

Ryan J. Post, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor of Psychology & Neuroscience, Providence College

1 Cunningham Sq.
Science Complex LL37
Providence, RI 02918

rpost@providence.edu
ryanpostlab.com

EDUCATION

Cornell University, Ithaca, NY	2014 – 2020
Ph.D. in Neurobiology	
Dissertation: Initiation and adaptive termination of goal-directed behavior in mice	
Providence College, Providence, RI	2010 – 2014
B.S. in Biology, B.A. in Psychology	
<i>Magna cum laude</i> , Liberal Arts Honors Certificate, Neuroscience Certificate	

ACADEMIC POSITIONS

Providence College, Providence, RI	
Assistant Professor of Psychology & Neuroscience	Aug. 2023 – present
University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA	
National Research Service Award Postdoctoral Fellow	Mar. 2022 – July 2023
Postdoctoral Researcher	Aug. 2020 – Mar. 2022
Bryn Mawr College, Bryn Mawr, PA	
Visiting Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology & Bi-College Neuroscience Program	Jan. 2022 – Dec. 2022

RESEARCH FUNDING

Pending

Research in Undergraduate Institutions (PI), NSF 2641322 (Co-PI: Ileana Soto Reyes)	May 2028 – Apr. 2031
National Science Foundation	<i>Direct funds:</i> \$534,480
RUI: Metabolic regulation of adaptive behavioral decisions under competing survival demands	

Current

PUI Early Career Development Award (Subaward PI), P20 GM103430 (PI: Bongsup Cho)	May 2026 – Apr. 2028
Rhode Island IDeA Network of Biomedical Research Excellence	<i>Direct funds:</i> \$200,000
A prefrontal cortical switchboard for competing motivations	

Completed

Provost's Faculty Fellowship – Early Career Scholar (PI)	Jul. 2024 – Jun. 2025
Providence College Academic Affairs	<i>Direct funds:</i> \$15,000
Neural pathways of adaptive food intake under competing motivations	
Summer Student Training and Research Award (Subaward PI), P20 GM103430 (PI: Bongsup Cho)	May 2024 – Apr. 2026
Rhode Island IDeA Network of Biomedical Research Excellence	<i>Direct funds:</i> \$85,260
Neural pathways of adaptive food intake under competing survival needs	

Medical Research Grant, 16409_139170 (PI)

Rhode Island Foundation

Medial prefrontal cortical circuits in motivation and depression

Apr. 2024 – Aug. 2025

Direct funds: \$23,769

National Research Service Award Postdoctoral Fellowship, F32 DK131892 (PI)

National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases

March 2022 – July 2023¹

Total funds: \$200,946

The role of ventromedial hypothalamic steroidogenic factor-1 neurons in exercise-related metabolism.

¹Awarded through Feb. 2025; voluntarily terminated upon starting tenure-track position.

PUBLICATIONS

Published

*Kindel, M., ***Post, R.J.**, Grose, K., Lantier, L., Hwang, E., Carty, J.R.E., Dohnlová, L., Lepeak, L., †Kern, H.C., Villari, R., Goldstein, N., Lo, E., Yeung, A., †Richie, L., †Skelly, B., Golub, J., Rai, M., Fujikawa, T., Ayala, J.E., Elmquist, J.K., Thaiss, C.A., Wasserman, D.H., Williams, K.W., Bloss, E.B., and Betley, J.N. (2026). Exercise-induced activation of ventromedial hypothalamic steroidogenic factor-1 neurons mediates improvements in endurance. *Neuron*. 114(9): 1564-1575.e9. [DOI](#)

***Post, R.J.**, *Bulkin, D.A., Ebitz, R.B., †Lee, V., Han, K., and Warden, M.R. (2022). Tonic activity in lateral habenula neurons acts as a neutral valence brake on reward-seeking behavior. *Current Biology*. 32(20): 4325-4336.e5. [DOI](#)

Post, R.J. and Warden, M.R. (2018). Melancholy, anhedonia, apathy: the search for separable behaviors and neural circuits in depression. *Current Opinion in Neurobiology*. 49: 192-200. [DOI](#)

Guru, A., **Post, R.J.**, Ho, Y.Y., and Warden, M.R. (2015). Making sense of optogenetics. *International Journal of Psychopharmacology*. 18(11): pyv079. [DOI](#)

Post, R.J., Dahlborg, K.M., O'Loughlin, L.E., and Bloom, C.M. (2014). Effects of juvenile exposure to predator odor on adolescent and adult anxiety and pain nociception. *Physiology and Behavior*. 131: 57-61. [DOI](#)

Bloom, C.M., **Post, R.J.**, Mazick, J., Blumenthal, B., Doyle, C., Peters, B., Dyche, J., and Davenport, D.G. (2013). A discriminated conditioned punishment model of phobia. *Neuropsychiatric Disease and Treatment*. 9: 1239-1248. [DOI](#)

Bloom, C.M., **Post, R.J.**, Anch, A.M., and Davenport, D.G. (2013). Behavioral assessment of visual deficits in the *taiep* mutant. *Degenerative Neurological and Neuromuscular Disease*. 3: 15-21. [DOI](#)

In revision, preprint available upon request

***Post, R.J.**, *Kindel, M., *Goldstein, N., *Lieberman, A.G., Blank, N., Smith, N.K., Awh, M., Chin, P.W., Jung, A., Carty, J.R.E., Kruger, K.A., Villari, R., Cho, E., †Richie, L., †Timoney, M., †Kern, H.C., Jaycox, C., †Skelly, B., Collins, H.W., †Morley, E.N., †Kelly, C.O., †Moore, E.J., †Fernandes, C.A., †Kellarakos, T.M., McKnight, A.D., Aguilar, F.S., Alhadeff, A.L., Thaiss, C.A., Machado, T.A., Betley, J.N. Separable streams of hunger and cost information enable behavioral trade-offs. *In second round revision*.

In preparation

†Morley, E.N., †Kelly, C.K., †Belt, O., †McCaffrey, K.M., †Schaub, F.S., †Rohr, M., †Ashley, A., and ***Post, R.J.** The impacts of pregnancy, maternal experience, and prenatal stress on motivated behavior amidst environmental threat.

Preprint publicly available

Guru, A., Seo, C., **Post, R.J.**, Kullakanda, D.S., Schaffer, J.A., and Warden, M.R. Ramping activity in midbrain dopamine neurons signifies the use of a cognitive map. *bioRxiv*. 2020.5.21, 108886. [Preprint](#)

*Co-first author. †Undergraduate mentee. ✱Corresponding senior author.

TEACHING

Providence College

Behavioral Neuroscience, PSY/NEU 262

8 sections across 4 semesters

Methods & Analysis: Behavioral Neuroscience with Lab, PSY/NEU 362	2 sections across 2 semesters
Neuroscience Capstone, NEU 474	3 sections across 2 semesters
Introduction to Neuroscience, NEU 100	2 sections across 2 semesters
New course proposed and approved; previously NEU 170 as ST	
Neural Circuits of Motivated Behavior, NEU 371	2 sections across 2 semesters
New course proposed and approved; previously NEU/PSY 470 as ST	
Independent Study, PSY 490	3 students across 3 semesters
Research in Psychology, PSY 395/495	30 enrollments across 7 semesters

Previous institutions

Advanced Topics in Neuroscience: Neuroscience of Mood Disorders, PSYC B316, Bryn Mawr College	Fall 2022
Behavioral Neuroscience, PSYC B218, Bryn Mawr College	Spring 2022
Biomedical Research Academy Journal Club: Decoding Dopamine, PSSA 006-920, University of Pennsylvania	Sum. 2021
First-year Writing Seminar: The Mind—Biological to Artificial, BIONB 1220, Cornell University	Fall 2018

Guest lectures

Introduction to Literature, ENG 175, Providence College, Prof. Olga Limnios	Fall 2024
---	-----------

FELLOWSHIPS, AWARDS, & HONORS

Provost's Faculty Fellowship – Early Career Scholar, Providence College	2024 – 2025
Ruth L. Kirschstein National Research Service Award Postdoctoral (F32) Fellowship	2022 – 2023
Outstanding Graduate Teaching Assistant, Cornell College of Agriculture and Life Sciences	2020
Cornell Center for Teaching Innovation Fellowship	2019 – 2020
John S. Knight Award, Cornell Knight Writing Institute	2019
Stress Neurobiology Workshop Outstanding Poster Award	2018
Cornell Neurotech Mong Junior Fellowship	2017 – 2018
NSF Graduate Research Fellowship Honorable Mention	2015
Cornell Presidential Life Sciences Fellowship	2014 – 2015
<i>Magna cum laude</i> , Providence College	2014
Rev. Charles V. Reichart Award for scholarship in biology, Providence College	2014
Rhode Island INBRE Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship	2012 & 2013
Psi Chi Psychology Honors Society	2012
Alpha Epsilon Delta Pre-health Honors Society, elected to executive board	2012
Providence College St. Catherine of Siena Honors Scholarship	2010 – 2014

SELECTED ACADEMIC PRESENTATIONS

Conference Presentations

Neuroscience 2026 · Society for Neuroscience · Washington, DC · Nov. 14-18, 2025 · <i>Title</i> : Medial prefrontal cortex ensembles bias action selection during motivational conflict. <u>Student co-presenters</u> : Kaelin McCaffrey & Madison Rohr	
Neuroscience 2025 · Society for Neuroscience · San Diego · Nov. 15-19, 2025 · <i>Title</i> : Medial prefrontal cortical ensembles direct behavior in response to competing needs. <u>Student co-presenters</u> : Francesca Schaub & Kaelin McCaffrey. Faculty for Undergraduate Neuroscience Travel Award	
Neuroscience 2024 · Society for Neuroscience · Chicago · Oct. 5-9, 2024 · <i>Title</i> : Additive, non-intersectional action of hypothalamic hunger circuits overcomes cost for acquisition of food.	

Society for the Study of Ingestive Behavior, 31st Annual Meeting · Chicago · Jul. 9-13, 2024 · *Title:* Additive, non-intersectional action of hypothalamic hunger circuits overcomes cost for acquisition of food.

Neuroscience 2022 · Society for Neuroscience · San Diego · Nov. 12-16, 2022 · *Title:* Ventromedial hypothalamic steroidogenic factor-1 neurons are potentiated by exercise training and underlie improvements in exercise performance.

Neuroscience 2019 · Society for Neuroscience · Chicago · Oct. 19-23, 2019 · *Title:* The prefrontal cortex-ventral tegmental area projection promotes movement initiation in motivated behaviors.

Neuroscience 2018 · Society for Neuroscience · San Diego · Nov. 3-7, 2018 · *Title:* The prefrontal cortex-ventral tegmental area projection modulates helplessness and locomotor activity, but not reward-seeking behavior.

2018 Stress Neurobiology Workshop · Banff, AB · June 8-11, 2018 · *Title:* The prefrontal cortical projection to the ventral tegmental area impacts helplessness- and locomotion-related behaviors, but not hedonic behaviors, in chronically stressed mice. **Outstanding Poster Award**

Student Regional Conference Presentations

2026 Northeast Under/graduate Research Organization for Neuroscience Conference · Faculty for Undergraduate Neuroscience · Quinnipiac University · Kaelin McCaffrey · Apr. 11, 2026 · *Title:* Medial prefrontal cortical ensembles direct behavior in response to competing needs

2026 Northeast Under/graduate Research Organization for Neuroscience Conference · Faculty for Undergraduate Neuroscience · Quinnipiac University · Madison Rohr & Clara Arcand · Apr. 11, 2026 · *Title:* Hunger-sensing hypothalamic neurons drive food consumption despite environmental threat

2026 Big East Research Symposium · Madison Square Garden, New York · Madison Rohr & Alonie Ashley · Mar. 14, 2026 · *Title:* Hunger-sensing hypothalamic neurons drive food consumption despite environmental threat. **Competitive invitation**

2025 NeuroBoston Fall Symposium · NeuroBoston (SfN Boston Chapter) · Tufts University · Kaelin McCaffrey & Francesca Schaub · Dec. 5, 2025 · *Title:* Medial prefrontal cortical ensembles direct behavior in response to competing needs.

2025 RI Summer Research Symposium · RI-INBRE · University of Rhode Island · Madison Rohr · Aug. 1, 2025 · *Title:* Medial prefrontal cortical ensembles direct behavior in response to competing needs.

2025 RI Summer Research Symposium · RI-INBRE · University of Rhode Island · Kaelin McCaffrey · Aug. 1, 2025 · *Title:* The impacts of pregnancy, maternal experience, and prenatal stress on motivated behavior amidst environmental threat.

2025 RI Summer Research Symposium · RI-INBRE · University of Rhode Island · Alonie Ashley · Aug. 1, 2025 · *Title:* Hunger-sensing hypothalamic neurons drive food consumption despite environmental threat.

2025 Northeast Under/graduate Research Organization for Neuroscience Conference · Faculty for Undergraduate Neuroscience · Quinnipiac University · Olivia Belt & Madison Rohr · Apr. 26, 2025 · *Title:* Effect of prefrontal cortical fear engram activation on competing needs: hunger and fear.

2025 Northeast Under/graduate Research Organization for Neuroscience Conference · Faculty for Undergraduate Neuroscience · Quinnipiac University · Claire Kelly · Apr. 26, 2025 · *Title:* Motivated behavior in juvenility and across the lifespan.

2025 Northeast Under/graduate Research Organization for Neuroscience Conference · Faculty for Undergraduate Neuroscience · Quinnipiac University · Emma Morley · Apr. 26, 2025 · *Title:* The effect of pregnancy and maternity on behavioral needs amidst environmental threat.

2025 Big East Research Symposium · Madison Square Garden, New York · Olivia Belt · Mar. 15, 2025 · *Title:* Effect of prefrontal cortical fear engram activation on competing needs: hunger and fear. **Competitive invitation**

2024 RI Summer Research Symposium · RI-INBRE · University of Rhode Island · Emma Morley & Claire Kelly · July 26, 2024 · *Title:* The effect of pregnancy and maternity on behavioral motivations amidst environmental threat.

2024 RI Summer Research Symposium · RI-INBRE · University of Rhode Island · Olivia Belt · July 26, 2024 · *Title:* Understanding competing fear and hunger motivations through correlating neural activity and behavior.

2024 RI Summer Research Symposium · RI-INBRE · University of Rhode Island · Noah Ashby & Madeline McGrath · July 26, 2024 · *Title:* Quantifying the effect of environmental threat on food consumption in mice.

- 2024 Northeast Under/graduate Research Organization for Neuroscience Conference · Faculty for Undergraduate Neuroscience · Quinnipiac University · Ethan Moore · Apr. 21, 2024 · *Title:* Hunger-sensing hypothalamic neurons drive food consumption despite environmental threat.
- 2024 Big East Research Symposium · Madison Square Garden, New York · Emma Morley & Madeline Rahilly · Mar. 16, 2024 · *Title:* Hunger-sensing hypothalamic neurons drive food consumption despite environmental threat.
Competitive invitation

Invited Seminars

- University of Pennsylvania Biology Seminar Series · Jan. 26, 2023 · *Title:* Neural circuits for behavioral choice under competing motivations.
- Bi-College Neuroscience Club · Bryn Mawr College · Nov. 10, 2022 · *Title:* Hypothalamic circuits for behavioral choice under competing motivations.
- St. Mary's College of Maryland Psychology · Nov. 9, 2022 · *Title:* Hypothalamic circuits for behavioral choice under competing motivations.
- Providence College Psychology & Neuroscience · Nov. 7, 2022 · *Title:* Hypothalamic circuits for behavioral choice under competing motivations.
- Exercise Program Project Grant Symposium · Hypothalamic Research Center, University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center (*Virtual*) · June 16, 2022 · *Title:* VMH steroidogenic factor-1 neural activity during exercise.
- Exercise Program Project Grant Symposium · Hypothalamic Research Center, University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center (*Virtual*) · May 14, 2021 · *Title:* Ventromedial hypothalamic neural activity during exercise.
- Neuroscience Alumni Series · Providence College · Mar. 31, 2016 · *Title:* Neuromodulatory circuits of depressive behavior.

Conference Leadership

- Faculty for Undergraduate Neuroscience Workshop 2026: Rewiring Neuroscience Education · North Central College, Naperville, IL · July 15-18, 2026 · Conference Organization Committee · *Moderator*, Short Teaching Talks: Scientific Communication

SERVICE

Providence College

- | | |
|--|----------------|
| Member (scientist), Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee | 2024 – present |
| Faculty co-advisor, Brainy Bunch (undergraduate neuroscience club) | 2023 – present |
| Faculty co-advisor, Nu Rho Psi Honor Society, Alpha-RI chapter | 2023 – present |
| Annual organizer of Careers in Neuroscience | 2025 – present |
| Annual organizer of induction ceremony | 2025 – present |

Scientific community

- | | |
|--|----------------|
| Member, Education Committee, Faculty for Undergraduate Neuroscience | 2025 – present |
| Judge, NEURON Conference | Apr. 2026 |
| Judge, NeuroBoston Fall Symposium | Nov. 2025 |
| Judge, Big East Research Symposium | Mar. 2025 |
| Guest referee, <i>Neuron</i> , <i>Nature Communications</i> , <i>Cell Metabolism</i> , <i>MethodsX</i> | ongoing |

MEMBERSHIP IN PROFESSIONAL SOCIETIES

- | | |
|--|----------------|
| Nu Rho Psi Honor Society, <i>Faculty co-advisor, Alpha in Rhode Island Chapter</i> | 2024 – present |
| Faculty for Undergraduate Neuroscience, <i>Education Committee member</i> | 2023 – present |
| Council on Undergraduate Research | 2023 – present |
| Society for Neuroscience | 2018 – present |
| Sigma Xi Scientific Research Honor Society | 2012 – present |