

Yemi Tchala

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EDUCATION

Hot Metal Bridge (HMB) Post-Baccalaureate Fellow

August 2024–May 2025

University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA

Department of Psychology

Advisor: Gabriella Alvarez, Ph.D.

B.A. Psychology with Honors

August 2024

University of Washington, Tacoma, WA

Magna cum laude | GPA 3.99

A.A. for Transfer

June 2022

Sound Puget Sound Community College, Olympia, WA

GPA 3.72

AWARDS

Hot Metal Bridge Fellowship

2024–2025

Institute for Innovation and Global Engagement Scholarship: \$1,000

2024

Division of Social, Behavioral, and Human Sciences Honors

2023–2024

Dean's List

2022–2024

Black Scholars Program: *Most Academically Improved*

2021–2022

Presidents List

2022

Black Scholars Program: *Lifelong Learner*

2020–2021

Vice Presidents List

2020–2021

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Race-related stressors; Structural Inequalities; Neural connectivity, function and age; Protective factors and resilience; Community-based research; Health Disparities

INVITED ARTICLE

Alvarez, G., Newbill, C., **Tchala, Y.** (2025) *Neural Pathways to Equity: Addressing Chronic Unsafty in Black Americans through Policy Change*. Invited article submission to the Policy Insights from Behavioral and Brain Sciences Special Issue on Health Sciences edited by Susan Fiske.

PRESENTATIONS

Tchala Y., Newbill C., Marsland A., Gianaros P., Alvarez G. (2025). *Exploring Racial Difference in Brain Aging in Allegheny County, Pittsburgh*. [Citation Poster Presentation]. Society for Biopsychosocial Science and Medicine Annual Meeting, Seattle, WA

Tchala Y., & Chaffee L. (2024). *Food for Thought: Challenging Narratives of Food Choice, Socioeconomic Status, and Time Scarcity*. [Poster Presentation]. Undergraduate Research Symposium, University of Washington, Seattle, WA

Tchala Y., Sky S., Hershberg R., Black S., Foster M., Turner J., Faidley J. (2023). *Photovoice: Access, Learning, Safety, and Informed Advocacy*. [Oral Presentation]. University of Washington Tacoma, WA

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

HMB Research Fellow

August 2024–May 2025

Neuroscience for Health Equity (NHE) Lab

University of Pittsburgh, Department of Psychology

Principal Investigator: Gabriella Alvarez, Ph.D.

Neural Correlates of Anti-Racism Training (NCAT) Study [R01]: Examined neural reactivity before and after anti-racism RECI training to assess change in networks underlying threat processing when presented with race-related stimuli.

- Conducted literature review, led conceptualization of fMRI tasks used to probe change in brain networks associated with threat
- Guided discussions of task methods within a multidisciplinary student and faculty team
- Mentored undergraduate research assistants

Segregation Impact on Health in Pittsburgh (SIHP) Study: Examined the health outcomes of people of color as a function of racial segregation among neighborhoods in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

- Conducted literature review to identify neighborhood and structural level segregation variables germane to the local community
- Identified and extracted census level data to measure variability in racial segregation
- Conducting secondary analysis using RStudio

Undergraduate Research Assistant

October 2023–July 2024

University of Washington, Division of Sciences and Mathematics

Research Advisor: Leighann Chaffee, M.A.

- Conducted literature reviews regarding:
 - Social factors, such as household income, race, environment, and time scarcity, through interdisciplinary perspective to form and test hypotheses on food choice

- Hedonic liking and motivational wanting of specific types of foods, identifying a gap in diverse researchers and samples within the Psychology of Eating field.
- Created poster discussing results, importance of diversifying data samples and interrogating traditional assumptions in food choice

Student Project Lead

June 2023–October 2023

University of Washington, Department of Psychology

Research Advisor: Rachel Hershberg, Ph.D.

- Used SHOWeD method to analyze qualitative data from photovoice project to improve community structural accessibility, inclusivity, and safety in a diverse sociodemographic context
- Delivered oral presentation on finding and created placards describing methods and data collection
- Scheduled meetings and organized teams to present in faculty-centered event

LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE

President, Students of Color Association

September 2019–July 2022

Olympia WA,

- Organized and facilitated club meetings, leading conversation about difficult topics
- Spoke at various assemblies on the effects of discrimination on student mental health
- Provided resources as well as personal and academic assistance to students struggling with homelessness and a variety of other situations
- Attended community conferences focused on diversity, equity, and inclusion

Founder, Olympia School District Student Mentorship Program September 2021– July 2022

Olympia WA,

- Led meetings organizing the mentor relationship between middle and high school students of color to facilitate a safe and supportive environment for learning
- Coordinated and presented at community events to garner support of the mentorship program
- Organized events to connect diverse high school students attending predominantly white intuitions
- Mentored incoming leadership board on program values and role responsibilities (2023-2024)

RELEVANT SKILLS

Microsoft Office Suite

Google Applications

Statistical Program for the Social Sciences (SPSS)

RStudio

CERTIFICATE

Mental Health First Aid

July 2023