UC DAVIS
CENTER FOR NEUROSCIENCE

Barbara Chapman
Neuroscience Award

Alexandra Mikhailova
2018 Award Recipient

Alexandra (Sasha) Mikhailova is a second-year PhD student in neuroscience at the University of California, Davis, in the lab of Dr. Kimberley McAllister. She plans on studying the role of immune molecules in regulating synapse development in the mammalian cortex. Previously, Sasha worked at University of California, San Francisco studying models of pediatric brain injury. She completed a Bachelor of Science in Neurobiology, Physiology and Behavior at UC Davis, while studying stroke recovery in the lab of Dr. Barbara Horwitz. After the first year of graduate school, Sasha is inspired to work across disciplines to answer questions in developmental neuroscience.

Impact of Philanthropy

The Barbara Chapman Neuroscience Award offered Sasha the opportunity to attend the Complexity Science Summer School at the Santa Fe Institute, the international hub of complexity research. Sasha gained new knowledge and tools to transcend disciplinary boundaries and expanded her professional network with fellow scientists from all over the world.

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Thank You

Thank you for your generous contributions that allowed me attend the Complexity Science Summer School (CSSS) at the Santa Fe Institute, the international hub of complexity research.

CSSS opened my eyes to a version of academia that actively works to transcend disciplinary boundaries and ask big questions about real-world complex systems. CSSS is a 4-week comprehensive introduction to complexity science, taught to a group of 80 of the brightest graduate students, faculty, doctors and professionals from around the world. Throughout the course we came together to work on intriguing and seemingly impossible questions, drawing upon our individual knowledge of math, physics, computer science, sociology, economics and biology.

Having just completed my first year of the PhD program, this summer school experience came at a critical period in my graduate training to fundamentally influence my scientific development - the Chapman Award helped make this possible. Not only do I understand the tools of complexity science, but I have professional connections (and friendships) with fellow scientists all over the world to help me utilize these tools through future collaborations.

Connecting with curious scientists from many disciplines who are concerned with neuroscience questions has been invaluable, and humbling. Communicating clearly across disciplines is a challenge, and now it's clear to me that this is a responsibility I will not take lightly in my scientific career.

Moving forward, I am thankful for this seminal experience in my personal and scientific development.

Sincerely,

Alexandra (Sasha) Mikhailova