NEURO NEWS

Volume 23, No. 1  FALL 2018

****2018 Incoming Students****

Nathaniel Ghena, Central Michigan University
Madelyn Haller, Colgate University
Tatsuya Hayashi, CUNY Hunter College
Ave Niazi, University of South Florida
Nguyen Pham, California State University, San Marcos
Aniket Ramshekar, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor
(MD/PhD student)
Daniel Rivera, Florida International University
Christopher Rudzitis, Muhlenberg College
Danlei Wang, Nanyang Technological University

****ACADEMIC DEFENSES****

Since the last issue of NeuroNews, the Neuroscience Program congratulates the following students on successfully passing their qualifying exams: Jenifer Einstein (Shepherd lab), Dominic Skinner (Lane lab), Arnulfo Tunon-Ortiz (Lamb lab) and Charlotte Magee (Fleckenstein lab);

and dissertation proposals: Christine Wnukowki (Jorgensen lab) and Ariadne Penalva (Douglass lab),

and dissertation defenses: Anthony Umpierre (Wilcox lab), Leonardo Parra (Jorgensen lab), Yueqi Wang (Scheglovitov lab), Jaycie Loewen (Wilcox lab) and Jace King (Anderson lab).

****STUDENT AWARDS****

Laura Bell (Scheglovitov lab) is the recipient of a NSF fellowship. This is a 3 year award and will cover her stipend as well as cost-of education allowance.

Arnulfo Tunon-Ortiz (Lamb lab) has been awarded a Research Supplement to Promote Diversity for 3 years through NINDS.

Kyle Jenks (Shepherd lab) was accepted and attended the Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory Imaging the Structure and Function of the Nervous System course.

****FACULTY AWARDS****

The Rothenfluh lab obtained a new NIH/NIAAA R01 grant: AA026818 MECHANISMS OF ALCOHOL-INDUCED PLASTICITY MEDIATED BY ARF6, 8/10/2018 – 5/31/2023

****SEMINAR SERIES 2018-2019****

September 18: David Sulzer, Ph.D., Columbia U.
October 16: Jennifer Li, Ph.D., Rowland I., Harvard
November 20: Aaron Batista, Ph.D., U. of Pittsburgh
January 15: Bita Moghaddam, Ph.D., OHSU
February 19: Axel Brunger, Ph.D., Stanford U.
March 19: Patrick Kanold, Ph.D., U. of Maryland, College Park
April 16: Yun Zhang, Ph.D., Harvard U.

see more details at:
https://neuroscience.med.utah.edu/meetings.php

****Other Important Dates****

Sept. 6: Neuroscience Program: Meet the New Students Reception
Jewish Community Center; 5-8PM

Sept. 25: Bioscience Symposium

Oct. 19: Annual Neuroscience Program Symposium @ Snowbird
“Of Mind and Math: Big Data Analysis and Computational Approaches in Neuroscience”

https://neuroscience.med.utah.edu/snowbird.php

This year’s invited speakers:
Nancy Kopell, Ph.D., Boston University
Adrienne Fairhall, Ph.D., University of Washington
Brad Almone, Ph.D.: Sandia National Laboratories
Jeffrey Anderson, Ph.D., University of Utah
Alla Borisuyk, Ph.D., University of Utah
Neda Nategh, Ph.D., University of Utah

The Intermountain Chapter of the Society for Neuroscience has already placed a call for abstracts for the poster session: Abstract deadline for poster submissions: October 5, 2018, 5:00PM

Nov. 3-7: The Society for Neuroscience Annual Meeting
held this year in San Diego, CA.

Feb. 8, 2019: Neuroscience Program Recruitment Weekend.
****ALUMNI NEWS****


*These authors contributed equally to this manuscript.

Benedict Albensi: is now the Chair of a national DSMB for a multinational Alzheimer study in Canada and Australia. He has also been elected to the Senate of the University of Manitoba representing the Rady Faculty of Health Sciences. This is a 2 year term.


Jared Nielsen: is now an Assistant Professor of Psychology and Neuroscience at Brigham Young University.


* equal contributions


****NEW FACULTY****

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

Neda Nategh, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Electrical & Computer Engineering.

Research: Computational understanding of the brain’s dynamic vision functions, neuro-inspired artificial vision.

****News Worthy****

So this happened right after the last issue of NeuroNews:

Great press for Jason Shepherd’s Cell paper [Link]

U of U release [Link]

The Atlantic [Link]

Newsweek [Link]

Nature [Link]

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3 neuroscience-focused Bioengineering graduate students were awarded the NSF fellowship: Kara Johnson and Shana Black from the Butson lab, and Marta Iversen from the Rabbitt lab.

Jenna Novy (undergrad in Shepherd lab) was awarded a UROP.

Daniel and Mindy Lathen (Rothenfluh lab) welcomed Brook Olivia on January 6th.
****Postdoctoral Position - Angelucci lab****

A postdoctoral position is immediately available in Dr. Alessandra Angelucci’s laboratory at the Moran Eye Institute, University of Utah. The postdoctoral fellow will be part of several large projects funded by two NIH R01s, an NIH BRAIN initiative and 2 NSF grants aimed at understanding the structure and function of feedforward and feedback circuits in the visual cortex of the non-human primate (macaque and marmoset), as well as developing novel technologies for simultaneous large scale optogenetic and electrical recordings. Technical approaches involve use of state of the art viral tracing methods, circuit specific optogenetics combined with electrode array recordings and in vivo 2-photon calcium imaging.

The ideal candidate would have strong quantitative and programming (e.g. Matlab, Python, C…) skills, and experience in electrophysiology and or/ in vivo 2P imaging.

The salary is commensurate with experience and postdoctoral NIH pay scales in the US. The positions entail an excellent health care and recreational benefits package. Salt Lake City offers unparalleled opportunities for outdoors recreation including world class skiing, rock climbing, mountain biking, river rafting and hiking. The city is consistently ranked among the most livable cities in America and is also a very affordable place to live.

To apply, please send a CV and name of 2-3 referees to alessandra.angelucci@hsc.utah.edu.

****Postdoctoral Position - Rothenfluh lab****

The Rothenfluh lab is seeking a postdoctoral fellow. We are looking for someone detail-oriented, conscientious, and motivated. The lab studies the molecular mechanisms of addiction using Drosophila as a model organism. Prior experience in any of these areas would be preferred beneficial: neuroscience, live imaging, high-throughput –omics analysis. Contact: adrian.rothenfluh@hsc.utah.edu

****Neuroscience Initiative (NSI) Highlights ****

1. We partnered with NBA to recruit Dr. Jim Heys.
2. We had a successful Brain Awareness Week (BAW) this year. The event was headed by Christie Wnukowski (Jorgensen lab).
3. We helped sponsor a graduate recruitment video. Project lead was Chris Gregg.
4. Our NSI Seed Grants helped Alex Shcheglovitov secure federal funding for over $2 million (R21 + RO1). Project Title: “Patient-specific “mini brains” as a new model system for pediatric epilepsy research”. Research Team - Alexander Shcheglovitov along with Robert Bollo and Jay Spamparan to from Neurosurgery. NSI Seed Grant Amount - $100,000.

Our 2018 NSI Seed Grant was awarded to the research team of Sophie Caron - Biology, Jason Shepherd - Neurobiology & Anatomy, Mark Metzstein, Human Genetics, Adrian Rothenfluh – Psychiatry

Project Title: “Arc-capsids: new way of neuronal communication during synaptic plasticity and learning” NSI Seed Grant Amount - $50,000.
5. We helped sponsor Jason Shepherd’s Synapse Interest Group seminar series.

In 2018, the NSI at the University of Utah funded five one-year pilot collaborative seed grant projects for up to $50,000 in research areas that align with the NSI mission of deepening our understanding of the brain and transforming this knowledge into innovative solutions for patient care. The NSI links basic, translational, and clinical research in five disease pillar areas:

1) Demyelinating & Neuroimmune Diseases
2) Mood & Behavior Disorders
3) Neural Injury & Recovery
4) Neurodegenerative Disorders
5) Episodic Brain Dysfunction

Seed grant applications focusing on “Neuroinflammation and It’s Role In Diseases” were also encouraged.


In 2017, Tom Lane led a team to secure a Multiple Sclerosis Collaborative Research Center Grant by the National MS Society. NSI provided support for proposal preparation and submission. The MS Center grant involves faculty from Pathology and Neurology, and is directed towards understanding MS progression and repair using viral models.

Info on StrokeNET:
University of Utah Health Sciences Center (UUHC) Stroke Center was chosen to be one of 25 Regional Coordinating Centers in the NIH funded Stroke Trials Network (StrokeNet). The team recently went through a competitive renewal and secured funding for the next grant period of 5 years. The Stroke Center leads multidisciplinary stroke care and research in the Mountain West region and has consistently achieved the highest quality awards offered by the American Heart & Stroke Association.

In 2018, Baldomero Olivera along with his colleagues were awarded a $10M DOD grant. The grant was directed towards studies on cone snail venom and how it might be transformed into a safer alternative to opioid painkillers. The initial work that provided the foundation for this research grant was funded through the University of Utah’s NSI Collaborative Pilot Seed Grant Program.

NEW NSI WEB PAGE: 
https://uofuhealth.utah.edu/neuroscience-initiative/about.php
****RECENTLY PUBLISHED****


****Non-Invasive Neurostimulation Program****

The Non-Invasive Neurostimulation (NIN) Program will be launching this fall. The NIN facility offers University of Utah researchers the opportunity to incorporate Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation (TMS) into their human neuroscience research. The NIN research facility features a state-of-the-art TMS stimulator, neuronavigation system, and TMS-compatible electroencephalography (EEG).

This program will apply cutting-edge TMS research methods to achieve two major objectives:

1. **Precision science.** Create new knowledge about how the human brain works.
2. **Personalized treatment.** Explore novel, personalized therapeutic and diagnostic approaches for neurological and psychiatric diseases.

The NIN Program is a collaborative effort between the Department of Psychiatry and the Scientific Computing and Imaging (SCI) Institute. The program is led by Christopher Butson, PhD, Associate Professor of Biomedical Engineering and a faculty member in the SCI Institute, and Brian Mickey, MD, PhD, Associate Professor of Psychiatry.

The facility is located in Research Park at the University Neuropsychiatric Institute (UNI) and will be available for use by all University of Utah investigators.

More information can be found at: https://medicine.utah.edu/psychiatry/nin/

Please contact Dr. Butson (butson@sci.utah.edu) or Dr. Mickey (brian.mickey@hsc.utah.edu) with questions.