



Todd Stang

University of Calgary Studentship Award



Todd is a second-year PhD student at the University of Calgary. He grew up in a rural community on the border of Alberta and Saskatchewan. The mysteries of the brain, with its vast amount of unknown information, interested Todd. This led him to conduct a summer research project related to multiple sclerosis (MS) after his second year of university. He found he loved research and decided to pursue it as a career. He completed his bachelor's and master's degrees at the University of Saskatchewan, where his research focused on neuron cell death in MS.

He moved to Calgary to begin his PhD in Dr. Patrick Whelan's lab in May 2024. His research focuses on a specific brain region called the A13. This region, found deep in the brain, has dopamine neurons that do not die in Parkinson's disease. His research involves discovering the specific function of these A13 dopamine neurons. The A13 serves many functions, as it has many inputs and outputs. One of these functions includes locomotion. He is also conducting basic science research in a rodent model of Parkinson's disease to evaluate whether stimulating the A13, a new treatment target, can better treat disease symptoms. Although this early research is years away from adoption into routine treatment, this research is providing a crucial foundation for future clinical studies. In his free time, Todd enjoys discovering the beauty of his new home city and exploring the mountains with his family.