The 2015 IAIR Early Career Award:
Nicholas Rule, University of Toronto

As "a professional interdisciplinary organization dedicated to the understanding and improvement of intercultural relations through world-class social science research," the International Academy of Intercultural Research (IAIR) recognizes and honors the achievements of young, developing scholars -- those who already early in their careers have demonstrated substantial contributions in moving the fields of intercultural and cross-cultural research forward into the future.

Every two years, promising candidates (whose achievements have occurred within a six-year period after receiving their terminal degree) are nominated by IAIR Fellows and reviewed by the Early-Career Award Committee. At each biennial conference (since 2005), the most deserving intercultural relations researcher is recognized for their outstanding early contributions.

This year's award winner is Dr. Nicholas Rule. For a young scholar, already within 5 years of his PhD, which he completed in 2010 at Tufts University in Boston, Massachusetts (under the mentorship of Nalini Ambady), he has become Assistant Professor of Psychology at the University of Toronto and is the Canada Research Chair in Social Perception and Cognition. This is not his first award, having already been recipient of a Canada Research Chair-Tier II award and the Early Researcher Award from the government of Ontario.

His research in social perception and social cognition focuses specifically on person perception, person construal, and social categorization, all important themes for intercultural relations. Using a wide range of methods, from micro-level fMRI studies of brain function to large cross-cultural, cross-national comparisons, he has studied perceptually ambiguous groups (social groups whose markers are not visually or perceptually obvious; e.g., sexual orientation, religion, political affiliation), how we predict outcomes based on appearance and nonverbal cues (particularly those manifest in the face), and cross-cultural differences in perception, cognition, and social behavior.

Members of the Early Career Award Committee commented that though all three nominees were strong this year, Nick was the clear, consensus winner, based on the quantity and quality of his work since receiving his PhD (one counted at least 38 refereed articles!), the breadth of his scholarship, and the extensive recognition that he has received from other organizations. One member noted, "Focusing on basic questions in cross-cultural psychology (at a deep, below the skin level), his work is clear, rigorous, interesting and highly novel. I believe his work will have considerable impact on the field."

Another committee member said, "Nicholas Rule's research appears to be more in quantity, more programmatic, and more theoretical and original, focusing on cultural neuroscience which is at the forefront of psychological research and intercultural relations." Dan Landis also noted that, "Nick is a leader…in the field of social and cultural neuroscience" which Dan believe will in just a short time, if focused on, become a major domain of our field. Nick also contributed a chapter in Warnick and Landis's forthcoming *Springer Handbook of Neuroscience in Cultural Contexts*. Therefore we congratulate Nicholas Rule as this years IAIR Early Career Award winner!

Steve Kulich, Committee Chair