

**Center for Cognitive Neuroscience
Duke University**

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May 14th 2018

Dear Colleagues,

I write in enthusiastic support of Ms. Christina Bejjani's application for the Psychonomic Society's Graduate Student Travel Award. Receiving this award would facilitate Christina's attendance at the 2018 annual meeting to present a poster on an exciting and novel line of research *on how we learn and transfer cognitive control settings*.

Christina is a 2nd-year graduate student in my lab and in the Dept. of Psychology & Neuroscience at Duke. She is an exemplary young investigator who is tackling a very novel and important question in the field of executive function/cognitive control. Namely, when we learn to associate a particular contextual cue with the need to engage top-down attentional control, would it be possible – and how? - to transfer this cue-control association to other stimuli that had previously been associated with that cue? Using a clever 3-phase experimental design, Christina has already established the basic feasibility of “control transfer” (Bejjani et al., 2018, *Psychon. Bull. Rev.*). In this new study, she now shows *how* control settings are transferred across related contexts. Specifically, she devised two very clever experiments to show that this type of transfer occurs through a *causal chain* rather than *common cause* structure, and is achieved through *mediated* rather than *model-free* learning. This important work thus pinpoints the precise conditions and strategies that give rise to cognitive control learning.

In addition to sharing this exciting research with her colleagues, attending the Psychonomics meeting would serve as an excellent opportunity for Christina to be exposed to top-class experimental psychology work over a wide range of topics. This would no doubt serve as a highly stimulating, formative experience at this early stage of her promising career trajectory. I hope you will grant Christina's application careful consideration. Please do not hesitate to contact me if further information is required.

Yours sincerely,

[redacted signature]

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