Summer Student Research Program
Project Description

FACULTY SPONSOR'S NAME AND DEGREE: Walter Zahorodny, PhD
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PROJECT TITLE (200 Characters max):

Characterizing the diagnostic and evaluative process of children with ASD.

HYPOTHESIS: ASD children who come to the attention of a doctoral-level developmental professional before 36 months are more likely to be diagnosed with ASD before 48 months than other ASD children.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

A variety of professionals, including developmental pediatricians, psychologists and neurologists, are involved in the identification and diagnosis of ASD children. There may be differences in the availability of professionals or in the approach of various professionals that enhance the likelihood of early ASD diagnosis. This study will describe the characteristics of the diagnostic process for children with ASD identified before age 9, using comprehensive case-specific information derived from population-based surveillance in a large, well-defined area. This project will be a retrospective, cross-sectional study, using de-identified information from six cycles (2000-2012) of ASD monitoring, representing approximately 1,200 individuals diagnosed with ASD by a community-based professional.   Each individual's case information encompasses clinical and educational evaluations from 0 to 8 years. Study findings may enhance what is known about the timely detection of ASD also identify disparities in the identification and/or diagnosis of ASD.

SPONSOR'S MOST RECENT PUBLICATIONS RELEVANT TO THIS RESEARCH:

ADDM Network; *Prevalence of the Autism Spectrum Disorders - Autism and Developmental Disabilities Monitoring Network, 11 Sites, United States, 2016, MMWR 65 (3) 1-23, 2016*

*Christensen D., Bilder D., **Zahorodny W.**, Pettygrove S., Durkin M., Rice C., Yeargin-Allsopp M.; Prevalence and characteristics of autism spectrum disorder among 4-year old children; Journal of Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics, 2015*

IS THIS PROJECT SUPPORTED BY EXTRAMURAL FUNDS?
        Yes ⊠   **or   No** ☐

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

THIS PROJECT IS: ☐Clinical   ☐Laboratory   ☐ Behavioral   ⊠ Other

THIS PROJECT IS CANCER-RELATED☐
Please explain Cancer relevance

THIS PROJECT IS HEART, LUNG & BLOOD- RELATED☐
Please explain Heart, Lung, Blood relevance

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THIS PROJECT EMPLOYS RADIOISOTOPES ☐

THIS PROJECT INVOLVES THE USE OF ANIMALS ☐
      PENDING ☐   **APPROVED** ☐   **IACUC PROTOCOL #**

THIS PROJECT INVOLVES THE USE OF HUMAN SUBJECTS ☒
      PENDING ☐   **APPROVED** ☒   **IRB PROTOCOL # M0120010288**

THIS PROJECT IS SUITABLE FOR:
UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS ☐   ENTERING FRESHMAN   ☐
SOPHMORES   ☐   ALL STUDENTS   ☒

THIS PROJECT IS WORK-STUDY: **Yes** ☒   **or**   **No** ☐

THIS PROJECT WILL BE POSTED DURING ACADEMIC YEAR
FOR INTERESTED VOLUNTEERS: **Yes** ☒   **or**   **No** ☐

WHAT WILL THE STUDENT LEARN FROM THIS EXPERIENCE?

The student will learn about the expression and prevalence of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) by participating in the ongoing ASD surveillance activities of the New Jersey Autism Study, a public health system established in cooperation with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the New Jersey Departments of Health and Education. The student will contribute to the epidemiology of ASD by participating in the analytic activities required to describe the provision of diagnostic evaluations to ASD children from birth through 8 years in a large well-defined metropolitan area.