I am very pleased to welcome 11 new graduate students (including 1 international student) into the Neuroscience Graduate Program this fall:

Jason Cooperrider (The Ohio State University)
Danielle Friend (University of Portland)
Patrick Gordon (University of Minnesota)
Scott Lauritzen (University of Texas, Austin)
Renee Madsen (University of Utah)
Adam McPherson (Clark University)
Caitlin Mencio (Texas Christian University)
Whitney Oswald (Utah State University)
Elissa Pastuzyn (Michigan State University)
Trang Pham (Midland Lutheran College)
Christina Rossi (Boston University)

Congratulations to the first year students Patrick Gordon, and Caitlin Mencio and the second year students Robert Duncan, Andrea Schwager, Elliot Smith and James Tucker for their appointment to the NIH Neuroscience Training Grant.

Our Admissions committee reviewed more than 100 applications and personally interviewed 23 applicants this past spring. In addition, we greatly appreciate the help from additional Neuroscience Faculty who participated in interviewing the candidates. Special thanks to the current graduate students Sean Flynn (White Lab), Andrea Schwager (Hoffman lab), and Elliot Smith (Greger Lab) who hosted the candidates and helped organizing the recruitment days.

And special thanks to Tracy Marble, our Program Coordinator, who is invaluable for organizing our admission and recruitment activities. Lastly, I thank all those who presented posters at our successful recruitment reception last February.

For our Admissions efforts in 2009, the Admissions Committee will continue to serve (however, additional members are welcome!). Furthermore, we have a great service opportunity for one of our junior faculty: we are looking for a Chair of Recruitment to enhance our recruitment efforts for future candidate students (e.g. for identifying opportunities to contact US and minority undergraduates in colleges and universities, for attending career day events for undergads etc.). Finally, please, mark your calendar for two important events: the 2008 Welcome Reception for our new students will be held on **Thursday, September 25th** at the JCC. The 2009 Recruitment Reception with dinner and poster presentations will be held **February 13th, 2008** (Friday of President’s Day weekend).

Sabine Fuhrmann, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
Ophthalmology and Visual Sciences
Chair, Neuroscience Admissions Committee

***NEW FACULTY***

Stefan-M. Pulst, M.D., Professor and Chair of Neurology
Research: Inherited diseases of the nervous system with an emphasis on spinocerebellar ataxias and Parkinson disease.

John Hoffman, M.D., Professor of Radiology
Research: Modern imaging techniques.

Trent Volz, Ph.D., Research Assistant Professor of Pharmacology & Toxicology
Research: Bioanalytical chemistry, neuropharmacology, and enzyme kinetics to study neurotransmitter transporter proteins.

Joshua Bonkowsky, M.D., Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Pediatrics/Division of Pediatric Neurology
Research: Zebrafish models of human disorders.

Yong Wang, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Surgery/Division of Otolaryngology/Head & Neck Surgery
Research: Cellular physiology of neurons in the normal and dysfunctional mammalian central auditory system.
Asim Beg (Jorgensen lab): moved from New York City where he was doing a postdoc at Columbia University and has accepted a tenure-track Assistant Professor position at the University of Michigan in the Department of Pharmacology in Ann Arbor, MI. His lab’s focus will be on the molecular mechanisms of synapse formation and neural connectivity.

Polly Dhond (Halgren lab): received a 5-Year NIH-K01 award and became an Assistant in Neuroscience MGH and Instructor Harvard Medical School.

Jon Danaceau (Lucero lab): is now the Operations director of the Sports Medicine Research and Testing Lab, a World Anti-Doping Agency accredited anti-doping laboratory. They have been accredited by WADA for almost two years (since Nov., 2006) and recently separated from the University and moved into new space at 560 Arapeen Drive in Research park.

Recent Publications:


Josh Cameron (Zhang lab): received a postdoctoral training grant in the Molecular Bases of Eye Diseases training program run by the Schepens Eye Institute (Harvard Medical School). The title of his project is Gene Expression Profiling, Retinoic Acid, and Early Eye Development in Zebrafish.

Arie Mobley (Lucero lab): received a Postdoctoral Training Grant Fellowship in the Neurobiology Dept. at Yale University. She also received a $1200 Travel award to attend the July meeting of the International Symposium on Olfaction and Taste.


Matthew Schmolesky (Leventhal lab): and a colleague, Dr. Barbara Trask, are co-teaching Introduction to Neuroscience to undergraduates at Weber State University this semester. This is the first official neuroscience course to be taught at WSU and may soon be followed by others (e.g. Cellular and Molecular Neuroscience, Neuroscience Laboratory Methods, etc.).


****STUDENT AWARDS****

James Anderson (Marc lab) has been selected as a 2008-2009 University of Utah Graduate Research Fellow. He receives a $15,000 stipend.

Michelle Stamm (Lucero lab) was awarded a student travel award to the International Symposium on Olfaction and Taste - funded by the Polak Foundation and part of The Association for Chemoreception Sciences.

Katherine Zukor (Odelberg lab) has been selected to participate as a predoctoral trainee in the NIH Developmental Biology Training Grant. The primary criteria for selection was: (1) scientific excellence and (2) relevance of the proposed research to the general field of developmental biology.

Her fellowship will begin between September 1 and October 1, 2008 and is for two years, with the potential for a third year based on satisfactory progress. The training grant will pay $20,772 of her stipend plus health insurance and tuition. In addition she is allotted funds for books, journals and/or supplies, and travel.

****FACULTY AWARD****

Karen Wilcox just started a new R21 from NINDS entitled “Astrocytes and temporal lobe epilepsy.”


Neurons of the week:

**RECENT PUBLICATIONS CONTINUED:**


***Brain Awareness Week 2008***

Last March we held another successful Brain Awareness Week. The Governor Jon Huntsman officially declared March 10th – 16th as Utah Brain Awareness Week 2008. We were also awarded a generous grant from the Henry W. and Leslie M. Eskuche Foundation, for which we are very grateful. This year we visited nearly a thousand kids in grades K-12. We brought our BAW program to Northwest Middle School, Juan Diego Catholic High School, Judge Memorial High School, Horizon Elementary, Hawthorne Elementary, the YWCA and the University Partnership. A few new activities were added to our program. In addition to the GFP expressing zebrafish we also had some C. elegans for the students to look at through a microscope. Becca and Shushruth worked to put together a new station devoted to optical illusions, which was a big hit with all ages. We will be sure to keep this a regular part of our program in years to come! We also partnered for the first time with the Utah Science Center for one of their Science in Scope. Becca and Shushruth worked to put together a new station devoted to optical illusions, which was a big hit with all ages. We will be sure to

Brain Awareness Week is only possible with all the help from our volunteers and contributors! This is truly a community effort and we thank everyone who pitched in this year. We hope you will join us again next year in this effort to inspire young students to think more about science!

The Brain Awareness Week Committee

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