



*American College of Neuropsychopharmacology*

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## **Bitá Moghaddam receives the ACNP Dolores Shockley Diversity and Inclusion Advancement Award**

The American College of Neuropsychopharmacology (ACNP) has named Bitá Moghaddam, Ph.D. as the winner of the 2023 Dolores Shockley Diversity and Inclusion Advancement Award.

The Dolores Shockley Diversity and Inclusion Advancement Award presented at the 62<sup>nd</sup> Annual Meeting of the ACNP is in recognition of an ACNP member who has been particularly successful in mentoring young scientists from underrepresented groups in the field of neuropsychopharmacology and related disciplines. The award was named in honor of Dr. Dolores Shockley, the first Black woman to receive a Ph.D. in Pharmacology in the United States and the first Black woman to chair a Pharmacology department in the United States. Dr. Shockley, who was known for her loving spirit, taught and mentored many students and was role model to many. She sadly passed away in 2020 at age 90. However, her legacy lives on in the work that those like Dr. Moghaddam do to mentor and train the next generation of scientists.

Dr. Moghaddam received her BS in Chemistry from Avila College and her PhD from the university of Kansas. She is currently the Ruth Matarazzo Professor of Behavioral Neuroscience, Oregon Health and Science University. Dr. Moghaddam studies neuronal networks in rodent adolescent models of risk for cognitive and affective disorders. She is a leader in the field of neuropsychopharmacology and use of electrophysiological approaches, including ensemble recordings in behaving animals to understand drug actions. Her work on neural circuits in the developing adolescent brain, mechanisms of actions of ketamine and antipsychotic drugs, and application of computational approaches have contributed to our understanding of how anxiety, addiction, and psychosis may develop. Dr. Moghaddam has received multiple awards including the ACNP's Efron award, CINP's Paul Janssen award, Career Development and MERIT awards from the NIMH and a Fogarty Senior Fellowship award.

Dr. Moghaddam has been committed to mentorship and empowerment of underrepresented scientists in her entire career. She has trained over 30 predoctoral and postdoctoral scientists, over 25% of whom have been members of underrepresented groups. Dr. Moghaddam has spearheaded efforts to support and promote scientists through leadership positions in many professional organizations. She was one of the original board members of the ALBA network, an international organization which aims to advance diversity and equity in brain sciences. Dr. Moghaddam fosters a lab environment in which concrete and actionable steps are offered to her mentees to acquire the skills, and access the opportunities, they need to succeed.

Dr. Angela Ozburn says *“She spends more time with her lab than any other faculty member I’ve known.” “she is consistently fiercely supportive of junior BIPOC scientists, offering her time, guidance, and support. Bita is inclusive and generous with her time and support. As junior faculty at OHSU, she encouraged and challenged me to grow in a scholarly way...” “As a female Native American and first gen student, mentors like Bita have been pivotal at every stage of my training as well as my transition from early- to mid-career academic researcher. “Bita Moghaddam has demonstrated exceptional leadership, innovation and success in promoting inclusion and career development of young, underrepresented minority scientists through dedicated acts of individual mentorship.”*

The most noteworthy result of Dr. Moghaddam’s mentorship is that her mentees are emulating her example. Dr. Ozburn, one of her nominators, is now an Associate Professor at OHSU and Elected Associate Member of Council, Chair of ACNP D&I BIPOC subcommittee and Co-Director of OHSU Fellowships for Diversity in Research at OHSU. Another, Dr. Aqilah McCane is the recipient of the 2023 Athina Markou ACNP travel award and starting her independent faculty position this fall. ACNP is proud to honor Dr. Moghaddam’s service to the diverse and talented field of young investigators who are expanding the vision of psychopharmacology with their unique and valuable perspectives.

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ACNP, founded in 1961, is a professional organization of more than 1100 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.