

## 2018 Talent Development Competition Awardees

**Title:** Can acute alcohol effects serve as a risk factor for alcohol use disorder and internalizing disorders comorbidities?

**Jesus Chavarria**

**Supervisor:** Jurgen Rehm

**Abstract:** Alcohol use disorders and internalizing disorders (i.e., anxiety and depression) often co-occur and are associated with significant impairment, poor quality of life, and worse treatment outcomes. Despite this impairing combination, very limited research has been conducted in a way that can test what may cause these co-occurring illnesses. This project plans to fill this gap by testing theories related to the co-occurrence of internalizing and alcohol use disorders. Specifically, we will attempt to determine whether 1) anxiety/ depression symptoms predict more drinking problems or 2) problematic drinking leads to depression/anxiety problems at a 5- and 10-year follow-up. Further, as research has shown that alcohol use can temporarily change, improve, and/ or mask mood states, this project will also explore whether the way people respond to drinking alcohol contributes to the co-occurrence of internalizing and alcohol use disorders over a 10-year period. To test these theories, data from the ongoing Chicago Social Drinking Project (CSDP) will be used. The CSDP consists of data from 161 light and heavy social drinkers who have been followed and re-tested at 5 and 10-years. As part of the postdoctoral fellowship, supervision and mentorship on data analysis, data interpretation, and clinical impact of the results will be provided by Drs. Jurgen Rehm, Samantha Wells, and Andrea King. Ultimately, the goal of this project is to uncover information that can inform the development of better treatments for people struggling with co-occurring alcohol and internalizing disorders. Additionally, this project will allow the applicant to contribute and collaborate with the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health scientists and set him up for a career as an independent addiction scientist.