NEUROSCIENCE QUARTERLY

SPRING 2008

"My advice to students and postdocs is simple: if you love what you are doing, just keep working and studying, and try to be part of ventures that will change the way in which science is viewed in our societies."

— SfN President Eve Marder

IN THIS ISSUE

New SfN Document To Help Universities Protect Researchers

A bomb left on the doorstep of a researcher's home. A bomb placed under the car of another. Another researcher's home flooded and then firebombed only months later. These acts happened over the course of 18 months in and around Los Angeles; all directed at University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) scientists who use animals in their research. But animal rights extremism is by no means limited to UCLA or even the U.S.

Eleven SfN members reported attacks against them in 2007, the highest annual total to date. According to the Foundation for Biomedical Research, more than 90 attacks were directed at scientists in 2007, most by animal rights extremists, and the majority targeted were neuroscientists. "The continuing intimidation and threats of violence to which researchers have been subjected are beyond the bounds of acceptable discourse and debate," said Jeffrey Kordower, SfN Committee on Animals in Research (CAR) chair.

SfN Takes Action

With a large percentage of SfN's 38,000 members using animals in their research, the Society continues to offer support, mainly through the activities of CAR, to members targeted by anti-research extremists. *Best Practices for Protecting Researchers and Research*, released February 6, seeks to encourage universities to enhance researcher safety

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Neuroscience 2008: A Rich Program in an International City

Neuroscience 2008, the Society for Neuroscience's 38th Annual Meeting, will be held November 15–19 in Washington, DC. Scientists from around the world will come together at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center for the world's largest venue for emerging neuroscience.

Scientific Program Includes New Topics and Lecturers

Neuroscience 2008 continues to be a premier educational event for neuroscientists. This year's line-up of Presidential Special Lectures are leading experts in the field who are working to understand circuits and how they produce behavior. Their work maintains a connection to basic science while nurturing the translational and medical components of research:

- Allison Doupe, University of California, San Francisco: Basal ganglia circuits involved in song learning in songbirds
- Leslie Griffith, Brandeis University: Circuits involved in sleep and sleep regulation

Continued on page 4 . . .

SOCIETY FOR NEUROSCIENCE

Message from the President

Making the Best of Bad Times

Eve Marder,
SfN President

"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times . . ." so Dickens wrote at the beginning of his *Tale of Two Cities*, which I read as a teenager. As I sit in my office looking at a gray late winter day with snow recently fallen, this quote popped into my head. Now I am musing about why and how our brains do such remarkable feats of memory and association. But the quote seems apt at this moment, as it is both the best of times and worst of times for neuroscience. It is the best of times because we are making unparalleled advances in understanding how the brain works. It is the worst of times (well, not the worst, but pretty bad) because the present funding and political climates are discouraging scientists, young and old. And many laboratories doing wonderful work are losing momentum and personnel at exactly the time when the potential for major advances is accelerating.

I am wishing that spring will bring not only new flowers and leaves on the trees, but new hope for the future of science, scientists, students, the environment, the economy, and world peace. In the U.S., the late winter/early spring is a time that students are choosing PhD programs, and departments are carrying out faculty searches. This year, we are watching, with more than usual interest, the outcomes of the primaries that will result in our candidates for president of the U.S. This year, the U.S. economy is floundering, with ripples around the world. National Institutes of Health and National Science Foundation funding rates are dangerously low, and students and postdocs are asking themselves whether to continue in science or move into other careers. The long-term damage resulting from this period will not be seen for many years, if too many of our brightest and most idealistic young scientists are discouraged and opt out of careers in science. Just as incessant news articles reporting economic recessions can become self-fulfilling prophesies, incessant conversations about our

The long-term damage resulting from this period will not be seen for many years, if too many of our brightest and most idealistic young scientists are discouraged and opt out of careers in science.

Society Receives Inaugural Golgi Medal

SfN and member Paul Greengard were each named the recipients of the first Golgi Medals given by the Brescia (Italy) Golgi Foundation for contributions to the field of neuroscience. The medal, established to honor Camillo Golgi, co-winner of the 1906 Nobel Prize in Medicine, was awarded at a March ceremony at the Italian Embassy in Washington, DC.

SfN President Eve Marder accepted the award from Pier Luigi Streparava (right), president of the foundation. Member Jennifer Warner-Schmidt of Dr. Greengard's lab accepted the award on his behalf and discussed emerging work on protein p11, its role regulating serotonin, and potential implications for Parkinson's disease. The medal will be displayed at SfN headquarters along with a numbered lithograph of Golgi's "sulla fina struttura dei bulbi olfattorii." It will be near the Cajal mural at SfN that recognizes Golgi's Nobel co-winner, Santiago Ramón y Cajal.

dire funding and job problems may have undue negative influence on our younger generation of scientists. My advice to students and postdocs is simple: if you love what you are doing, just keep working and studying, and try to be part of ventures that will change the way in which science is viewed in our societies.

The spring is also the time of Brain Awareness Week and numerous other advocacy actions that the Society for Neuroscience undertakes, such as our Capitol Hill Day on Tuesday, April 22, in Washington, DC. This year's Capitol Hill Day involves not only SfN committee leaders and regular members, but also six SfN chapter representatives and young scientists from the Washington, DC area. These actions have multiple goals to: a) convince our governments that investment in science will bring both benefits for human health and for our economic well-being, b) convince our fellow citizens that they should support the use of their taxes for the pursuit of science, c) educate our citizens about the brain, and d) promote science education at all levels of schooling.

Most of us became neuroscientists because we were deeply curious and fascinated by how complex behaviors emerge from large groups of neurons. Problems like consciousness, how we learn and remember, how animals behave, or why some of us are depressed, schizophrenic, or autistic drew us into neuroscience. Then, we were captured by a problem or set of problems strongly enough to make a life of studying neuroscience. As a graduate student, when I first put a microelectrode into a rhythmically bursting neuron, I felt as if I had a direct pipeline into the secret of life. Part of that wonder remains with me more than 35 years later as I walk back into my laboratory and watch my students record from the same class of neurons. How do we retain that sense of wonder in ourselves and use it effectively in our advocacy and educational efforts? How do we combine the business of doing science, the business of writing and reviewing papers and grants, the business of convincing others that we are generating new knowledge of value to them, while holding on to the reason we became scientists?

We are, after all, in the business of generating new knowledge, disseminating that knowledge, and educating the young and old. I was very taken by a recent editorial in the February 15, 2008 issue of *Science* by AAAS Chief Executive Officer Alan Leshner, which redefined for me the goals of advocacy. Leshner advocates for what he calls "Glocal Science Advocacy," by which he means that we should all take every opportunity to talk to our friends, families, taxi drivers, and other casual acquaintances about science and its importance and benefits, and then to mobilize a larger segment of the non-science community in support of science. I would like here to endorse this effort. Of course, we

The real change in how science and education are viewed and funded in every country around the world may require millions of grass roots conversations with our friends and neighbors.

at SfN encourage everyone to take part in special events, such as Brain Awareness Week and lobbying our governmental representatives. And we at SfN were pleased to join the call for Science Debate 2008, a grassroots effort by scientific societies and scientists to bring science to the forefront in the upcoming presidential election. (see www. sciencedebate2008.com) This is hopefully the beginning of a new set of advocacy strategies that will bring issues of science and science policy into the forefront of conversation about governance across the globe. But the real change in how science and education are viewed and funded in every country around the world may require millions of grass roots conversations with our friends and neighbors.

People are intrinsically curious about their brains. Use that curiosity to explain what we as neuroscientists are learning about brains in animals and humans. If all 38,000 members of the Society for Neuroscience dedicated themselves to having multiple conversations with people in all walks of life about the wonder and importance of research on the brain, we will be explaining to those who fund our work exactly why their tax dollars, euros, and yen are dedicated to the mysteries of the brain. ■

Neuroscience 2008, *continued from page 1*

- Catherine Dulac, Harvard University: Genetics and circuits in olfactory development and behavior in mice

- Carol Barnes, University of Arizona: Circuits involved in learning behaviors in monkeys and rodents

The Dialogues between Neuroscience and Society speaker will be Mark Morris, American modern dancer, choreographer, and director. Morris, who is famed for his creative choreography and the integration of movement and music, plans to offer a professional choreographer and dancer's unique perspective on the relationship between body, mind, motion, and rhythm, and his views on proprioception and the precise timing of movement. Separately, members of Morris' dance company will also be at the meeting to show the results of a pioneering project that uses dance therapy to help Parkinson's patients. Morris was named a Fellow of the MacArthur Foundation in 1991, and is a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

Check the Neuroscience 2008 Web site regularly for updates at www.sfn.org/am2008. As you plan your days, be sure to schedule a visit to the exhibit hall. There you will find the scientific poster presentations and one of the largest assemblies of vendors, publishers, and NIH institutes.

Pre-conference Workshops

Even before the conference officially begins, learning opportunities are available. Be sure to register for them early, as space is limited.

Short Courses: The Society will offer three short courses: Optical Control of Neural Excitability, organizer: Haig Keshishian; State of the Art in Immunocytochemistry and *In Situ* Hybridization, organizer: Gloria Hoffman; and Quantitative Analytic Methods for Complex Neural Systems, organizer: Partha Mitra. Each daylong course consists of a series of lectures by faculty, followed by afternoon breakout sessions. Course fees include a syllabus booklet, breakfast, and lunch.

Neurobiology of Disease Workshop — Traumatic Brain Injuries

This workshop is co-organized by Marc Dichter and Michael Selzer. Lectures will be followed by discussion groups on a range of cutting-edge topics. A reception at the close of the day will give students and faculty the opportunity to interact and explore remaining questions informally. A $35 registration fee includes breakfast, lunch, and reception.

Beyond the Scientific Program

In addition to the plentiful learning opportunities, Neuroscience 2008 will include events that highlight the intersection of science and society, allowing you to find common ground with others in the field and expand your professional network.

Animals in Research Workshop — How To Educate and Engage Administrators about Animal Research
In developing *Best Practices for Protecting Researchers and Research*, a set of proactive steps universities can take to enhance researcher safety and security (see page 1), the Committee on Animals in Research (CAR) and SfN staff recognized the benefits for Society members to learn methods of engaging institutional leadership. This session is designed to help scientists initiate discussions with their university administrators on what is often considered a sensitive topic.

The workshop will last two hours, include breakfast, and promote one-on-one interaction and individual guidance. Speakers will include CAR Chair Jeff Kordower and several university speakers providing insight on research administration, security, and media relations. Additionally, an SfN member who has presented the document to his/her administration will share his/her experience and provide recommendations on approaching university leadership. The session will allow for significant Q & A.

Brain Awareness Campaign Event
Brain Awareness Week (BAW) is one of the most visible public education efforts undertaken by neuroscientists worldwide (See page 7). The 2008 Brain Awareness Campaign Event will feature a presentation by SfN President-Elect Tom Carew. A networking reception and poster session highlighting recent BAW events and ideas will follow the short formal program. Both new and experienced organizers of BAW and other public education programs are encouraged to attend the event.

A Celebration of Women in Neuroscience
The Committee on Women in Neuroscience (C-WIN) will host its third annual luncheon at this year's meeting. The luncheon will feature SfN Past President Huda Akil and will honor women leaders in neuroscience. Space is limited and registration is free, but required. To register for the luncheon, contact Katherine Hoffman at khoffman@sfn.org.

Public Advocacy Forum — The Elections: The Winner Is…Science?
This two-hour forum, featuring a panel of leading SfN members, Washington insiders, and science policy experts, will offer a unique opportunity to discuss the election outcomes and the direct impact on science policy.

The Public Advocacy Forum at Neuroscience 2007 was well attended with over 300 attendees—Andy Grove, former CEO of Intel and *Time* magazine's Man of the Year in 1997, discussed the promise of engaging business leaders in the research process. This year promises to be an energetic and successful forum in Washington, DC.

Additional Savings on Housing for Students and Category II Members

The Society will once again offer an online forum to connect students and Category II members interested in sharing hotel accommodations in Washington, DC.

Eligible members will receive an e-mail inviting them to join the online forum where they can create profiles and correspond with one another, exchanging up to 70 personal messages through the forum, eliminating the use of personal e-mail accounts. Participants must use their individual discretion and accept sole responsibility for their use of the forum. SfN will monitor content in the online forum and reserves the right to remove any content that is not directly related to the purpose of the forum. Look for details in your e-mail inbox.

About the City

The city of Washington, DC is a one of a kind meeting venue. The 2.3 million square feet Walter E. Washington Convention Center is located in the heart of the U.S. capital, conveniently serviced by the DC Circulator buses and the Metro.

While you are in DC, be sure to take in the city's historic landmarks or schedule a walk-through tour of the National Institutes of Health (NIH)—the primary U.S. Federal agency for conducting and supporting medical research—headquartered in nearby Bethesda, Md.

Washington is home to more than 170 embassies, which will be the venues for many embassy-sponsored receptions. During your stay, enjoy the multicultural diversity of the city through its heritage centers, restaurants, and entertainment opportunities. Over a dozen museums, such as the National Museum of Natural History and other Smithsonian Institution museums, offer free admission. Some private museums require a ticket purchase, such as the National Museum of Women in the Arts and the International Spy Museum. Other entertainment opportunities include sporting events at the nearby Verizon Center, a ballet at the Kennedy Center, performances of the National Symphony Orchestra, or diverse ethnic cuisine at local restaurants and eateries.

Neuroscience 2008, *continued from page 5*

Save Money, Register as Early as July 15

Join this one-of-a-kind professional gathering. Advance member registration opens on July 15.

Registration Fees

Fees vary based on registration categories and when registration is received. (see table at right)

- **Advance Fees** are available as of July 15 at noon EDT for members and July 22 at noon for nonmembers. Closes online September 26.
- **Online Discount Fees** are available September 27 at midnight EDT and continues throughout the annual meeting.
- **On-site, In line**—Opens November 14, 2 p.m. EDT in the Walter E. Washington Convention Center ■

Registration Category	Fees (U.S. $)		
	Advance	Online Discount	On-site, In line
Member	$230	$280	$330
Member, Category II	$115	$140	$165
Student Member	$50	$60	$85
Student Member, Undergraduate	$40	$40	$40
Student Member, Category II	$25	$30	$43
Nonmember	$415	$465	$515
Student Nonmember	$100	$110	$135
Guest	$20	$30	$40
CME Accreditation	$20	$30	$40

Note: Single day registration is not available.

2008 SfN Award, Prize, and Program Deadlines

Award, Prize, or Program	Deadlines
Peter and Patricia Gruber International Research Award in Neuroscience	April 28
Young Investigators Award	April 28
Career Development Award	May 12
Julius Axelrod Prize	May 12
Louise Hanson Marshall Special Recognition Award	May 12
Jacob P. Waletzky Award for Innovative Research in Drug Addiction and Alcoholism	May 12
Graduate Student Travel Awards	May 27
Postdoctoral Travel Awards	May 27
Neuroscience Scholars Program	June 2
Science Educator Award	June 6
Childcare Supplement Award	June 9
Chapters Graduate Student Travel Awards	June 13
Chapters Postdoctoral Travel Awards	June 13
Patricia Goldman-Rakic Hall of Honor	June 16
Mika Salpeter Lifetime Achievement Award	June 16
Next Generation Award	June 20
Swartz Prize for Theoretical and Computational Neuroscience	July 14
Science Journalism Student Award	Oct. 3

Visit www. sfn.org/awards for more information.

Brain Awareness Week 2008

This year marked the 13th annual Brain Awareness Week (BAW), an international campaign of educational events designed to increase public awareness about the wonders of the brain and nervous system. Held March 10–16, 2008, the BAW campaign is a partnership between the Society for Neuroscience (SfN) and the Dana Alliance for Brain Initiatives (DABI), which founded BAW. It aims to focus national and international attention on the progress in and benefits of neuroscience research, and to help people of all ages and backgrounds understand more about the "universe between their ears."

BAW is comprised of a coalition of more than 1,200 science, advocacy, and other health organizations that coordinate educational events emphasizing the importance of basic neuroscience research to public health and well-being of the public.

"Brain Awareness Week is an exciting time to reach out to the public and particularly to children, promoting increased understanding of the nervous system. Neuroscientists across the country and around the world join in this effort, in a global collaboration," explains Nicholas Spitzer of the University of California, San Diego and chair of SfN's Public Education and Communication Committee.

In Washington, DC, where SfN is headquartered, the Society joined a collaborative effort with DABI and other partners at the National Museum of Health and Medicine to assist with a week's worth of edu-

Students listen to a scientist's presentation about the orientation of the cranial nerves at the National Museum of Health and Medicine, Walter Reed Army Medical Center, Washington, DC.

cational activities on the campus of the Walter Reed Army Medical Center for 800 students from the DC Metro area. SfN President Eve Marder led a March 11 session for an audience of middle school students and their teachers.

The Society also supported the Washington, DC Brain Bee on February 6 that drew 20 students from 12 Maryland and DC schools who participated in the fifth annual Brain Bee, hosted and organized by the Dana Center. The competition was judged by Benjamin R. Walker, assistant professor in the Department of Psychology at Georgetown University. Elena Perry, the Washington, DC Brain Bee winner, went on to compete in and win the National Brain Bee Competition in Baltimore, MD.

Highlights of BAW events follow—spanning North American and international participation in New Jersey, California, Massachusetts, Wisconsin, Mexico, Canada, Turkey, and Australia.

New Jersey

Robert Sekuler, SfN member and professor at Brandeis University, Waltham, MA, took the leap this year into the Brain Awareness Campaign by agreeing to visit his grandson's elementary school in Livingston, New Jersey. "If I survive this experience," Sekuler promised as he contacted SfN headquarters for assistance, "next year I'll sign up for SfN's Neuroscientist-Teacher Partner Program." Armed with a *Brain Facts* book and Neuroscience Education Resources CD-ROM for the teacher, Sekuler triumphed in engaging 75 fourth-graders. Sekuler reports it was a terrific first experience—from the students' enthusiasm and questions to the positive reception of Brain Awareness Week from the teachers and principal. "Thanks to the brain, the kids were mesmerized for nearly an hour. If only all our undergraduate students were as attentive and interactive as these fourth-graders," said Sekuler.

Nanthia A. Suthana, UCLA Graduate Student:

"BAW provides an exciting opportunity to connect with children and adolescents in the community, and inspire excitement about science and the brain. In this program, we hope to provide under-represented students, who might otherwise not have knowledge about the field of neuroscience, a chance to learn about the brain and to encourage them to pursue higher education and possibly a career in science."

California

The University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) student group Project Brainstorm, sponsored by the UCLA Brain Research Institute and Graduate Students Association (GSA), held BAW events March 10–13. This year, almost 400 elementary through high school students visited UCLA during BAW. Over 50 graduate and undergraduate students and faculty volunteered for the events. In addition, for the first time, funding was received from the GSA community service program to assist schools that might otherwise not be able to afford the trip to UCLA.

Of the many events, the four-hour daily visits included interactive neuroscience activities and lab tours. Brain demonstrations were the most popular aspect of the program: groups of 7–10 students rotated around five stations and graduate students answered questions about the UCLA collection of human and animal brains.

The lab tours were in keeping with the theme of UCLA Neuroscience—"from molecules to behavior"—with students attending a variety of labs. Interactive events

Year-Round Public Outreach Resources

Neuroscientist-Teacher Partner Program

If you are a neuroscientist or completing graduate studies in neuroscience and would like to interact with teachers and students in K-12 classrooms, your expertise is needed to share knowledge and raise interest in the nervous system.

Join the program to establish a partnership with a K-12 educator. You can host a laboratory tour, visit a classroom, or serve as a neuroscience curriculum advisor.

Neuroscientists interested in joining the program are invited to submit contact information on the SfN Web site: www.sfn.org/ntp.

Neuroscience Resources for the K-12 Classroom CD-ROM

Obtain a free copy of this new CD-ROM, which serves as a gateway to educational resources on the Web. Write to education@sfn.org for a complimentary copy.

Brain Awareness Campaign

The Brain Awareness Campaign is a year-round activity. To access tips for organizing an event, gather resources for participants, and see what others have done in the past, visit www.sfn.org/baw.

Students examining a whole brain specimen: One of five stations where UCLA graduate students answered questions about the brain.

included age-appropriate presentations on topics including brain injury, sensation, and lobe functions.

Massachusetts

The Brudnick Neuropsychiatric Research Institute (BNRI) in the Department of Psychiatry at University of Massachusetts Medical School participated in BAW this year by sponsoring the Central Massachusetts Brain Bee. BNRI also offers year-round brain awareness educational services to the Worcester community regarding mental health conditions, neurological disorders, addiction, and substance abuse. "We reach out to the public whose tax dollars support investigations into science and whose votes will elect members of legislatures who vote on funding for neuroscience research," says SfN member Joanne S. Treistman at the University of Massachusetts Medical School.

On April 5, 2008, BNRI was part of the 15th annual Teddy Bear Clinic, a health fair focused on children, at a local area mall. The BNRI booth included hands-on activities for children and brain information for parents. BNRI receives educational materials from DABI's Lending Library program.

The Brain Education Center at BNRI sees its mission as growing the new generation of neuroscientists, as well as educating the public about what neuroscience contributes to society. It provides leadership and resources to facilitate the work of partners promoting education about human brain function in relation to mental health conditions, neurological disorders, harm prevention, addiction, and substance abuse.

Wisconsin

In a joint effort, the SfN Wisconsin chapter and the Neuroscience Training Program at University of Wisconsin (UW)-Madison strive to take advantage of existing resources and programs to keep their outreach programs—including BAW—low-cost and relatively low-effort on the part of staff and faculty. This year, the program continued its outreach to the Madison community.

During the month of April, the program participated in UW-Madison's

Chapter Resources

Chapters are a critical component of the Society's ability to engage individuals in the field of neuroscience both nationally and internationally. Chapter involvement provides opportunities for networking and information sharing, as well as funding for lectures, travel, and other neuroscience initiatives.

In addition to playing an integral role in Brain Awareness Week, chapter opportunities include:

Chapter Grants

The Society offers chapters the opportunity to apply for funding up to $2,000. This grant is designed to help new chapters succeed in their local missions, promote the goals of the SfN strategic plan, and support innovative chapter initiatives.

Next Generation Awards

Each year, the Society recognizes chapter members who have made outstanding contributions to public outreach and science education. Awards are made at the pre/postdoctoral and junior faculty levels.

Travel Awards

Assists graduate students and postdocs nominated by their local chapters with attending the SfN annual meeting.

For more information, visit www.sfn.org/chapters or e-mail chapters@sfn.org.

Semana del Cerebro: Poster advertising BAW events for the general public and elementary school children organized by the Instituto de Neurobiología, Querétaro, Mexico.

Science Expeditions by hosting an exploration station. The program, staffed by volunteer faculty members and undergraduate and graduate students, was also at the Madison Children's Museum doing hands-on neuroscience activities with the young and old. "We reached a total of approximately 2,000 people. All this costs only $400 in supply money, plus 40 hours or so in organization time, plus 48–60 hours of volunteers," explains Heather Daniels, assistant director of graduate studies in the Neuroscience Training Program at UW-Madison.

Mexico

The SfN Mexico City chapter held its fourth BAW — Las Emociones y Tu Cerebro (Emotions and Your Brain)—at the Instituto de Neurobiología (INB), Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, in Querétaro, Mexico. Professors and doctors from the General Hospital of Public Health offered a series of informal talks on topics such as autism, depression, hyperactivity, pain, laughter, and emotion. The talks were organized by SfN member Teresa Morales and held at the public library in downtown Querétaro, drawing community members and engaging them in question-and-answer sessions.

Neurobiologists, postgraduate students, and technicians were involved in public outreach to area children. Elementary schools were invited to visit the INB for lab tours, crafts, games, and exhibits.

Canada

The SfN Halifax chapter supported BAW through events with Dalhousie University and the Nova Scotia Museum of Natural History in Halifax. In keeping with the museum's polar theme, a "Cool Brains" exhibit was featured March 10–14. The exhibit included a brain model that can be disassembled and an ever-popular Build-a-Neuron interactive game. The event was well-attended by more than 2,000 elementary and middle school children who visited the museum with their parents. Graduate students from the Dalhousie University neuroscience program helped run the exhibit.

Dalhousie University also held two public lectures, following this year's theme of "successfully living with brain injury/disease." A clinical neuropsychologist spoke one evening and the other evening featured a panel of health care professionals who presented "Living with Brain Trauma/Disease: Progressive Therapeutic Approaches." Each gave a short overview of how they help people who live with brain injury or disease and then the floor was opened to the audience for discussion.

Turkey

The BAW campaign in Eskisehir, Turkey, was first launched 10 years

One of six displays at the Museum of Natural History, Halifax, Nova Scotia: Dalhousie University students help children examine a brain model that can be taken apart.

ago. Since that time, Faculty of Medicine, Eskisehir Osmangazi University (ESOGU) neuroscientists and students have volunteered in more than 150 events.

"I think that it is the social responsibility of a neuroscientist to educate the public to increase knowledge and understanding of the brain and nervous system," says SfN member Ferhan Esen at ESOGU. "And every neuroscientist must take a responsibility at least in one outreach activity in BAW." Esen translated the *Brain Facts* book into Turkish last year.

BAW activity in Eskisehir continues to evolve. Events this year included activities for preschool-aged children, elementary school classroom visits, and conferences for the general public, as well as the first-ever local Brain Bee.

Australia

Another example of an SfN chapter serving as a resource to their community can be found in Australia, where the Brisbane chapter supports BAW as a year-round event centered around the Australian Brain Bee Challenge (ABBC). ABBC 2008 consists of three rounds of challenges, beginning with the round one multiple-choice quiz with questions based on the SfN *Brain Facts* book. Round one was held in all registered Australian and New Zealand schools on March 12, 2008 during BAW. A record 9,406 students registered this year, representing all states and territories of Australia, and Auckland and Otago in New Zealand—more than a ten-fold increase in registrations from 2007.

"Brain Awareness Week is a wonderful initiative, held worldwide, that has become a common thread between neuroscientists across the globe," says SfN member Linda Richards at the University of Queensland in Australia. "This includes dispelling myths and misconceptions that the public may have about brain function, mental health and neurological disorders. It is a time when we can involve the public in what we do and show them how science can improve their lives." ■

Eskisehir, Turkey: Children celebrate completing their brain puzzles during BAW.
Photo Credit: Tuncay Erdogan

Tara Perrot-Sinal, Professor at Dalhousie University:

"We offer a great selection of events that increase the public's awareness of the brain. As a neuroscientist, I get the most satisfaction from interacting with others and passing on what I know about the brain. This usually takes the form of training graduate and undergraduate students but I have found a similar satisfaction from my involvement in outreach programs such as Brain Awareness Week. Ultimately, being a scientist is about learning and passing on that knowledge to as many people as possible."

Shaun Collin, Brisbane Chapter President:

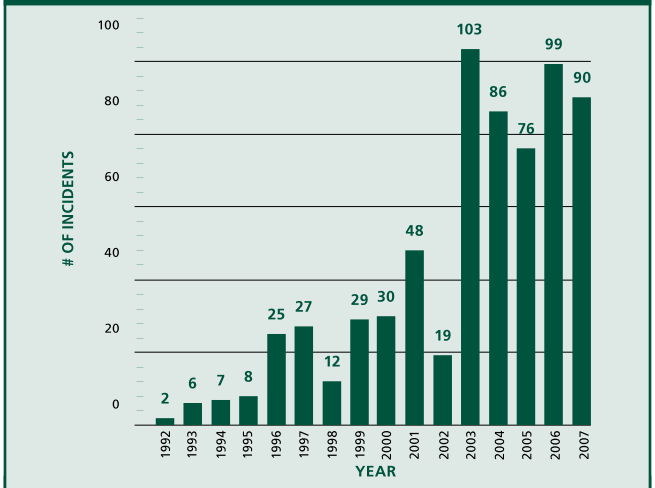
"The Brisbane (Australia) chapter of SfN has supported brain awareness activities since the chapter was formed in 2003. I see this as an important link between the public and the neuroscience researchers not only here at the University of Queensland but throughout Australia."

Mark Your Calendar for Next Year!

March 16–22, 2009
Visit www.sfn.org/baw for details.

Best Practices, *continued from page 1*

Reported Illegal Incidents Against Researchers Using Animals, 1992–2007



The number of reported illegal incidents against researchers using animals has increased exponentially in the past 10 years.
Source: Foundation for Biomedical Research, 2008.

and security, while offering a set of proactive steps to use as a guide. It was developed by CAR with a goal of drawing from the work of other organizations and universities, including the UCLA task force report that outlined a strong plan for responding to anti-research extremists' activities. By taking a new, comprehensive approach to improving protections by providing specific and proactive recommendations, CAR hopes to guide research institutions toward implementation of their own plans.

The safety and security of those performing vital biomedical research often depends on the involvement and oversight of their research institutions. CAR member Mark Baxter said, "I hope *Best Practices* can be used as a guide to help researchers and institutions create policies that both ensure the safety of scientists engaged in responsible research and promote public understanding of how biomedical science benefits human health and welfare."

Best Practices focuses on three areas in which institutions can supplement and improve current safety plans:

- **Leadership and Administration —** University administrators, presidents, and chancellors should provide public leadership and make a public commitment to protecting researchers and the research enterprise. This includes the pursuit of legal actions when appropriate and necessary, as evidenced by UCLA, which filed a lawsuit on February 19 against extremists to stop their campaign of terror against researchers who conduct or support legal research using laboratory animals.
- **Security —** Universities and research institutions are encouraged to develop and implement security protocols and build relationships. These recommendations are designed to enhance the institution's emergency management and preparedness plans. An important component is ensuring regular and effective communications between campus and local police to avoid gaps in protection.
- **Public Affairs and Communications —** Comprehensive legislative and communication strategies to bolster federal, state, and local government support, while winning public support, are essential to the protection of research. In addition to maintaining strong external relationships, institutions must be mindful of activities taking place on campus and ensure that student organizations are not interacting with dangerous groups that advocate violence.

In the coming months, SfN leadership, staff, and members will help raise awareness of *Best Practices* at institutions throughout the country and around the world, starting with the top 30 NIH-funded institutions. The Society is also hopeful that NIH will take an even stronger role in encouraging universities that receive funding through them to have a protection plan in place.

Member Involvement

It is essential to the success of the overall effort for scientists to meet with university and institution leaders and urge them to address potential anti-research violence.

SfN encourages members to present the *Best Practices* document to their institutional leaders and personally urge them to improve protections for researchers. Resources, including talking points and frequently asked questions, are available to guide members during meetings with administrators on the SfN Web site at www.sfn.org/bestpractices. We encourage members to connect with others in their institutions to coordinate such visits. SfN staff are happy to discuss questions and also ask that members please report to the Government and Public Affairs department on their meetings at advocacy@sfn.org.

A strong, proactive response to growing animal rights extremism remains an SfN priority. With *Best Practices*, SfN and its members are taking the lead on pre-empting future attacks and assisting those already targeted. SfN also recognizes that anti-animal research extremism may not be the only safety and security threat facing the scientific community in the near future, as evolution and stem cell issues remain controversial.

As noted by SfN President Eve Marder, "Responsible biomedical research is essential to improve human health and save lives. Continued progress requires that institutions ensure the health and safety of researchers and their families." ■

An Interview with UCLA Chancellor Gene Block


Gene Block

Gene Block, SfN member, recently took the helm of a major research institution. The University of California, Los Angeles is among the top 10 institutions receiving funding from the U.S. National Institutes of Health. Neuroscience Quarterly *asked Block about the impact of federal funding cuts on major research institutions, how universities can work with leadership to protect researchers targeted by violence, and how to support the next generation of neuroscience leaders.*

***NQ:* The outlook for federal funding of research is uncertain at best in the U.S., as well as for many countries around the world. How does an institution like UCLA think about funding and supporting research and researchers in an era of cuts and uncertainty? What impact does it have on your near- and long-term planning?**

When faced with an era of uncertainty in funding and research support, an institution such as UCLA must focus on its strengths. We are a large, highly multidisciplinary institution with all our schools and programs based on one compact campus, within a very large urban metropolis. These circumstances enable our faculty to address complex interdisciplinary problems on multiple fronts and to engage in solving real problems. As a result, funding is often less of an issue here than in institutions with a more narrow focus.

***NQ:* In California, as elsewhere, there is growing state-level and private investment in research. Is that the wave of the future, and what should researchers know about this trend?**

California has long been a leader among states in providing significant research funding. Most notable, perhaps, is the $3 billion that Proposition 71 is providing over 10 years for stem-cell research. Meanwhile, the private industry's engagement with universities is significant and growing. UCLA's researchers are taking advantage of the opportunities that these trends present. Still, the health of our research enterprise depends on funding by the federal government, which remains our major source.

***NQ:* In response to increasing attacks from anti-animal research activists, UCLA has shown tremendous growth and emerging leadership over the past two years. What lessons did UCLA learn through this process that other universities should draw upon?**

We have indeed learned some lessons in responding to attacks by anti-animal research activists in recent years. Three important ones are:

a) a clear, consistent university message in support of research is fundamental.
b) faculty must feel protected, both on campus and at home.
c) a coordinated, well-crafted response plan is critical, as well as having an individual who is responsible for coordinating all steps in implementation.

***NQ:* Having been both a researcher and a university administrator, what recommendations would you give researchers seeking to engage their administrations to enhance protection?**

My principal recommendation would be for researchers to engage their administrations in a dialogue, during which there should be no significant differences between faculty and administration; otherwise, misunderstandings may occur.

***NQ:* Neuroscience is a hot field for young researchers today and SfN is seeing considerable membership growth among those under 30 years old. At the same time, funding is down. What impact does that have on the futures for young researchers? As UCLA grooms young scientists, what career choices and options are they facing, and how does your curriculum support a wider range of possible career paths?**

Young researchers in neuroscience are naturally concerned by the narrowing of opportunities for them. Although the NIH is taking steps to provide more funding for young scientists, flat budgets are making it more difficult to get initial RO1 funding. By attracting to UCLA large interdisciplinary centers, such as the recently funded Center on Neurogenetic Phenomics, we help young neuroscientists at the forefront of the field prepare for a broader range of careers than they otherwise could.

***NQ:* What do you see as the grand challenges and opportunities for the university-based research enterprise?**

Probably the largest challenge and opportunity for research-intensive universities lies in their ability to engage in translational research. The most challenging problems facing humanity— from climate change to global health— would benefit immensely from the engagement of universities in their solution. Although large research universities are excellent at discovering new knowledge and equipping a future workforce to apply this knowledge, they are much less effective in directly engaging in translational research. To be effective in this role is an enormous challenge, requiring a profound re-thinking of the way universities operate. At UCLA, we are beginning such re-thinking as we plan the creation of a campus-wide "problem-solving institute" that will work with community leaders to identify large issues facing Los Angeles, issues which we can help resolve. Ideally, such engagement will become a campus theme, emphasized with lectures, seminars, service learning, and focused research. We hope this effort will better define what it means to be a public university. ■

Advocacy Update

By all accounts, this year is not likely to be "business as usual" for the U.S. Congress. The November presidential and congressional elections may exacerbate existing political tensions and slow progress on most legislation, including the annual appropriations bills.

Following a particularly contentious process last year, congressional leaders have stated they may not pass appropriations bills this year if they will only be vetoed again by the president. At press time, some leaders were speculating that they would conduct at least preliminary work on some spending bills to establish their FY2009 appropriations priorities and negotiate with the new president.

Yet it continues to be very important that SfN members weigh in with Congress to advocate biomedical and basic research funding as a national priority. See the Activities and Resources section on the following page and check the Government and Public Affairs Web page, www.sfn.org/gpa, for ways members are engaging in advocacy.

The President's FY2009 Budget Proposal

In the first step of the budget process, the president released his proposed FY2009 budget on February 4, although many congressional Democrats declared it "dead on arrival." As expected, the proposal largely freezes spending on domestic programs. Below is a summary of FY2009 funding requests for SfN's appropriations priorities.

National Institutes of Health
The president's FY2009 budget proposes to flatline NIH funding at $28.9 billion, the same level provided in FY2008. If this budget were enacted, it would be the sixth straight year of flat funding and the agency will have lost 13.4 percent of its purchasing power since the end of the doubling in 2003.

By contrast, the biomedical research community has settled on a request of a $1.9 billion increase for NIH in FY2009, approximately a 6.5 percent increase over last year. The recommended increase would match biomedical inflation with three percent added to account for real growth. While Capitol Hill staff warn it will be difficult to achieve this increase, Representatives Edward Markey (D-MA) and Dave Reichert (R-WA) led 177 of their House colleagues on a letter to appropriators in support of this request. In addition, Senators Tom Harkin (D-IA) and Arlen Specter (R-PA) continue their strong leadership in the Senate in support of increased funding for NIH.

Although the effort to restore NIH's purchasing power will be an uphill battle again this year, SfN and its members must continue advocating in support of the sustained funding that is essential to the pursuit of research advances and breakthroughs.

National Science Foundation
The National Science Foundation (NSF), a key component of the president's American Competitiveness Initiative, would receive a 13 percent increase to $6.85 billion in the proposed FY2009 budget. The Biological Sciences Directorate, home to almost all neuroscience research at NSF, would receive a 10.3 percent increase over FY2008 for total funding of $675 million.

The science community has proposed $7.33 billion, a 20.8 percent increase, for NSF, which keeps the agency on track to double by 2017 as proposed in the America COMPETES Act. While this significant increase would be difficult to enact this year, Representatives Rush Holt (D-NJ), Vernon Ehlers (R-MI), and 133 other House members signed a letter to appropriators in support of this request. The community is hopeful that the combined support of the president and Congress will result in a strong increase for the agency, which received just a three percent increase in FY2008.

Veterans Affairs
In the wake of highly publicized problems in veterans' care, the Department of Veterans Affairs would receive the third biggest dollar increase of any department or major agency. The president's budget proposal calls for $93.7 billion, an increase of $3.4 billion over current funding. The Medical

SfN member Danielle Evers of Georgetown University speaks at a Capitol Hill press conference as Rep. Rush Holt (D-NJ) and Rep. Judy Biggert (R-IL) look on. Photo Credit: The Science Coalition.

and Prosthetic Research Program would receive $442 million, a decrease of about $38 million, or 7.9 percent.

Activities and Resources

More than 20 SfN members are scheduled to participate in the second annual SfN Capitol Hill Day on April 22, which coincides with the Government and Public Affairs Committee and Committee on Animals in Research spring meetings. To encourage greater chapter involvement in national advocacy activities, several chapter leaders also are participating in Capitol Hill Day.

To guide member participation in advocacy activities at the local and national level, the Society has recently updated the *Guide to Public Advocacy*, a reference manual that provides instructions and tips on contacting Congress and engaging the public. The guide is available online at www.sfn.org/guide.

As part of our coalition activities, several SfN members participated in the Coalition for Life Sciences and Science, Engineering, and Technology Congressional Visit Days, meeting with more than 15 congressional offices to discuss research and science funding. Through the Coalition for Health Funding, SfN staff met with members of the House Budget Committee and other congressional staff to discuss FY2009 funding for health and research programs.

International News

Canadian Budget 2008 Released, Several Science Programs See Boost

Canadian Finance Minister Jim Flaherty released the government's 2008 budget on February 26. Several scientific programs stand to benefit from this year's budget. The most significant is the establishment of the Vanier doctoral scholarship program, which would be funded at $12.5 million CDN in 2008 and 2009, and at $20 million per year from 2010 to 2014. Genome Canada, a broad genomics program with research institutes in six provinces, would receive $140 million, a larger figure than in past years. The Canadian Institutes for Health Research would receive an increase of $34 million to its 2007 base budget, with grant funding amounts to be appropriated by parliament later this year. Visit www.budget.gc.ca for complete budget details.

Scientific Research Funding in Mexico Is Not Adequate

Over the last seven years of the federal administration in Mexico, the budget for science has decreased from 0.4 to 0.36 percent of the total national budget. This has affected ongoing research projects, but moreover, the hiring of new and young investigators. In the absence of the minimum funding required to set up laboratory facilities, many are leaving the country or leaving science as a career altogether. During the National Science Prize ceremony in February, President Calderon proposed that an additional budget of 40 billion pesos (about $3.8 billion) be designated for science this year. ■

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Neuroscience Quarterly is printed on New Leaf Reincarnation Matte, made with 50% recycled fiber, 30% post-consumer waste, and processed chlorine free. By using this environmental paper, SfN saved the following resources:

40	trees
7,490	gallons of water
1,971	pounds of solid waste
2,906	pounds of hazardous effluent

The Journal of Neuroscience Web Site Has a New Look!

Visually more appealing and easier to navigate, *The Journal of Neuroscience* Web site still offers the same great resources, like the abstract browser, an online archive, and current highlights in the "This Week in *The Journal*" section.

A new "For the Media" section contains resources for journalists and public information officers, including prepublication access to studies, tables of contents, and news releases; image reprint information; and help in contacting authors and experts.

News releases on studies in *The Journal* and other news are at www.sfn.org/newsreleases. News stories highlighting neuroscience research more broadly are posted weekly at www.sfn.org/newsclips. ■

2008 Final Dues Notice

Renew Membership and Retain Important Benefits

Remember, you must be an SfN member in good standing for calendar year 2008 before you submit or sponsor an abstract. If you missed the deadline for submission of 2008 membership dues, it is not too late to renew. Log in to www.sfn.org/renewnow to submit online payment and retain important benefits including:

- Abstract sponsorship privileges
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