

Changes are on the way for Emory Neuroscience

Emory Neuroscience is getting a face lift. Or at least its curriculum is. The Executive Committee voted last spring to restructure the first year coursework in an attempt to streamline and integrate the current courses. Three important changes were approved. In the fall, incoming students will take a course called Neuroscience I, designed to integrate the current biochemistry and cellular neuroscience courses. Students will also be encouraged to begin rotations in the fall.

Spring semester will see even bigger changes spurred by a decision to reconstruct the GDBBS sponsored cell biology course. Neuroscience students will be joining the GDBBS cell biology course for a seven week module to cover topics not included in other NS courses. Second semester will also include Neuroscience 2, a course that combines neuroanatomy and systems neuroscience.

All those involved in the efforts to revise the curriculum are excited about the upcoming year. Liz Degoursac, the new student representative on the

curriculum committee says she is particularly excited about these changes because "they will provide a highly integrated approach to presenting the fundamentals of neuroscience."

This year will also include a change in the program administration as Ron Calabrese goes on sabbatical for the year. Yoland

Smith will be acting director of the program. Larry Young will become DGS and Leonard Howell will remain as Chair of Student Admission. Yoland Smith is also Chair of Curriculum Committee. Special thanks to Tim Cope for all the hard work he has put into the new curriculum as previous Chair of the Curriculum Committee.



What are you reading?

You may have noticed that it says Volume I Issue I in the upper right hand corner of this page. That's because you are reading the very first edition of the Central Sulcus, the new Emory Neuroscience newsletter. This publication is designed to keep everyone affiliated with our program up to date and provide a forum for student accomplishments and concerns. With more than 80 graduate students and

even more faculty members, such a publication will be a great asset. If you have any questions, comments or suggestions, please email Zoe Donaldson at zdonald@emory.edu. Your input and help is much appreciated.

A huge thank you goes out to all those who helped make this publication happen. Leah Anderson and Adriana Galvan put together our feature articles (see

inside). And of course, none of this would have been possible without tremendous program support particularly from Yoland Smith and Sonia Hayden.

Also, a thank you to Kim Dougherty who has compiled a list of student publications that will be available soon on the GIN website.

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Things to look forward to...

- NEW! Computer workstation for neuroscience students located across from Sonia's office on the 6th floor of Whitehead.
- September 18: Neuroscience Program Retreat.
- October 18th: SfN poster preview day.
- October 23-27: SfN 34th Annual Meeting in San Diego.
- The new Atlanta Chapter SfN president is Shawn Hochman (Emory) and the vice president is Anne Murphy (GSU).



First grader's examine a human brain



When comparing rodent and primate brains, the students notice more wrinkles in the monkey brain.

“How do you spell Neurotransmitter?”

This year’s community outreach activities were an outstanding success!

By Leah Anderson

The future funding of our research is critically dependent on public support from voters, lawmakers, and philanthropists. Therefore, in conjunction with the SFN’s Brain Awareness Week, the Atlanta Chapter of the SFN (ACSFN) sponsors visits to local schools. These visits are an excellent opportunity for us to educate students, teachers and parents on the exciting and important work we do as neuroscientists. This past spring was our biggest and best outreach effort with more than 17 visits made by 30 volunteers. We reached more community members than ever. We visited elementary, middle, and high schools in 5 urban and suburban

public school districts as well as a few of the nearby private schools. We participated as guest lecturers, science night exhibitors, and SCITREK volunteers. Each year, there is a wide variety of ways for neuroscientists to get out and work with the community. The feedback from these visits was overwhelmingly positive. We received very thoughtful emails of thanks from parents and teachers, as well as crayon-drawn cards of thanks from elementary students!

Chances are, if you didn’t volunteer this year, one of your co-workers did. If you have yet to participate in any outreach activity, I encourage you to talk to

one of us about our experiences. I guarantee you will hear some funny and amazing stories about the student’s enthusiasm and curiosity. The ACSFN has accumulated a database of schools, teachers and successful lesson plans for volunteers to use in setting up their visits. We have games, activities and specimens available whenever you may need them. Therefore, participating in community outreach has never been easier! If you have any questions, suggestions, or would like to volunteer for upcoming community outreach activities, contact the ACSFN outreach coordinator, Leah Anderson at lrande@emory.edu.

On their way out...

Emory’s neuroscience program has awarded Ph.D. degrees to 12 students in the last year. We wish them all the best of luck.

Ph.D Awarded to

Ellen E. Olson
Miranda M. Lim
David Gutman
George Walton Hubert
Joseph T. Daley
Carissa J. Cascio
Volkan Coskun, M.D.
Susanne Hollinger
Laura Volpicelli Daley
Jonathan McConathy
Deborah Backus
Dan McClatchey
Kevin Erreger

Advisor

Bob McKeon
Larry Young
Charles Nemeroff
Yoland Smith
David Rye
Krish Sathian
Marla Luskin
John Hepler
Allan Levey
Mark Goodman
Miike Cutcher
Allan Levey
Steve Treynelis



Left: Laura Volpicelli Daley with her advisor, Allan Levey.



Right: Susanne Hollinger with her advisor John Hepler.

On their way in...

This fall has seen the addition of ten excellent students to the neuroscience program. A huge thank you is in order for all those who helped make recruiting so successful—particularly admissions committee members, Kathy Engisch, Amy Lee, Shawn Hochman, Mike Mustari, Thomas Wichmann, Larry Young, Kristen Sager, and Sara Giordano.

New Students:

Todd Ahern—Oberlin College—tahern@learnlink.emory.edu
James Bogenpohl—Washington Univ.—bogie223@yahoo.com
Maurice Fountain—Morgan State Univ.—fountain_maurice@yahoo.com
Eric Heuer—Allegheny College—heuer@learnlink.emory.edu
Shareen Iqba—Indiana University—saiqbal@emory.edu
Michael Jutras—Brown University—mjutras@emory.edu
Jun Liu—Georgia Tech—phipsyche@yahoo.com
Jessica McClung—Cal Poly State Univ.—jmclun@learnlink.emory.edu
Meagan Ward—Smith College—meagan.ward@emory.edu
Micheal (Terrence) Wright—Cal State, San Marcos—terrence.wright@emory.edu

Focus on... The NIH Training Grant

If you ask your average neuroscience student what they know about the NIH training grant that funds a portion of our program, they will probably be able to tell you that it helps pay some of the student stipends, provides book money and money to host student selected guest speakers. But there is a lot more to it than that. The NIH training grant is a prestigious grant awarded by NIH to programs throughout the US that have excelled not only in producing great research but also in training great neuroscientists. Ron Calabrese emphasizes that “the importance of the training grant is peer validation

and the ability to accept more students into our program.” Only a few institutions receive this grant (ten when the grant was initiated in the 1980’s). This is one of the things that sets our program apart and emphasizes, yet again, how well we train our students. Emory Neuroscience received the grant, Training in Systems and Integrative Neuroscience, ten years ago. To date we have successfully trained 28 students with training grant money. Ron Calabrese has served as PI on the training grant since 1995, and Yoland Smith will take over as PI when the grant is submitted for renewal

“The importance the training grant is peer validation and the ability to accept more students into our program.”

this year. More information about the training grant can be found at <http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/pa-02-109.html>.



Food for thought Even neuroscientists need to eat

As we all know, members of the Neuroscience Program at Emory University enjoy good food and drink (or, if the food is not good, it should be plenty). This section of the newsletter is meant to be a forum to exchange recipes, restaurant recommendations, and maybe some experts can give us some advice on good wine or beer.

I invite our community to contribute with yummy (and easy) recipes –we could all use something different than spaghetti for dinner– or to share their impressions about local eateries. If food is one of your favorite rewards, share your experience with us!

To kick off the column, I’d like to talk about Mexican restaurants in Atlanta. Atlanta has a variety of ethnic restaurants, and if one decides to explore beyond the well-known chains, there are a lot of good and cheap places, full of flavor and tradition.

I was born and raised in Mexico City and moved to Atlanta four years ago to discover that what I missed most from my country was its food. Fortunately, I have discovered several places where real Mexican food is prepared. Don’t expect ambience in any of these places (and don’t take anybody on a first date), but the adventure will be interesting and the fresh tacos, hot salsas and original mole will be your reward.

Taqueria Los Pinos
584 Woodward Ave.
Atlanta, GA 30305
404-577-0093

Taqueria Nayerit
562 Boulevard
Atlanta, GA 30312
404-622-0999

These two places in Grant Park offer a similar experience. Even though the menu looks a lot like Willy’s (burritos and tacos), expect more creative fillings like pork, beef tongue (*lengua*), chicken or grilled steak strips (*carne asada*). Other items on the menu are as good and maybe more interesting like *gorditas* (think pita pockets made with corn and stuffed with beans and meat) or *tortas* (Mexican sandwiches, prepared with avocado, beans, salsa and your choice of meat). On weekends they usually have *pozole* (stew made with hominy and pork meat) and tamales. Both places are reasonably clean, but dark and a little scruffy. A good bet is to ask for take out.

Sylvia’s Pastry
6065 S. Norcross Tucker Road Suite 9
Norcross, GA 30096
770-496-4550

This is, by far, my favorite Mexican place. The food is what you’d get in any good “loncheria” in Mexico City, or in a traditional Mexican household. Everything I have had here is really delicious. The ingredients feel fresh and the food is never too salty or too spicy, just right. The *mole* – a sauce made from at least 17 ingredients, including chocolate, peanuts, sesame and hot chiles– is remarkable. And the one item that really makes it worth the long

By Adriana Galvin

drive to Norcross are the tortillas. We are talking warm, freshly cooked, smelling of corn *masa* (dough), that roll into tacos with ease, holding their shape and character. This is also one of the few places where you can enjoy Mexican desserts, such as vanilla flan (custard) and *pastel tres leches* (milk cake). Even though the place is small, it’s quite cheerful and the owner, Roberto Nava, speaks fluent English and is a very gracious host. It can be easy to miss, so look for a gas station across the street, or call for directions.

El Taco Veloz
5084 Buford Highway N.E.
Atlanta, GA 30340
770-936-9094

A true “taqueria”, that could be the Mexican equivalent of a fast food joint. For little money and in no time –that is why it is *veloz* (fast)– you’ll have tacos, burritos or *tortas*, filled with chicken, pork or beef. They also have vegetarian tacos. Refried beans and red rice are good side dishes.

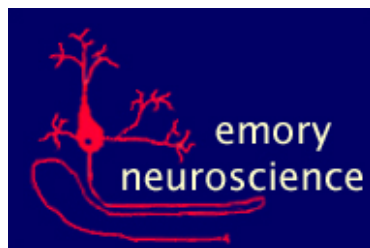
If you have suggestions or comments for Food for Thought, please contact Adriana Galvin at aglayan@emory.edu.

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Great Minds...



www.emory.edu/NEUROSCIENCE

The Emory Neuroscience Graduate Program leads to the PhD degree and is designed to provide a broad background in modern neuroscience, as well as specialized training in a wide range of specific research areas and techniques. The particular areas of strength in our program are further described on our website. The broad range of research interests coupled with a collaborative atmosphere make the Emory Neuroscience Program well suited to provide a strong, dynamic and exciting environment in which to pursue graduate studies.

For more information please contact Sonia Hayden at shayden@emory.edu or (404) 727-3707.

Meet Your GIN Presidents

Graduates **I**n **N**euroscience is a social organization for neuroscience graduate students. This spring, we voted to extend the position of GIN president to a two year assignment. Cliff will continue for one more year and will be joined by Rebecca Rosen in the fall who will be taking over for Sara Dodson who has done a fantastic job. Here are a few things you might want to know about your GIN presidents.

CLIFF MICHAELS
ccmicha@emory.edu

Where did you come from?
A small town in Eastern Pennsylvania called Nazareth. In fact its right next to Bethlehem (funny huh).

What inspired you to become GIN president?

I was home in PA last summer and I got a phone call telling me that I had been elected GIN president.

What is your favorite part of being GIN president?

Putting together the retreat. It is honestly one of my favorite things I've done since being in Atlanta, and I'm looking forward to planning another one. Also I figure its good practice for when I get my PhD and start an event planning business (haha).

Where do you work?

I just recently returned to the lab of Dr. Stephen Holtzman in pharmacology and am doing behavioral pharmacology on acute opioid dependence and withdrawal.

REBECCA ROSEN

Where did you come from?

Miami, Florida

What inspired you to become GIN President?

Cliff and Sara make it seem like so much fun.

What sorts of things do you hope to see GIN do in the next two years?

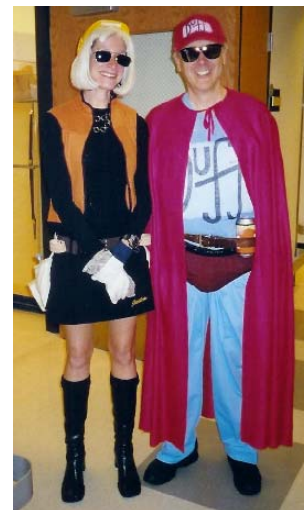
I hope GIN will be a social network for all the neuro-kids to keep in touch as we drift off into our lab cubbyholes, especially after the first year of the program. We have a great program with great students and GIN should help us remember that.

Favorite ice cream flavor?

Hands down, dulce de leche (caramel for you gringos).

Is there anything else we should know about you?

Haha, now that I am elected, you want to know?



Above: Rebecca with Duffman Ron Calabrese

Below: Cliff at Sweetwater Brewing Company



