

# NEURO NEWS

## News from Admissions, Recruiting and Neuroscience Initiative

### \*\*\*From the Admissions Committee Chair - Jeanne Frederick\*\*\*

The NP admissions process is underway. **Drs. Yingbin Fu, Julie Korenberg and David Krizaj** have completed their commitments and we appreciate their past service. As the deadline was moved two weeks earlier, to December 31st, all applications have been reviewed. Candidates invited to interview possess varied backgrounds, e.g., molecular dynamics of GPCR activation, hybridoma cell line construction, voltage- and patch clamp electrophysiology, optogenetics and rodent fMRI imaging. Current committee members include: **Hilary Coon (Psychiatry), Mike Deans (Otolaryngology), Chuck Dorval (Bioengineering), Jeanne Frederick (Ophthalmology), Chris Gregg (Neurobiology & Anatomy), Bryan Jones (Ophthalmology), Jason Shepherd (Neurobiology & Anatomy), Karen Wilcox (Pharmacology & Toxicology), Ayako Yamaguchi (Biology) and Jun Yang (Ophthalmology)**. NP faculty are invited to meet the candidates at the JCC reception on February 13th--so save the date!

### \*\*\*From the Recruitment Committee Chair - Megan Williams\*\*\*

Thanks to all students and faculty that participated at our table at the Society for Neuroscience Graduate Fair and ENDURE event. **Jeffrey Yarch** (Chico State Univ.) and **Drew Haack** (Univ. of British Columbia) went on successful Alma Mater visits this fall and **Rebecca Pfeiffer** represented the Neuroscience Program at the annual SACNAS meeting. This year we established a new student committee: the public relations committee! If you like making flyers, taking photos, and talking to prospective students, this is the committee for you. Sign up with Tracy or on committee sign up day at the start of the new school year.

### \*\*\*\*New Program Manager for Neuroscience Initiative\*\*\*\*

The Neuroscience Initiative was launched in Fall 2014, with the goal of uniting University of Utah academic, translational, and clinical neuroscience communities towards a better understanding of the brain in health and disease. To learn more about the Neuroscience Initiative, visit <http://www.neurogateway.utah.edu/>.

Becca Parker, PhD, who graduated from the Neuroscience Program in 2012, has returned to the University of Utah as the initiative's program manager. As a graduate student, Becca studied chronic intracortical microstimulation and recording using microelectrode arrays under the mentorship of Drs. Bradley Greger and Richard Normann in Bioengineering and Dr. Paul House in Neurosurgery. Following graduate school, she completed a one-year postdoc at the University of Pittsburgh, studying the use of microelectrode arrays in dorsal root ganglia under the guidance of Drs. Douglas Weber and Robert Gaunt. For the past year and a half, she taught health-related courses such as anatomy and physiology as a full time science faculty member at Klamath Community College in Oregon.

As the Neuroscience Initiative program manager, Becca will assist interdisciplinary teams with proposal development, administer pilot grants, coordinate working groups and symposia, provide oversight for outreach activities including Brain Awareness Week, and serve as the primary contact for the Neuroscience Initiative. Feel free to send any questions her way. You can find her in EIHG 3140, call her at 801-585-0343, or email her at [parker.becca@utah.edu](mailto:parker.becca@utah.edu).

### \*\*\*\*FACULTY AWARDS\*\*\*\*

**Stefan Pulst (Neurology, Chair)** was awarded a senator Jacob Javits award for neuroscience from NINDS.

## \*\*\*BAW NEWS\*\*\*

Brain Awareness Week will be March 16-21, 2015. We will again have the opportunity to finish up the week with a day of public outreach at the Leonardo. We have already had several schools contact us to request a visit. I hope you are all as excited about going to the schools, as the students and teachers are to have us come!

## \*\*\*NEW POST-DOC GROUP\*\*\*

The postdoctoral fellows are an important cog in the neuroscience community and we would like to encourage increased support for these young scientists. As such, we are looking to start a neuroscience postdoctoral group that draws from fellows in neuroscience labs across the campus. The purpose of this group will be to organize events, both social and academic, where issues specific to postdocs can be discussed. For example, career development, job searches, grant writing, work load management etc.

**Jason Shepherd** will be the Faculty point person for the group, but we need a couple of enthusiastic postdocs to help organize/launch the group. Please email him if you are interested: Jason.Shepherd@neuro.utah.edu

## \*\*\*ALUMNI NEWS\*\*\*

### Dan Ryskamp:

**Ryskamp, D.A., Redmon, S., Jo, A.O., and Križaj, D.** (2014) TRPV1 and endocannabinoids: emerging molecular signals that modulate mammalian vision. *Cells* 3(3):914-938. PMID:25222270

**Ryskamp, D.A., Jo, A.O., Frye, A., Vazquez-Chona, F., MacAulay, N., Thoreson, W.B., and Križaj, D.** (2014) Swelling and eicosanoid metabolites differentially gate TRPV4 channels in retinal neurons and glia. *Journal of Neuroscience* 34(47):15669-15678. PMID:25411497

**Benedict Albeni:** is contributing monthly articles now on aging and/or Alzheimer's Disease to an online magazine called, HealthGreatness. The December issue has an article on Concussions and Alzheimers Disease. See the link below for access: <http://healthgreatness.com/concussions-alzheimers-disease-2/> as well as a new link: <http://healthgreatness.com/women-alzheimers-disease/>

Nafez, S., Oikawa, K., Odero, G.L., Sproule, M., Ge, N., Schapansky, J., Abrenica, B., Hatherell, A., Cadonic, C., Zhang, S., Song, X., Kauppinen, T., Glazner, G.W., Grilli, M., Czubryt, M.P., Eisenstat, D.D., and **Albeni, B.C.** (2014) Early growth response 2 (Egr-2) expression is triggered by 2 NF- $\kappa$ B activation. *Molecular and Cellular Neuroscience*. In press.

**Tim Simeone** received a New Investigator Award from Creighton University School of Medicine in Fall, 2014. This award is given to a full-time faculty member who has achieved a significant record of research, as evidenced by publications and securing intramural and/or extramural grant support early in their academic career. Fellow faculty member and wife, Kristina, received this award in 2011 making them the first married couple to be honored in Creighton University School of Medicine history.

## \*\*\*Other Important Dates\*\*\*

**Feb. 13:** Neuroscience Program Recruitment. Our annual reception devoted to recruiting student candidates for the upcoming academic year will be held at the Jewish Community Center, 2 North Medical Drive, Friday, February 13th from 5:00-9:00pm. There will be, of course, the usual amounts of food and drink **AND chocolate fountain!**

**March 16-21:** National Brain Awareness Week. Tiffanie Dahl and Sarah Redmon are co-chairs of the committee this year.

**May 13:** Annual Neuroscience Student Symposium  
Student organizer: Michelle Reed

**October 30:** Annual Snowbird Symposium  
Student organizers: Maryam Bijanzadeh and Jaycie Loewen

## \*\*\*SEMINAR SERIES 2014-2015\*\*\*

Remaining seminars for this year:

**January 20:** Kimberly Huber, Ph.D., U TX Southwestern Medical Center

**March 17:** Mary M. Heinricher, Ph.D., OHSU

**April 21:** Edward M. Callaway, Ph.D., The Salk Institute

see more details at:

<http://neuroscience.med.utah.edu/Meetings.html>

## \*\*\*ACADEMIC DEFENSES\*\*\*

Since the last issue of NeuroNews, the Neuroscience Program congratulates the following students on successfully passing their qualifying exams: **Rishi Alluri (Rose lab), Tiffanie Dahl (Bonkowsky lab), Donn Van Deren (Capecchi lab)** and **Yueqi Wang (Shcheglovitov lab)**.

and dissertation proposals; **Maryam Bijanzadeh (Angelucci lab), Daniel Epstein (Yureglun-Todd lab), and Meredith Gibbons (Wilcox lab)**.

## \*\*\*NEW FACULTY\*\*\*

Since the last issue of NeuroNews we have added the following new faculty:

**Paul S. Bernstein, M.D., Ph.D., Professor of Ophthalmology & Visual Sciences.**

Research: Biochemistry and biophysics of nutritional interventions against ocular disease; carotenoid and omega-3 fatty acid metabolism and function in the human retina; genetics of macular and retina dystrophies and degenerations.

**Hilary Coon, Ph.D., Research Professor of Psychiatry.**

Research: Genetics of autism, suicide risk, nicotine dependence, and obesity; application of statistical methods to genetic data.

## \*\*\*RECENTLY PUBLISHED\*\*\*

**Ambati, B.K. and Cahoon, J.M.** (2014) Rejuvenating clinician-scientist training. *IOVS*, 28;55(3): 1853-1855. PMID 24681976 doi: 10.1167/iovs.14-14167.

Baladi, M.G., Nielsen, S.M., **Umpierre, A., Hanson, G.R., and Fleckenstein, A.E.** (2014) Prior methylphenidate self-administration alters the subsequent reinforcing effects of methamphetamine in rats. *Behavioural Pharmacology*, 25(8): 758-765. PMID: 25325290. PMCID: PMC4216622 [Available on 2015/12/1]

Joice, A.C., Raman, K., **Mencio, C.**, Quintero, M., Brown, S., Nguyen, T., and **Kuberan, B.** (2015) Enzymatic synthesis of heparan sulfate and heparin. *Methods in Molecular Biology (Clifton, N.J.)*. **Kuberan, B., Nakato, H., & Desai, U.R. Eds.** Vol 1229, pg 11-20. Pubmed ID: 25325939

**Marc, R., Pfeiffer, R., and Jones, B.** (2014) Retinal prosthetics, optogenetics, and chemical photoswitches. *ACS Chemical Neuroscience*, Oct 15;5(10): 895-901 Pubmed ID: 4210130

**Mencio, C., Swarup, V., Soliai, M. and Kuberan, B.** (2015) Synthesis of sulfur isotope labeled sulfate donor, 3'-phosphoadenosine-5'-phosphosulfate. *Methods in Molecular Biology (Clifton, N.J.)*. **Kuberan, B., Nakato, H., & Desai, U.R. Eds.** Vol 1229, pg 37-42. Pubmed ID: 25325942

**Mencio, C., Garud, D., Kuberan, B. and Koketsu, M.** (2015) Synthesis of selective inhibitors of heparan sulfate and chondroitin sulfate proteoglycan biosynthesis. *Methods in Molecular Biology (Clifton, N.J.)*. **Kuberan, B., Nakato, H., & Desai, U.R. Eds.**, Vol 1229, pg 69-78. Pubmed ID: 25325945

Robinson, J.D., Howard, C.D., **Pastuzyn, E.D.**, Byers, D.L., **Keefe, K.A.**, and Garris, P.A. (2014) Methamphetamine-induced neurotoxicity disrupts pharmacologically evoked dopamine transients in the dorsomedial and dorso-lateral striatum. *Neurotoxicity Research*, (26)2, 152-167. PMID: 24562969.

**Umpierre, A.D., Remigio, G.J., Dahle, E.J., Bradford, K., Alex, A.B., Smith, M.D., West, P.J., White, H.S., and Wilcox, K.S.** (2014). Impaired cognitive ability and anxiety-like behavior following acute seizures in the Theiler's virus model of temporal lobe epilepsy. *Neurobiol. Dis.*, 64:98-106. PMID: 24412221

**West, P.J., Saunders, G.W., Remigio, G.J., Wilcox, K.S., and White, H.S.** (2014) Antiseizure drugs differentially modulate theta-burst induced long-term potentiation in C57BL/6 mice. *Epilepsia*, 55(2): 214-23. PMID: 24447124

## \*\*\*POSTDOCTORAL POSITION\*\*\*

A postdoctoral position is available in the laboratory of **Dr. Timothy Simeone (NP'03)** at Creighton University School of Medicine. This position is for a highly motivated individual with 0-2 years postdoctoral experience. The successful candidate will participate in two NIH funded projects: 1) investigating the role of mitochondria in synaptic, cellular and network excitability in epilepsy; 2) investigating the role of hypocretin neurons in sleep co-morbidities associated with epilepsy. Our laboratory employs a combination of in vitro and in vivo molecular/cellular, histochemical, electrophysiological, optogenetic and behavioral approaches in our experiments.

Qualified applicants must have a Ph.D. degree and experience with electrophysiological techniques. Evidence of strong written and verbal communication skills, organizational skills, as well as the ability to work collaboratively within a team environment is required. To apply, please email a curriculum vitae, a statement of research interests and career goals, and a list of at least three references of whom we can ask for letters of recommendation to [timothysimeone@creighton.edu](mailto:timothysimeone@creighton.edu).

Do you have something to submit in the next issue of NeuroNews?  
Send your information to: Tracy Marble, Program in Neuroscience  
401 MREB, FAX: 581-4233, or e-mail: [tracy.marble@hsc.utah.edu](mailto:tracy.marble@hsc.utah.edu)