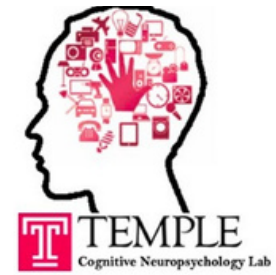


TEMPLE COGNITIVE NEUROPSYCHOLOGY LAB

December 2025 Newsletter



UPDATES FROM THE LAB!

This newsletter was prepared to keep members of our valued community up to date on our work, recent news, and events regarding our research. We hope you enjoy our fourth newsletter and reach out with suggestions for what you would like to see in future installments.

Email us at aging@temple.edu
or call 484-843-1321.

Since our last newsletter published in March 2025, we have exciting updates from the lab. Students presented at the Alzheimer's Association International Conference held in Toronto, ON in July 2025 and we have published several papers!

Almost all presentations and publications were based on data collected in our lab with the help of our community members, like you! We also have several other exciting lab updates to share.

Our Year in Research: What have we learned?

Building Healthy Habits in Midlife

- **Confidence matters.** We found that self-efficacy (feeling capable of making healthy choices) is one of the strongest predictors of actually engaging in brain-healthy behaviors like exercise, mental activity, and good sleep. Read the paper [here](#).
- **Who can benefit most?** Research shows that people who either want to stay healthy but don't know much about dementia or who feel discouraged and have unhealthy habits may benefit the most from dementia prevention programs. Read the paper [here](#).

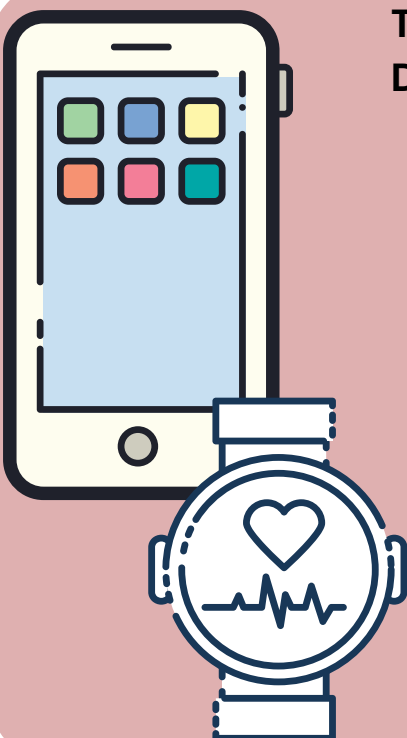
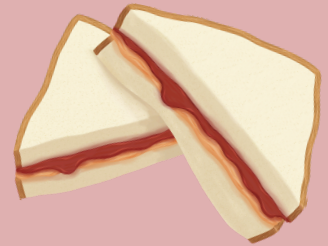


Our Year in Research: What have we learned?

(Continued)

Everyday Function: Detecting Changes and Supporting Independence

- ***Small changes in daily tasks.*** Even subtle inefficiencies, like taking extra steps or slowing down when making breakfast or lunch, can signal early changes in thinking skills for older adults. Read the paper [here](#).
- ***Virtual Kitchen Challenge (VKC).*** With college athletes, we tested a virtual touchscreen task where participants prepared meals. After practice, they performed more efficiently, and scores were linked with memory and problem solving skills. This tool may be useful for detecting subtle functional difficulties across different groups. Read the paper [here](#).
- ***Virtual Kitchen Intervention.*** We found that completing training on preparing a meal in a virtual environment may improve real-life performance, offering a new way to strengthen functional independence. Read the paper [here](#).



Technology to Support Independence and Early Detection

- ***Smartphone reminders.*** We piloted a personalized reminder app for people with memory difficulties. Participants reported it was easy to use and helped them complete daily tasks more successfully. Read the paper [here](#).
- ***Smartwatches and daily check-ins.*** Wearing a smartwatch and answering a short daily survey for four weeks proved both doable and acceptable for a diverse group of older adults. This opens the door for new approaches to tracking and supporting daily brain health in real time. Read the paper [here](#).

Highlights from the Alzheimer's Association International Conference!

Recent lab alums (Dr. Katherine Hackett and Dr. Rachel Mis) joined current lab members for happy hour!



Lab members Marina Kaplan, Moira Mckniff, Kimberly Halberstadter, and Sophia Holmqvist enjoying the AAIC Bites and Beats reception!

Lab members presented 7 posters at the conference

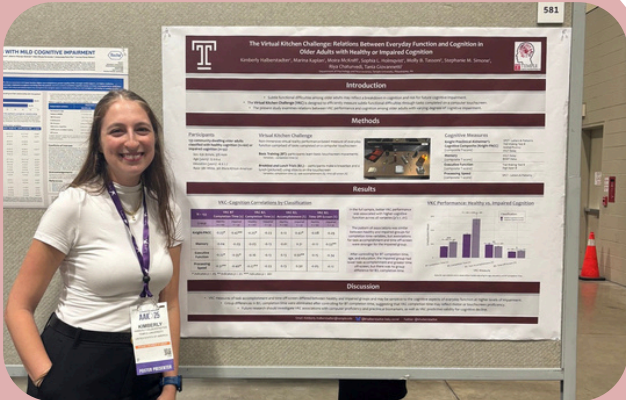
The U.S. POINTER clinical trial results were revealed at the conference! Older adults at risk for cognitive decline who participated in a structured lifestyle intervention that targeted the following health behaviors had improvement in their cognition:

- **Physical activity:** 30–35 minutes of moderate-to-intense aerobic activity four times a week, plus strength and flexibility exercises twice a week.
- **Cognitive activities:** Computer-based brain training program three times a week for 30 minutes, plus regular engagement in other intellectually challenging and social activities.
- **Nutrition:** Adherence to the MIND diet, which emphasizes dark leafy greens, berries, nuts, whole grains, olive oil and fish, and limits sugar and unhealthy fats.
- **Health monitoring:** Regular check-ins on blood pressure, weight and lab results.

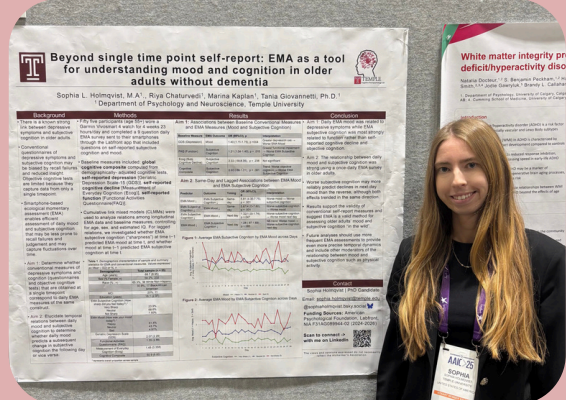
Read full study results [here](#).



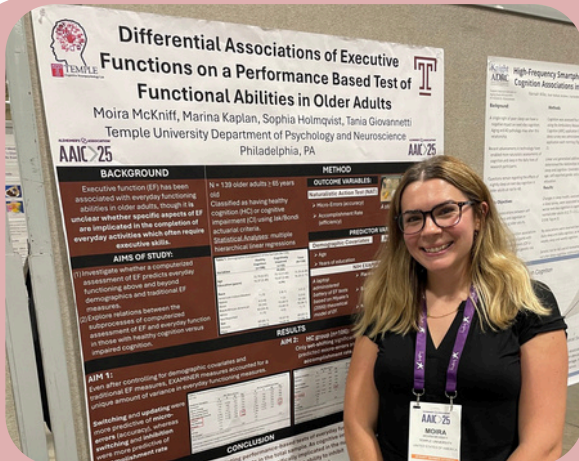
Poster Presentations at the Alzheimer's Association International Conference!



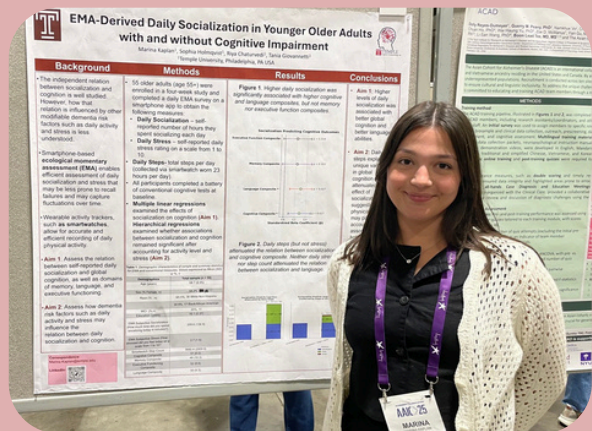
Kimberly's research revealed that better performance on the **Virtual Kitchen Challenge** was related to better cognition. Those with impaired cognition had longer completion times, lower task accomplishment, and greater time off-screen than those with healthy cognition.



Sophia's work described how worse mood and subjective cognition (measured by daily EMA) were bidirectionally associated and related to self-report measures of the same construct from her **Smartwatch Study**. Essentially, you are likely to feel very sharp if your mood is happy at the daily level.

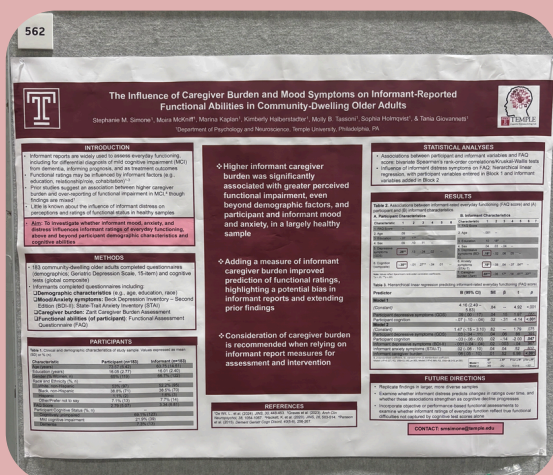


Maira's work demonstrated that working memory and the ability to inhibit responses on a computerized task predicted real-kitchen task performance. This suggests that boosting working memory and inhibition of competing demands may improve everyday functioning.

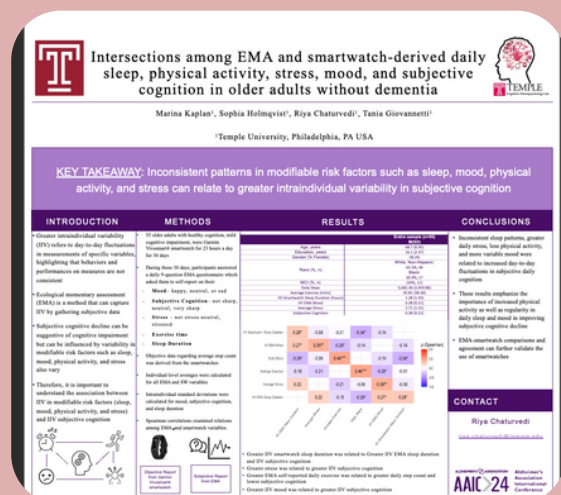


Marina found that higher levels of daily socialization were associated with better overall cognition and language abilities from our **Smartwatch Study**. Physical activity had a greater benefit on global cognition than socialization.

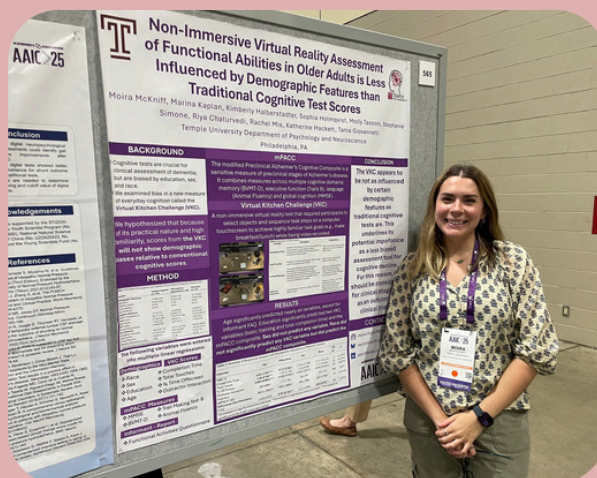
Poster Presentations at the Alzheimer's Association International Conference!



Stephanie's work demonstrated that there is a relation between high caregiver burden and over-reporting of functional impairment in a sample of older adults without cognitive impairment. Because of this, it is important for clinicians to consider how burden experienced by a collateral reporter may impact their rating of a loved one's daily functioning.



Riya's work suggested that inconsistent sleep patterns, greater daily stress, less physical activity, and more variable mood were related to increased day-to-day fluctuations in subjective cognition from the **Smartwatch Study**. With this, increased physical activity, and regularity in daily sleep, and mood may be important in improving subjective cognitive decline.



Moira's project revealed that performance on the **Virtual Kitchen Challenge** was not influenced by demographic features as compared to traditional cognitive testing, suggesting the VKC may provide a more accurate assessment for cognitive decline.



aging@temple.edu

484-843-1321

Lab Kudos/Happenings!

Congrats to Kimmy Halberstadter and Moira McKniff (Current 3rd Year PhD students) for defending their pre-dissertations and being awarded their Master's Degrees!

Welcome to our new undergraduate research assistants: Nico Vorkunova, Morgan Dame, Lily Bingaman, Liv Dufour, Ire Choi, Krina Patel, and our new master's student, Sophia DiConza!

Congrats to undergraduate research assistants Sarah Wilgus, Julia Maganti, Beccy Mosheyev, Flynn Hanley, and Zidata Tony-Ogbata on graduating from TU!

Riya Chaturvedi (Recent Undergrad Alum) began her job as a Research Coordinator at Penn FTD Center!



Penn Frontotemporal
Degeneration Center

Congrats to Molly Tassoni for defending her dissertation and starting her APA internship year at Emory School of Medicine!

Congrats to Stephanie Simone for graduating and officially becoming Dr. Simone! She is now a Postdoctoral Fellow at University of Michigan School of Medicine



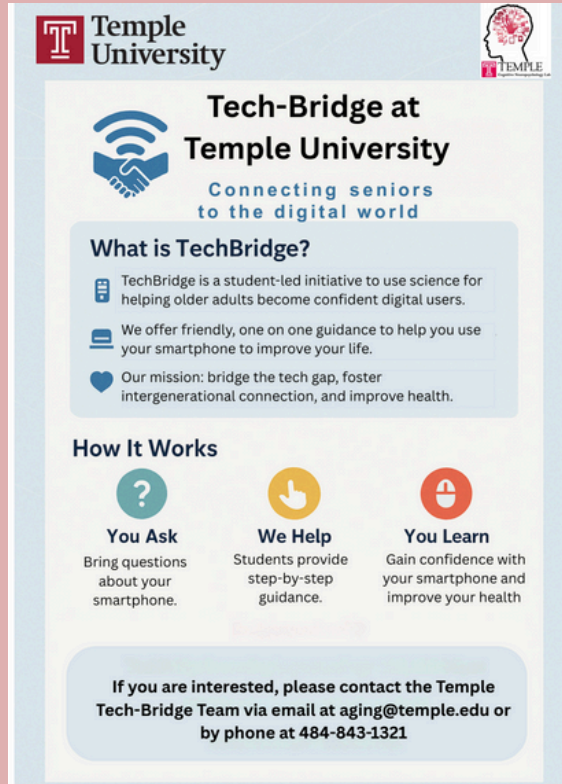
aging@temple.edu

484-843-1321

Outreach Events

We have continued our community partnerships with
Community Enrichment Fitness Network (CEFN) and
Penn's Village

- We launched a formal initiative spawning from our past smartphone clinics, **Tech-Bridge**, to connect undergraduate students with older adults to assist with smartphone-related tasks
- We have hosted several events at local senior centers across the Philadelphia area






Temple University

Tech-Bridge at Temple University
Connecting seniors to the digital world

What is TechBridge?

- TechBridge is a student-led initiative to use science for helping older adults become confident digital users.
- We offer friendly, one on one guidance to help you use your smartphone to improve your life.
- Our mission: bridge the tech gap, foster intergenerational connection, and improve health.

How It Works

		
You Ask Bring questions about your smartphone.	We Help Students provide step-by-step guidance.	You Learn Gain confidence with your smartphone and improve your health

If you are interested, please contact the Temple Tech-Bridge Team via email at aging@temple.edu or by phone at 484-843-1321



Penn's Village



aging@temple.edu

484-843-1321

Ways you can help!



Participate in our studies.

We have studies for people with healthy thinking skills as well as people with memory difficulties. [Sign up to learn more!](#)



Stay connected.

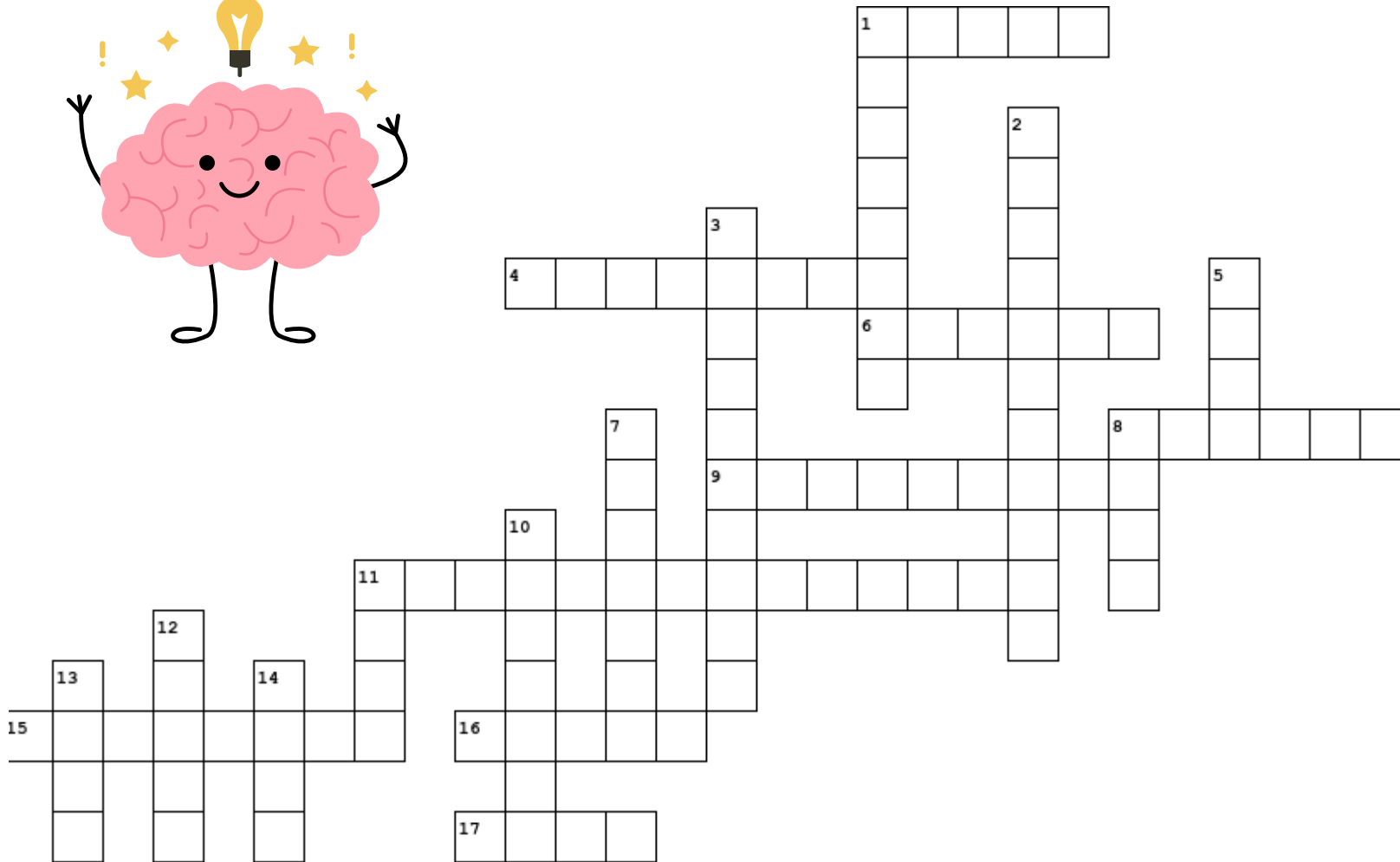
Follow us on [Facebook](#) and Twitter @TUCogneuropsych to get future newsletters and learn about future presentations. Learn more about current projects [here](#).



Donate.

Consider supporting student research expenses and projects by making a donation. Reach out to learn more.

Try our Crossword!



Across

1. _____ stone
4. the kind of girl Madonna is
6. "That's the most _____ case scenario."
8. an unlikely place to find an actual ship in
9. to strengthen with additional material
11. a meeting with someone, with "dis" in front of it
15. a parent, sibling, cousin, aunt, uncle,...
16. where you'd find a lot of pumpkins
17. "To plant a _____ is to believe in a tomorrow."

Down

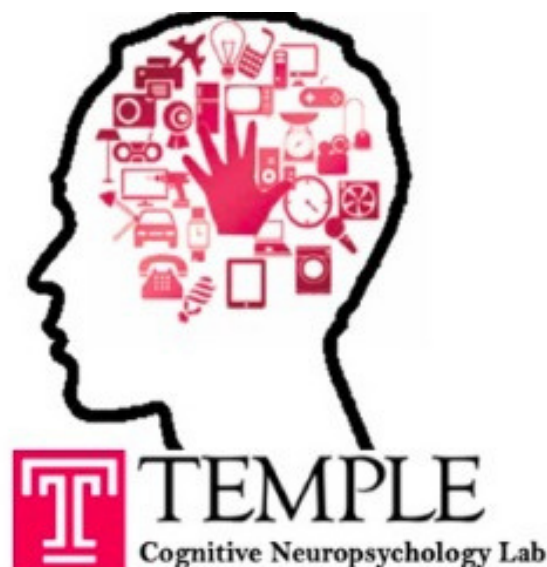
1. a homophone for the largest ape
2. a verb that signifies "in loving memory"
3. "You're really blowing this out of _____!"
5. a musical about impoverished young artists and a certain epidemic crisis
7. a novel with more pictures than words
8. a homophone for the Beauty in "Beauty and the Beast"
10. the meat found in most Wawa breakfast sandwiches
11. what you should probably save for a wedding
12. what you may be sitting on right now
13. what summer is notorious for
14. not a husband, but a _____

You could either print it out, or click here to do it digitally:

CLICK HERE

THANK YOU

**We appreciate your interest in our lab.
Special thanks to those of you who have
participated in our studies. We couldn't do
our work without you!**



aging@temple.edu

484-843-1321