

Stephanie L. Wert

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EDUCATION

University of California, Los Angeles Expected 2026
Doctoral Student, Psychology, Cognitive Neuroscience major
Advisor: Barbara Knowlton, Ph.D.

Northwestern University June 2017
Bachelor of Arts, Neuroscience & Psychology

FELLOWSHIPS & AWARDS

UCLA Edwin W. Pauley Fellowship 2021 – 2026
Role: Graduate Student
\$30,000

Northwestern University Grant for Ongoing and Active Learning Award 2020
Role: Research Assistant
\$1,600

RESEARCH & PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCES

University of California, Los Angeles September 2021 – Present
Principal Investigators: Barbara Knowlton, Ph.D. & Jesse Rissman, Ph.D.
Graduate Research Assistant

- Analyze behavioral data in a perceptual decision-making task to investigate how implicit and explicit learners interpret ambiguous information
- High-definition transcranial direct current stimulation (HD-tDCS) technician
- Trains undergraduate research assistants on experimental procedures and HD-tDCS administration
- Assisted in the experimental design of a study testing a causal role of the left ventrolateral prefrontal cortex (VLPFC) in the strategic encoding of value using HD-tDCS

Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine July 2020 – December 2021
Principal Investigator: Lauren Wakschlag, Ph.D.
Research Study Assistant

- Coordinated Northwestern cohort of COVID-19 & Perinatal Experiences (COPE) Study, a consortium of 7 universities & medical centers that conduct longitudinal assessments of COVID-19-related stress, birth and neurobehavioral outcomes, and biological specimens of mothers and children
- Led weekly COPE team meetings and managed resources, IRB materials, and the project's timeline
- EEG technician and certified MRI technician for neonates and children under age 5
- Managed financial orders and reimbursements

Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine

Principal Investigator: Joel Voss, Ph.D.

Part-time Research Study Assistant (due to COVID-19-related funding pause) July 2020 – September 2021

- Analyzed behavioral datasets on the effects of noninvasive brain stimulation on episodic memory
- Responsible for financial administration, including participant payments and reconciliation of accounts

Research Study Assistant

April 2019 – June 2020

- Functioned as primary data collector responsible for conducting neuropsychological tests, obtaining informed consent, taking physiological vitals, and executing detailed and lengthy experimental protocols with participants from 18-80 years old

- Transcranial magnetic stimulation technician and certified as an MRI technician for adults
- Implemented enhanced quality-assurance procedures yielding improved data accuracy
- Managed, processed, and analyzed behavioral datasets using R, Microsoft Access, and Excel
- Coordinated social media advertisement and scheduling of participants and experimental resources

Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine

Principal Investigator: Eva Redei, M.S., Ph.D.

Volunteer (due to funding reduction)

July 2018 – June 2020

- Led a project that investigates molecular differences between human lymphocyte and hippocampal tissue
- Responsible for experimental design, data collection and analysis, and writing the manuscript
- Managed and analyzed data and edited manuscripts for ongoing collaborations

Research Technologist I

June 2017 – June 2018

Undergraduate Research Assistant

June 2014 – June 2017

- Performed and troubleshoot data collection using advanced molecular biology and behavioral techniques
- Co-wrote, edited, and published 6 papers in peer-reviewed journals
- Collaborated with co-workers and administrators to improve scheduling and product delivery
- Conducted in-depth literature searches and analyzed multi-modal data sets
- Mentored, supervised, and trained 3 undergraduates in molecular biology and behavioral techniques

PUBLICATIONS

Wert, S. L. & Redei, E. E. Isoform analysis of blood transcriptomic biomarkers for depression in human lymphocytes and hippocampal tissue. (*in preparation*)

Krogh-Jespersen, S., MacNeill, L. A., Anderson, E. L., Stroup, H. E., Harriott, E. M., Gut, E., Blum, A., Fareedi, E., Fredian, K. M., **Wert, S. L.**, Wakschlag, L. S., & Norton, E. S. (2022). Disruption Leads to Methodological and Analytic Innovation in Developmental Sciences: Recommendations for Remote Administration and Dealing With Messy Data. *Frontiers in Psychology, 12*:732312. doi:10.3389/fpsyg.2021.732312

Hermiller, M. S., Dave, S., **Wert, S. L.**, VanHaerents, S., Riley, M., Weintraub, S., Mesulam, M. M., & Voss, J. L. (2022). Evidence from theta-burst stimulation that age-related de-differentiation of the hippocampal network is functional for episodic memory. *Neurobiology of Aging, 109*, 145-157. doi:10.1016/j.neurobiolaging.2021.09.018

Przybyl, K. J., Jenz, S. T., Lim, P. H., Ji, M. T., **Wert, S. L.**, Luo, W., Gacek, S. A., Schaack, A. K., & Redei, E. E. (2021). Genetic stress-reactivity, sex, and conditioning intensity affect stress-enhanced fear learning. *Neurobiology of Learning and Memory, 185*. doi:10.1016/j.nlm.2021.107523

Redei, E. E., Ciolino, J. D., **Wert, S. L.**, Yang, A., Kim, S., Clark, C., Zumpf, K. B., & Wisner, K. L. (2021). Pilot validation of blood-based biomarkers during pregnancy and postpartum in women with prior or current depression. *Translational Psychiatry, 11*(1), 68. doi:10.1038/s41398-020-01188-4

Luo, W., Lim, P. H., **Wert, S. L.**, Gacek, S. A., Chen, H., & Redei, E. E. (2020). Hypothalamic Gene Expression and Postpartum Behavior in a Genetic Rat Model of Depression. *Frontiers in Behavioral Neuroscience, 14*(190). doi:10.3389/fnbeh.2020.589967

Jung, S. H., Meckes, J. K., Schipma, M. J., Lim, P. H., Jenz, S. T., Przybyl, K., **Wert, S. L.**, Kim, S., Luo, W., Gacek, S. A., Jankord, R., Hatcher-Solis, C., Redei, E. E. (2020). Strain Differences in Responsiveness to Repeated Restraint Stress Affect Remote Contextual Fear Memory and Blood Transcriptomics. *Neuroscience, 444*, 76-91. doi:10.1016/j.neuroscience.2020.07.052

Meckes, J. K., Lim, P. H., **Wert, S. L.**, Luo, W., Gacek, S. A., Platt, D., Jankord, R., Saar, K., & Redei, E. E. (2018). Brain region-specific expression of genes mapped within quantitative trait loci for behavioral responsiveness to acute stress in Fischer 344 and Wistar Kyoto male rats. *PLoS ONE, 13*(3), e0194293. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0194293

- Lim, P. H., **Wert, S. L.**, Tunc-Ozcan, E., Ferreira, A., Marr, R. M., & Redei, E. E. (2018). Premature hippocampus-dependent memory decline in females of a genetic rat model of depression. *Behavioral Brain Research*. doi:10.1016/j.bbr.2018.02.030
- Tunc-Ozcan, E., **Wert, S. L.**, Lim, P. H., Ferreira, A., & Redei, E. E. (2017). Hippocampus-dependent memory and allele-specific gene expression in adult offspring of alcohol-consuming dams after neonatal treatment with thyroxin or metformin. *Molecular Psychiatry*. doi:10.1038/mp.2017.129
- Holl, K., He, H., Wedemeyer, M., Clopton, L., **Wert, S.**, Meckes, J. K., Cheng, R., Kastner, A., Palmer, A. A., Redei, E. E., & Solberg Woods, L. C. (2017). Heterogeneous stock rats: a model to study the genetics of despair-like behavior in adolescence. *Genes Brain and Behavior*. doi:10.1111/gbb.12410
- Mehta-Raghavan, N. S., **Wert, S. L.**, Morley, C., Graf, E. N., & Redei, E. E. (2016). Nature and nurture: environmental influences on a genetic rat model of depression. *Translational Psychiatry*, 6, e770. doi:10.1038/tp.2016.28

CONFERENCE POSTERS

- Wert, S. L.** & Redei, E. E. (2019, October). *Isoform analysis of blood transcriptomic biomarkers for depression in human lymphocytes and hippocampal tissue*. Society for Neuroscience Meeting, Chicago, IL.
- Mehta-Raghavan, N. S., **Wert, S. L.**, Morley, C., Graf, E. N., & Redei, E. E. (2015, October). *Nature and nurture in a genetic model of depression*. Society for Neuroscience Meeting, Chicago, IL.

BOOK CONTRIBUTIONS

- Regier, N. (2020). *Seeing People Through*. Berrett-Koehler Publishers. *Initial drafting of Facilitator's Guide for a book on personality-based leadership and communication techniques*.

SKILLS

- *Communication*: Scientific writing, native English speaker, conversational Spanish speaker, trained in Process Communication Model, coached in Leading Out of Drama, excellent interpersonal skills
- *Computer*: Microsoft Office Suite, Google Drive, Natural Forms, REDCap, StudyTracker, EndNote, OSF
- *Statistics/Programming*: R, SPSS, MATLAB command-line, GraphPad Prism
- *General laboratory*: Experimental design, literature searches, data management & analysis
- *Technological expertise*: Electroencephalogram (EEG), Transcranial magnetic stimulation (TMS), Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), Transcranial direct current stimulation (tDCS)
- *Human subjects data collection*: Obtaining informed consent, medical record review, recruitment & scheduling of participants, taking physiological vitals, NIH Toolbox, verbal/concept fluency task
- *Wet laboratory*: Wash/clean glassware, centrifuge, pipette, sterile techniques
- *Molecular*: Blood and tissue RNA isolation, RNA purification, reverse transcription, quantitative polymerase chain reaction (qPCR), primer design
- *Rodent data collection*: Handling, weaning, open field test, fear conditioning, social interaction, forced swim test, maternal behavior test, sex identification, brain extraction, injection administration, diet preparation, & anesthesia

STUDENT MENTORING

Northwestern undergraduate students with Dr. Eva Redei

- Wendy Luo '19 (undergraduate research assistant, Spring 2016 – Spring 2019, now an M.D. Candidate at the University of Chicago)
- Stephanie Gacek '19 (undergraduate research assistant, Spring 2017 – Spring 2019, now an M.D. Candidate at Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science)
- Sophie Jenz '20 (undergraduate research assistant, Summer 2017 – Spring 2020, now a doctoral student at Northwestern University Interdepartmental Neuroscience Program)

CERTIFICATIONS, AFFILIATIONS, & INTERESTS

- *Certifications:* Good Clinical Practice (GCP) Training, CITI Program: Human Biomedical Research, Youth Mental Health First Aid, Basic Life Support, Adult First Aid/CPR/AED
- *Affiliated organizations:* Society for Neuroscience, Cognitive Science Society, Alzheimer's Association
- *Research interests:* Cognitive neuroscience, decision-making, individual differences, learning, memory, motivation, attention, stress, depression, anxiety, Alzheimer's disease, aging, development, personality, affect, genetics, sleep, consciousness, flow