

# MILWAUKEE TRAUMA OUTCOMES PROJECT (MTOP)



## SUMMARY

The Milwaukee Trauma Outcomes Project (MTOP) seeks to advance research and community prevention efforts pertaining to trauma and the development of Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) among racial and ethnic minorities communities in Milwaukee.

## DESCRIPTION

The Milwaukee Trauma Outcomes Project (MTOP) seeks to advance research and community prevention efforts pertaining to trauma and the development of Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), particularly among racial and ethnic minorities living in Milwaukee. MTOP includes interdisciplinary scholars partnering to further understand the social and biological factors that contribute to PTSD. The structural inequities and increased exposure to traumatic experiences, including community violence and racial/ethnic discrimination, contribute to racial/ethnic health disparities. Still, our understanding is limited regarding how societal, environmental, cultural, and biological factors interact to cause mental health problems or promote resilience.

## MILESTONES

1. Convene group of MTOP researchers (completed)
2. Establish research partnerships with community stakeholders (6-8 months)
3. MTOP researchers will prepare and begin data collection for hospital research study (10-12 months)

## ABOUT OUR TEAM

- Lucas Torres**, Ph.D., Psychology, Marquette University (PI)  
**Terri deRoos-Cassini**, Ph.D., Trauma & Critical Care, Medical College of Wisconsin (Co-PI)  
**Jennifer Knight**, M.D., Psychiatry & Behavioral Medicine, Medical College of Wisconsin (Co-PI)  
**Christine Larson**, Ph.D., Psychology, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee (Co-PI)  
**Panna Codner**, M.D., Trauma Surgery, Medical College of Wisconsin/Froedtert Hospital (Co-PI)

MTOP researchers represent vastly different disciplines and areas of study including mental health disparities, trauma, neuroscience, cancer, trauma surgery, and public health. The common thread among the MTOP research group is a commitment to reducing disparities, an interest in understanding the underlying mechanisms that contribute to PTSD and other health conditions, and the desire to meaningfully impact individuals and communities. In this way, we can address trauma from “molecules to community engagement” and develop new insights regarding the social determinants of health and thereby moving closer to reducing disparities.

## BEYOND BOUNDARIES

The development of MTOP aligns closely with the mission of Marquette University, namely the search for truth, the discovery and sharing of knowledge, and the fostering of excellence. MTOP is designed to foster excellence in scholarship and collaboration as well as to promote leaders in the field of research across many disciplines. MTOP’s “molecules to community engagement” approach is critical to gaining new knowledge that is meaningful to local Milwaukee residents and beyond. In this way, MTOP can serve as a model for future centers and institutes seeking to develop and implement scholarship that integrates basic science principles with community engagement.