FUNDING ANNOUNCEMENT
Support for Graduate Research Assistants
2013-2014 Academic Year

PURPOSE
The Bronfenbrenner Center for Translational Research (BCTR) invites applications from College of Human Ecology graduate students for Graduate Research Assistant (GRA) support for the 2013-2014 academic year. Up to 3 one-semester GRAs (15 hours per week) will be funded for the fall 2013 semester. There is a possibility of continuing the assistantships in the spring semester of 2013, but not guaranteed. Preference will be given to Ph.D. students. The GRAs are located in the BCTR in Beebe Hall and are intended to further the work of current BCTR projects and the BCTR as a whole. Students may also work on faculty projects that are administered by the BCTR or where there is significant collaboration with BCTR faculty or staff. Time will likely be split between more than one project. Final determinations of project assignments will be made this summer with an attempt to match student preferences with project needs. Listed below are examples of projects that may benefit from graduate student participation this fall; this list should not be considered exhaustive as others will emerge.

APPLICATION GUIDELINES
Applications for GRA support should include the following information:
• Title page including name, affiliation, mailing address, telephone number, and e-mail address.
• A brief 1 single-spaced page summary of your background, relevant coursework and research skills or experiences, and progress toward your degree. Include a statement regarding career interests in translational research. If you have a preference for one or more BCTR projects you may list these.
• A statement of endorsement from your major advisor
• A curriculum vita

SELECTION CRITERIA
Funding decisions will be based on the fit of the student’s background, skills, and career goals in relation to the mission of the BCTR and the focus and needs of its current projects.
(www.bctr.cornell.edu/projects).

SUBMISSION
The application deadline is May 31, 2013. Funding decisions will be made by June 15, 2012. Electronic versions of your application should be submitted to Patty Thayer at pmt6@cornell.edu. Questions can be directed to: John Eckenrode, BCTR Director, 255-0467, jje1@cornell.edu.
Sample Projects

Maternal and Child Health Center of Excellence: The GRA will help plan and develop a resource center for state and county agencies that provide perinatal health and support services for new parents. The center will support local programs regarding evidence-based practice strategies and the use of local data to inform program delivery. A GRA would support this effort in various ways, including summarizing research and practice literature related to perinatal home visiting and continuous quality improvement, investigating approaches being used in other states for improving program impact, helping with grant preparation. Hours: 5-10 per week.

PROSPER Partnership Model in New York: The GRA will work with the PROSPER State Management Team in the role of State Evaluator. PROSPER stands for (PRO)moting School-community-university Partnerships to Enhance Resilience and is a scientifically-proven delivery system that facilitates sustained, quality delivery of evidence-based programs that reduce risky youth behaviors, enhance positive youth development and strengthen families. The target audience is middle school youth and their parents. The PROSPER state evaluator is in charge of tracking resources (e.g. biweekly reports, process evaluation data), administering yearly team surveys, and being a source of evaluation support for 2 Community Teams (in Livingston and Schuyler counties). The state evaluator will conduct and prepare the annual evaluation. Occasional travel to the team sites may be required (e.g. to present team survey results). The state evaluator will have monthly calls with the Network evaluator, who provides training and technical assistance. Opportunities for analysis of process evaluation data will start in Fall 2013, as will the opportunity to interview youth team members. Knowledge of program evaluation, a detailed work style, and ability to work/communicate well with people are desired skills. Hours: 4-6 per week.

Residential Child Care Project: The RCCP comprises several programs designed to help agencies provide higher quality caregiving to the children in their care. We are conducting several large-and small-scale studies to evaluate the impact of these programs on children's safety and well-being, and to inform practice and policy about the care of children in out-of-home care. The RCCP offers the opportunity for a graduate student to contribute to both large-and small-scale program evaluation projects. Depending on project needs, the student may participate in activities such as: development and validation of assessment instruments; planning and implementing research protocols; processing quantitative and qualitative data; helping with literature reviews; preparing reports, manuscripts and grant proposals; developing tools and methods for helping agencies to use empirical evidence to inform program planning and management. Although many skills can be learned on the job, helpful skills include: familiarity with quantitative assessment and psychometric methods; structured and semi-structured interviewing; qualitative data analysis; data management; technical writing. Hours: 10-15 per week.

4-H Program: Evaluation RA. Cleaning and analyzing 4-H data sets related to Career Explorations, STARR (STARR stands for State Team Action Representatives Retreat), and our Common Measures for program outcomes. The results of analyses will be used to generate reports and develop 4-H research concepts. Hours: 6-10 per week.
Complementary Strengths Research Partnership: This community-based participatory research project examines the relations among social connectedness, highly engaged youth program participation, and HIV risk reduction among adolescents in New York City after-school programs. The objective is to study the interactions among youth connectedness, characteristics of highly engaged program participation and HIV risk reduction using both quantitative and qualitative analytic methods in order to develop effective setting-based interventions that promote strong youth participation, thereby promoting youth health and well-being overall and in particular adolescent sexual health. The focus of the GRA position would be on the analysis of longitudinal survey data from youth peer educators participating in an HIV prevention intervention in Brooklyn, NY. Survey data include measures of youth program participation, social connectedness, and HIV risk reduction/sexual health promotion. The position calls for strong statistical skills, ability to work with a diverse research team including campus and community members, and interest in youth development/public health. Interest and capability in qualitative data management and analysis would be a plus and would enable the GRA to work with the team on utilizing and archiving open-ended survey responses and interview transcripts. Hours: 5-8 per week.

Parenting in Context Project: The GRA for this project will work with Rachel Dunifon and Kimberly Kopko on the Parenting in Context project. The goal of this project is to provide resources and research-based materials to parent educators in the Cornell Cooperative Extension system. The GRA will analyze data on parent education programs taking place in New York State, will develop evaluation tools for existing programs, and will produce a series of research briefs on topics relevant to parent educators in the Cornell Cooperative Extension system. Required skills: minimal quantitative skills, some knowledge of evaluation, writing skills. Hours: 10 per week.

Grandparents Raising Youth Project: The GRA will conduct research on custodial grandparents families—families in which grandparents are raising their grandchildren with no parent in the household. Using unique multi-method data collected by Rachel Dunifon and Kimberly Kopko, the GRA will work with the researchers to analyze the data. The GRA will also analyze data from a follow-up survey conducted from the grandparents. The GRA may also work with the researchers to collect new data on youth being raised by grandparents. The results from the work of the GRA will be incorporated into a grant proposal for a larger study of custodial grandparent families. Required skills: experience in both qualitative and quantitative data analysis, writing skills. Hours: 15 per week.

Food choices, stress exposure, and dietary behavior projects: The GRA would work on data analyses and writing from several related projects on food choices, stress exposure, and dietary behavior. Three datasets are available and analyses would involve learning meta-analyses (training available) and other types of research synthesis techniques. The datasets are: Food Choice Coping Strategies in Multi-Ethnic Families (Devine, Wethington, & Bisogni); Nudging Nutrition (Wansink, Wethington, Sobal); and Small Changes and Lasting Effects (Charlson, Wethington, Devine). The GRA would be equipped with a computer in Beebe Hall with the datasets, codebooks, and SKYPE so that the PI can meet with the RA on a regular basis while on sabbatical. Hours: 5-8 per week.

The Research Navigator Initiative: This program engages Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) educators in learning about current College of Human Ecology (CHE) research, research methodologies, principles
of research partnership development, and human participants/IRB procedures, with a strong emphasis on building relationships and partnerships between CHE research faculty, CCE educators, and the communities served by CCE associations. One major aim of the initiative is to develop a common language and clear expectations regarding research partnerships between CHE faculty and CCE county associations. The initiative works to facilitate identification of research opportunities, questions, and needs at the CHE/community level as well as to build connections with on-going faculty research programs. The BCTR GRA position would maintain an on-line inventory of CCE research-related resources (e.g. capacity to recruit focus group participants, established system for obtaining parental consent for early adolescent summer camp participants, etc.) in all regions of NYS as well as an inventory of current research opportunities and interests generated by both faculty and CCE educators. Hours: 2-4 per week.

**Cornell Youth in Society:** A GRA would support ongoing projects about natural mentoring in small learning communities and would be involved in designing and pre-testing a survey and helping to plan and organize the first survey administration in 30 YouthBuild programs. Tasks would include: conducting telephone interviews with youth and adults, transcribing, coding, and participating in analyzing qualitative data. Hours: 5-10 per week.

**Cornell Research Program on Self-Injury Behavior (CRPSIB):** There is a wealth of quantitative and qualitative data from multiple datasets on self-injury and recovery. The GRA would work with the PI on a research paper to a) refine paper objectives, b) analyze data, and c) draft a publishable paper. Ideal skills include some advanced analytic skills (ideally longitudinal analysis), qualitative coding and analysis skills, strong organizational skills, self-initiation skills, and strong writing skills. Intrinsic interest in adolescent mental health and/or wellbeing ideal but not critical. Hours: 5 per week.

**Research Synthesis Project:** The BCTR Research Synthesis Project supports the development of high-quality research syntheses on priority topics identified by Extension stakeholders and faculty. Resources and products resulting from this project will include collections of original peer reviewed research literature, annotated bibliographies, and research briefs. A GRA position would support the development and pilot testing of an evidence-based system for the translation of research findings in human development, health and well-being, for improved accessibility and use by community practitioners, policy makers and researchers. The successful candidate will work with a small team, with a primary focus on literature review and analysis, and development of a working bibliographic database. The position requires the ability to follow established protocols accurately, take careful notes, and complete tasks reliably on schedule. Interest and capability in literature review, quantitative and qualitative data analysis is a plus. Hours: 8-10 per week.

**Student Engagement Committee:** The GRA would assist with SEC-related logistics. Specific tasks are likely to include: a) putting together and maintaining a list of all BCTR students; b) coordinating website profiles (will work with other SEC members on this but will be primary coordinator); c) assisting with coordination of professional development series; d) communicating with BCTR students about opportunities and other related topics as needed. Skill set needed is willingness and good coordination and organization skills. Hours: 2 per week.