



CTSN graduate student James Burkett receives NIH fellowship to study brain mechanisms of empathy in prairie voles



James Burkett, a graduate student in Dr. Larry Young's lab in the CTSN at Emory University, was recently awarded an NRSA Fellowship from the National Institutes of Health. His two-year project will focus on brain mechanisms driving empathy-based consoling behavior in the monogamous prairie vole, a behavior he and Larry Young recently discovered. In disorders such as autism spectrum disorder, schizophrenia and psychopathy, empathy is often disrupted, and as of yet there are no medical treatments that target this deficit. By exploring the evolutionary antecedents of human empathy in this rodent

model, this research will provide new opportunities and new tools for studying the complex neurochemistry involved in empathy, which may lead to new translational treatments for the empathy deficits characteristic of these and other disorders.



CTSN Mission

The CTSN fosters intellectual exchange and collaboration between basic and translational researchers and clinicians at Emory investigating the neurobiology of prosocial behavior and disorders of the social brain. The Center recognizes that research in animal models has the potential to transform clinical practice, and research in clinical populations can provide novel insights into the organization of the social brain. We are committed to translating discoveries made by basic neuroscientists and behavioral biologist into novel strategies for improving social function in psychiatric disorders characterized by deficits in the social domain, including but not limited to Autism Spectrum Disorders and Schizophrenia.

*Promoting Discovery
and Healing of the
Social Brain*
