

DIEGO PLACIDO | CURRICULUM VITAE

Center for Mind and Brain – University of California, Davis
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EDUCATION

Ph.D. Developmental Psychology University of California, Davis <i>Computational Social Science Designated Emphasis</i> <i>Quantitative Psychology Minor</i>	2026
M.A. Developmental Psychology University of California, Davis <i>Quantitative Psychology Minor</i>	2022
B.A. Psychology Brandeis University <i>Neuroscience & Computer Science Focus</i>	2015

ACADEMIC & RESEARCH INTERESTS

- Effects of contextual influences on attention, learning, and memory
- Multisensory perception and integration of audio, visual, and tactile modalities
- Neural correlates of visual attention, socioemotional reasoning, and cognitive control
- Impact of socioeconomic status, culture, and social dynamics on cognitive development

RESEARCH TRAINING

<i>PhD Graduate Student Researcher</i> , Cognition in Context Laboratory University of California, Davis - Center for Mind and Brain Director: Yuko Munakata, Ph.D.	2020–
<i>PhD Graduate Student Researcher</i> , Neurocognitive Development Laboratory University of California, Davis - Center for Mind and Brain Director: Susan M. Rivera, Ph.D.	2019–21
<i>Laboratory Manager / Researcher</i> , Developmental Cognitive Neuroscience Lab Brown University Director: Dima Amso, Ph.D.	2017–19
<i>Clinical Research Assistant</i> , RI Consortium for Autism Research & Treatment Brown University - Bradley Child Psychiatric Hospital Directors: Stephen Sheinkopf, Ph.D. & Eric Morrow, M.D., Ph.D.	2016–17
<i>Research Assistant</i> , Memory and Cognition Laboratory Brandeis University - Volen National Center for Complex Systems Director: Arthur Wingfield, D.Phil.	2014–16

SELECT AWARDS, FELLOWSHIPS, & HONORS

41 total accolades:

• Community Cultivation Award, UC Davis Psychology Dept. (x2)	2025
• Professors for the Future Fellowship, University of California at Davis	2024–25
• Dukes Travel Award, UC Davis Psychology Dept. (x3)	2024,25
• Karen D. Horobin Psychology Graduate Student Research Award, UC Davis Psychology Dept.	2022
• National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship	2021–24
• Outstanding Leadership & Service Award, UC Davis Psychology Dept.	
• American Psychological Association Anne Anastasi Graduate Student Research Recognition Award	2021
• Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society <i>only top 10% of seniors and graduate students across all disciplines elected</i>	
• Diverse Mentoring Initiative Award, UC Davis Psychology Dept. (x7)	2020,21,22
• Templeton Travel Award, UC Davis Psychology Dept. (x3)	2020,21
• NASEM Ford Foundation Predoctoral Fellowship, Honorable Mention (x2)	
• Graduate Research Mentorship Fellowship, University of California at Davis	2020–21
• Best Graduate Student Talk, UC Davis Psychology Dept. Annual Conference	2020
• Psychology fMRI Training Program Fellowship, University of Michigan	
• First-Year Research Fellowship, University of California at Davis	2019–20
• First-Year Diversity Fellowship, University of California at Davis	
• 1st Prize Research Award, Brown University Carney Institute for Brain Science	2019
• National Science Foundation Innovation Corps Fellowship	2018
• Provost Undergraduate Research Grant, Brandeis University	2015–16
• Alumni and Friends Scholarship, Brandeis University (x2)	2014,15
• ExxonMobil Northern Virginia CC Honors Program Scholarship	2013
• Rotary International Club Vocational Education Award	2011

EXTERNAL GRANT FUNDING

FAPESP Generation Project Grant

Foundations of the building blocks of higher cognition: Cultural influences on executive functions and their connections with relational reasoning

2026–31

Agency: São Paulo Research Foundation (FAPESP)

Amount: \$464,295.75 (USD)

Role: Associate Researcher

Site: Federal University of ABC (Brazil)

Status: Granted

NIMH Postdoctoral Fellowship in Emotion Research

Agency: National Institute of Mental Health

2026–27

Role: Principal Investigator

Site: University of Wisconsin, Madison (USA)

Status: Deferred

<p>NSF Graduate Research Fellowship (DGE-2036201)</p> <p><i>Investigating environmental influences on the development of adaptive control using real-world, experimental, and computational modeling measures</i></p> <p>Agency: National Science Foundation</p> <p>Amount: \$138,000.00 (USD)</p> <p>Role: Principal Investigator</p> <p>Site: University of California, Davis (USA)</p> <p>Status: Completed</p>	2021–24
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PUBLICATIONS

* denotes co-first author; + denotes mentored student; ++ denotes co-mentored student

10. Placido, D., Traut, H.J., & Munakata, Y. (in prep.). Supporting the development of inhibitory control: The promise of considering individual differences in cognitive effort.	In Prep.
9. Placido, D., Zengilowski, A., Khaligh, N.H.++, & Munakata, Y. (in prep.). Context determines the cost: Perceptions of stress mediate the impact of household unpredictability on children's inhibitory control.	
8. Nketia, J., Al Sager, A., Dajani, R., Placido, D., & Amso, D. (2024). Executive functions in Jordanian children: What can the hearts and flowers task tell us about development in a non-western context? <i>Journal of Cognition & Development</i> , 25(2), 180–200.	2024
7. Munakata, Y., Placido, D., & Zhuang, W. (2023). What's next? Advances and challenges in understanding how environmental predictability shapes the development of cognitive control. <i>Current Directions in Psychological Science</i> , 32(6), 431–438.	2023
6. Zengilowski, A., Maqbool, I., Pratap Deka, S., Niebaum, J.C., Placido, D., Katz, B., Shah, P., & Munakata, Y. (2023). Overemphasizing individual differences and overlooking systemic factors reinforces educational inequality. <i>Nature npj Science of Learning</i> , 8(1), 13.	
5. Wang, J.Y., Grigsby, J., Placido, D., Wei, H., Tassone, F., Kim, K., Hessl, D., Rivera, S.M., & Hagerman, R.J. (2022). Clinical and molecular correlates of abnormal changes in the 1 cerebellum and globus pallidus in fragile X premutation. <i>Frontiers in Neurology: Applied Neuroimaging</i> , 13, 797649.	2022
4. Banks, A.++, Yonehiro, J., Placido, D., & Munakata, Y. (2021). Scaffolding development: Steps toward a meta-analysis of the role of parents in shaping children's executive functioning. <i>McNair Association of Professionals National McNair Research Journal</i> .	2021
3. Dajani, R., Al Sager, A., Placido, D., & Amso, D. (2020). The value of the We Love Reading program for executive functions in Jordanian children. <i>EPiC Series in Education Science: Proceedings of the MIT LINC 2019 Conference</i> .	2020
2. Laurence, P.G., Placido, D., & Tafla, T.L. (preprint). Neurodiversity-Driven Cognitive Development Framework: Integrating strength-based approaches, neurodiversity, and contextual understanding of executive functions. <i>PsyArXiv</i> .	Preprint

1. Amso, D., Govindarajan, L.N., Gupta, P., **Placido, D.**, Baumgartner, H., Lynn, A., Gunther, K., Sharma, T., Veerabadran, V., Thakkar, K., Kim, S., & Serre, T. (pre-print). Using computational analysis of behavior to discover developmental change in memory-guided attention mechanisms in childhood. *PsyArXiv*.

REFEREED ABSTRACTS

* denotes co-first author; + denotes mentored student; ++ denotes co-mentored student

SYMPOSIA

3. **Placido, D.**, Zengilowski, A., Ward, A., Khaligh, N.H.++, & Munakata, Y. (2025, May). Ready or not, unpredictability may reveal contextually relevant mechanisms of cognitive control. (Presenter). Unpredictability unveiled: Recent advances in capturing environmental dynamics (Co-Chairs: Meriah DeJoseph & Nicole Walasek), Society for Research in Child Development Biennial Meeting, Minneapolis, MN, USA.
2. **Placido, D.*** & Yonehiro, J.* (2021, May). Holding graduate programs accountable in combating systemic racism through the implementation of the racial justice report card. (Co-Speaker). UC Davis Graduate Anti-Racism Symposium, Virtual (due to COVID-19 pandemic).
1. Duarte, S.E.*. **Placido, D.***, Rodriguez, J.E.*. Santisteven, A.C.*. Smith, L.K.*. Trainor, B.C.*. & Yonehiro, J.* (2021, May). Psychology graduate program diversity, equity, and inclusion activities. (Co-Chair). UC Davis Graduate Anti-Racism Symposium, Virtual (due to COVID-19 pandemic).

2025

2021

TALKS & POSTERS

22. **Placido, D.**, Isbell, E., Hoang, B., Coffey Corina, S., Richardson, D., Lopez, L., & Munakata, Y. (2025, September). Revealing the potential influences of environmental unpredictability on cognitive control development using ERP and pupillometry. Poster presented at the Flux International Congress on Integrative Developmental Cognitive Neuroscience, Dublin, Ireland.
21. **Placido, D.**, Isbell, E., & Munakata, Y. (2024, October). Cognitive control: What does childhood unpredictability have to do with it? Poster accepted at the 57th Annual Meeting of the International Society for Developmental Psychobiology, Chicago, IL, USA.
20. **Placido, D.**, Zengilowski, A., Ward, A., Khaligh, N.H.++, & Munakata, Y. (2024, May). Does current ecological relevance attenuate the effects of chaotic home environments on children's inhibitory control performance? Talk & poster presented at the Stanford University Bay Area Developmental Symposium, Stanford, CA, USA.
19. **Placido, D.**, Zengilowski, A., Ward, A., Khaligh, N.H.++, & Munakata, Y. (2024, March). Does current ecological relevance attenuate the effects of chaotic home environments on children's inhibitory control performance? Poster presented at the Cognitive Development Society Bi-Ennial Conference, Pasadena, CA, USA.

2025

2024

18. Khaligh, N.H.++, Zengilowski, A., Placido, D. , & Munakata, Y. (2023, June). Hidden strengths in childhood: An asset-based perspective on measures of inhibitory control. Poster presented at the UC Davis Psychology Department ASPIRE Program Symposium, Davis, CA, USA.	2023
17. Khaligh, N.H.++, Gonzales, C.+, Sivakumar, S.+, Rafael, S.+, Murakami, M.+, Cyrus, J.+, Zengilowski, A., Placido, D. , Matthews, J., & Munakata, Y. (2022, May). Developing identity as a math student: Leveraging Black and Latinx youth voices. Poster presented at the UC Davis Psychology Department Spring Conference, Davis, CA, USA.	2022
16. Placido, D. , Traut, H.J., & Munakata, Y. (2021, September). Can cognitive effort predict who benefits most from distinct types of inhibitory control practice? Poster presented at the Flux International Congress on Integrative Developmental Cognitive Neuroscience, Virtual (due to COVID-19 pandemic).	2021
15. Banks, A.++, Yonehiro, J., Placido, D. , & Munakata, Y. (2021, July). Scaffolding development: A meta-analysis on the role of parents in shaping children's executive function development. Poster presented at the UCLA McNair Conference, Virtual (due to COVID-19 pandemic).	
14. Tong, A.++, Ji, D.++, Lee, R.++, Banks, A.++, Holm, A.++, Dirzo, M.++, Waltmon, J.++, Placido, D. , Yonehiro, J., & Munakata, Y. (2021, May). Elucidating links between parental scaffolding and executive functions development in children through a meta-analytic approach. Poster presented at the UC Davis Psychology Department Spring Conference, Virtual (due to COVID-19 pandemic).	
13. Banks, A.++, Yonehiro, J., Placido, D. , Waltmon, J.++, & Munakata, Y. (2021, May). Parental scaffolding prepares groundwork for children to thrive with executive functions. Poster presented at the UC Davis Undergraduate Research Conference, Virtual (due to COVID-19 pandemic).	
12. Placido, D. , Traut, H.J., & Munakata, Y. (2021, April). Using pupillometric measures to predict individual differences in children's responsiveness to inhibitory control interventions. Poster presented at the Society for Research in Child Development Biennial Meeting, Virtual (due to COVID-19 pandemic).	
11. Prater Fahey, M., Grahek, I., Dean Wolf, C., Placido, D. , Orwicz, A., Amso, D., & Shenhav, A. (2020, September). When is effort worthwhile? Learned efficacy influences how adolescents allocate cognitive control. Poster presented at the Flux International Congress on Integrative Developmental Cognitive Neuroscience, Virtual (due to COVID-19 pandemic).	2020
10. Placido, D. , Hessl, D., & Rivera, S.M. (2020, July). Differences in temporal parietal junction activation between fragile X permutation carriers who do and do not convert to having Fragile X-Associated Tremor Ataxia Syndrome. Talk presented at the NFXF International Fragile X Conference, Virtual (due to COVID-19 pandemic).	
9. Wang, J.Y., Grigsby, J., Placido, D. , Hessl, D., Rivera, S.M., & Hagerman, R.J. (2020, July). The eye of the tiger sign in males carrying normal and permutation alleles of the FMR1 gene. Talk presented at the NFXF International Fragile X Conference, Virtual (due to COVID-19 pandemic).	

8. Placido, D., Hessl, D., & Rivera, S.M. (2020, May). Temporal information processing deficits exhibited in fragile X premutation carriers that convert to the full onset of Fragile X-Associated Tremor Ataxia Syndrome. Talk presented at the UC Davis Psychology Department Spring Conference, Virtual (due to COVID-19 pandemic).

7. Placido, D., Malmberg, S., Liu, X., & Hwang, F., (2019, November). Enhancing executive functions using augmented reality. Poster presented at the Brandeis University Innovation Showcase (National Science Foundation Innovation Corps), Waltham, MA, USA.

6. Lynn, A., Govindarajan, L., Placido, D., Seungchan, K., Thakkar, K., Serre, T., & Amso, D. (2019, August). Top-down saliency maps link physical navigation and memory-guided attention in early childhood. Poster presented at the Flux International Congress on Integrative Developmental Cognitive Neuroscience, New York, NY, USA.

5. Dajani, R., Al Sager, A., Placido, D., & Amso, D. (2019, June). The value of the We Love Reading read-aloud method for executive functions. Talk presented at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology Learning International Network Consortium, Cambridge, MA, USA.

4. Placido, D., Nketia, J.A., Werchan, D.M., & Amso, D. (2019, March). Exploring the effects of emotional support and cognitive stimulation on executive functions in children across socioeconomic status. Poster presented at the Brown University Carney Institute for Brain Science, Providence, RI, USA.

3. Placido, D., Malmberg, S., Liu, X., & Hwang, F., (2018, November). Effy: A mechanism to enhance executive functioning. Talk presented at the Brandeis University Innovation Showcase (National Science Foundation Innovation Corps), Waltham, MA.

2. Placido, D., Nketia, J.A., Werchan, D.M., & Amso, D. (2018, August). Exploring the effects of emotional support and cognitive stimulation on executive functions in children across socioeconomic status. Poster presented at the Flux International Congress on Integrative Developmental Cognitive Neuroscience, Berlin, Germany.

1. Atagi, E., Placido, D., & Wingfield, A. (2016, April). Examining the effects of age and hearing acuity on lexical detection latencies in linguistically complex sentences. Poster presented at the Cognitive Aging Conference, Atlanta, GA, USA.

2019

2018

2016

INVITED PRESENTATIONS

Leonard Learning Lab, Yale University 2024
Isbell IDEA Research Lab, University of California at Merced 2023
Divers-I-Tea Prospective Student Event, University of California at Davis 2020,21,22
Munakata Cognition in Context Lab, University of California at Davis 2019
Kaldy Baby Lab, University of Massachusetts at Boston

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Guest Lecturer, "Ecological Theories of Development"
PSC 140 - Developmental Psychology (~380 students)
University of California at Davis - Psychology Department
Professor: Yuko Munakata, Ph.D.

2024
(Spring)

Teaching Assistant
PSC 140 - Developmental Psychology (~380 students)
University of California at Davis - Psychology Department
Professor: Yuko Munakata, Ph.D.

SPECIALIZED TRAINING

ERP Boot Camp
University of California at Davis - Center for Mind and Brain
Instructors: Steven Luck, Ph.D. & Emily Kappenman, Ph.D.

2024

Siemens 3T MRI Safety and Operator Certified
University of California at Davis - Imaging Research Center

2019

RELEVANT SKILLS

Programming: R, Python, C#, Java, JavaScript, HTML, LaTeX, MATLAB, SAS, SPSS, SPM
Laboratory: EyeLink eye-tracker, SMI RED eye-tracker, Tobii eye-tracker, EEG, fMRI, fNIRS, audiometer, BeGaze, DataVyu, E-Prime, PSILiveCapture, PsychoPy, PsyScope X, Unity
Languages: English (Fluent), Spanish (Fluent), French (Modest), Japanese (Novice)

RELEVANT PROFESSIONAL LEADERSHIP & SERVICE

TO THE ACADEMY

NSF-GRFP Fellow Panelist
Applying for Fellowships (Virtual Panel)
Next Gen Psych Scholars Program

2021

Co-Organizer & Co-Moderator
Career Perspectives (Virtual Panel)
Flux: International Society for Developmental Cognitive Neuroscience

2020

Science Communications Committee Member
International Society for Developmental Psychobiology
Supervisor: Natalie Brito, Ph.D.

2020–22

Trainee Liaison Committee Member
Flux: International Society for Developmental Cognitive Neuroscience
Supervisors: Nim Tottenham, Ph.D. & Beatriz Luna, Ph.D.

2018–20

TO THE DEPARTMENT & UNIVERSITY

<i>Faculty Search Committee (Graduate Student) Member</i> Perception, Cognition, & Cognitive Neuroscience Area University of California at Davis - Psychology Department	2025–26
<i>Co-Vice President & Treasurer</i> Latinx Success Network for Graduate Students University of California at Davis	2024–
<i>PhD Graduate Student Panelist</i> Gradpathways Pursuing a PhD Workshop University of California at Davis - Graduate Studies	2023
<i>Sustaining and Advancing Anti-Racism Roundtable Panelist</i> Graduate Anti-Racism Symposium University of California at Davis - Graduate Studies	2022
<i>Anti-Racism Implementation Working Group Member</i> University of California at Davis - Graduate Studies	2022–23
<i>Committee on DE Educational Policy Student Representative</i> University of California at Davis - Computational Social Science DE	2021–23
<i>NSF-GRFP Fellow Panelist</i> Applying for the NSF-GRFP Panel University of California at Davis - Psychology Department	2021,22,23
<i>Diversity Recruitment Planning Committee Member</i> University of California at Davis - Psychology Department	2021,22
<i>PhD Graduate Student Panelist</i> Meet the Leaders in Mind and Brain Research Virtual Interview Series University of California at Davis - Center for Mind and Brain	2020,21
<i>Anti-Racism Advocacy Working Group Member</i> University of California at Davis - Graduate Studies	2020–21
<i>Co-Organizer & Volunteer</i> Neurodiversity Summit (Virtual Panel) University of California at Davis - M.I.N.D. Institute	2020
<i>DEI Mentoring Fellowship Selection Committee Member</i> University of California at Davis - Psychology Department	2020–22
<i>DEI Graduate Student Branch Committee Member</i> University of California at Davis - Psychology Department	
<i>PhD Graduate Student Panelist</i> Divers-I-Tea Prospective Student Event University of California at Davis - Psychology Department	2020,21,22
<i>Graduate Student Association Representative</i> University of California at Davis	2019–20

RELEVANT COMMUNITY OUTREACH & VOLUNTEER SERVICE

<i>Mentor</i> ASPIRE Program University of California at Davis - Psychology Department	2022–24
<i>Mentor</i> Next Gen Psych Scholars Program	2021–22
<i>Graduate Student Peer Mentor</i> University of California at Davis - Psychology Department	2020–
<i>Mentor</i> Letters to a Pre-Scientist Organization	2018–20
<i>Sanctuary Volunteer</i> First Unitarian Church of Providence	2018–19
<i>Science Volunteer</i> Brown University - Brain Fair	2017,18,19
<i>Mentor</i> Big Brothers Big Sisters Organization	2017
<i>Teaching Assistant</i> Brandeis University - Lemberg Children's Center	2015
<i>Student Volunteer</i> Key Club International	2009–11

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

- Association for Psychological Sciences
- Cognitive Development Society
- Cognitive Science Society
- Flux: The International Society for Developmental Cognitive Neuroscience
- International Society for Developmental Psychobiology
- Society for Research in Child Development

SUPERVISED TRAINEES/MENTEES

- Kaylie Gee, Undergraduate RA, University of California at Davis (2025–)
- Gahee Kwon, Undergraduate RA, University of California at Davis (2025–)
- Apiksha Misha, Undergraduate RA, University of California at Davis (2025–)
- Erin Larson, Undergraduate RA, University of California at Davis (2025–)
- Christopher Josue De La Cruz, Undergraduate RA, University of California at Davis (2025–)
- Sebastian Nieto, Undergraduate RA, University of California at Davis (2025–)
- Wyatt Sterzing, Undergraduate RA, University of California at Davis (2025–)
- Wesley Brown, Undergraduate RA, University of California at Davis (2025)
- Brooke Hoang, Undergraduate RA, University of California at Davis (2025)
- Adithya Srinivasan, Undergraduate RA, University of California at Davis (2024–)
- Rhea Mishra, Undergraduate RA, University of California at Davis (2024–)
- Andrea Navarro Macias, Undergraduate RA, University of California at Davis (2024)
- Abigail Liu, Undergraduate RA, University of California at Davis (2024–25)
- Vincent Chavez, Graduate PhD Student, University of California at Davis (2023–)
- Sanjana Parikh, Undergraduate RA, University of California at Davis (2023–25)
- Sreya Kumar, Undergraduate RA, University of California at Davis (2023–24)
- Brian Nguyen, Undergraduate RA, University of California at Davis (2023–)
- Catherine Gonzales, Undergraduate RA, University of California at Davis (2022–23)
- Niki Hosseinzadeh Khaligh, Undergraduate RA, University of California at Davis (2022–24)
- Sydney Rafael, Undergraduate RA, University of California at Davis (2021–22)
- Seigo Ninomiya, Undergraduate RA, University of California at Davis (2021–22)
- Joyan Cyrus, Undergraduate RA, University of California at Davis (2021–22)
- Mark Murakami, Undergraduate RA, University of California at Davis (2021–22)
- Kevin Vasquez, Undergraduate Student, University of California at Irvine (2021–22)
- Antoinette Banks, Undergraduate RA, University of California at Davis (2021–22)
- Brittany Villalpando, Undergraduate RA, University of California at Davis (2021–22)
- Swekha Sivakumar, Undergraduate RA, University of California at Davis (2021–22)
- Ankit Raghunath, Undergraduate RA, University of California at Davis (2021)
- Jace Kuske, Graduate PhD Student, University of California at Davis (2020–24)
- Ravneet Gill, Undergraduate RA, University of California at Davis (2019–21)
- Cassandra "Cassie" T-Pederson, Undergraduate RA, Brown University (2018–19)
- Maria Rodriguez, Undergraduate RA, Brown University (2017–19)

REFERENCES

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