

Neural Networking

Newsletter of the North Central Florida Society for Neuroscience

Advancing the Understanding of the brain and nervous system



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Getting the Most Out of the Annual Meeting



NEUROSCIENCE
2014

November 15–19
WASHINGTON, DC

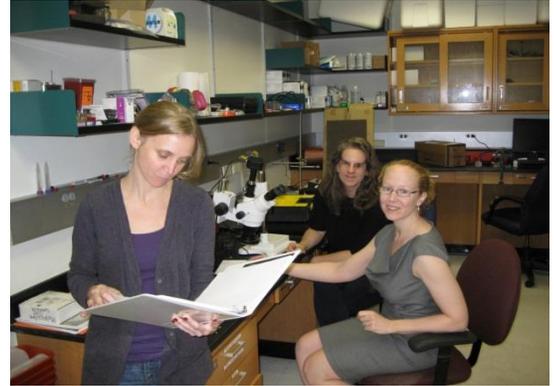
Whether you are first-time attendee or a veteran presenter at SfN, here are a few tips that can help you gain more insight into scientific research and professional development at this year's annual Neuroscience Meeting in Washington DC.

- **Plan your itinerary ahead of time.** Most long-time attendees will remember collecting the daily programs to navigate posters and presentations. Now you can plan and organize your itinerary using the [Neuroscience Meeting Planner](#) to search and select those presentations that meet your specific criteria. You can then view your personalized itinerary during the conference using the free [Neuroscience 2014 Mobile App!](#)
- **Learning more about key topics.** SfN has assembled 8 "[Curated Itineraries](#)", or pre-formed schedules of presentations, in target areas including addiction research, neurodegeneration and sensory perception. These helpful, organized schedules can help you to quickly and effectively navigate important areas of interest to you.
- **Prepare for career transitions.** If you are an undergraduate contemplating graduate training in neuroscience or a graduate student or postdoc looking for a job, then be sure to use this meeting as an opportunity to introduce yourself to prospective mentors or employers. For those would-be graduate students who'd like a more structured opportunity to learn more about prospective graduate programs, be sure to attend the [Graduate School Fair in Hall E on Saturday from 1-3PM and Sunday-Tuesday from 12-2PM](#). Similarly, the [NeuroJobs Career Center](#) will be open in the [West Salon](#) throughout Neuroscience 2014
- **Socialize and network with neuroscientists.** Socials and other after-hours gatherings are great opportunities to catch up with friends and colleagues whose careers have taken them to new places. Beginning this year, NCF-SfN will host an informal social on [Tuesday November 18 at 6:30PM at Capitol Brewing Company \(1100 New York Ave NW\)](#), a local brewpub just 4 blocks from the convention center. If you're enjoying this night out on the town, you can keep the night going by moving over to the [SfN Graduate Student Reception](#) which will follow the NCF-SfN social [from 9PM to midnight in the Grand Ballroom of the Renaissance Hotel](#).
- **Learn more about science advocacy and outreach.** In addition to the great scientific program on display this year, the SfN is a major proponent of scientific advancement in the public and community settings. **Theme H** specifically organizes posters that cover the history, teaching, public awareness and impact of neuroscience; these posters are on display [November 15 from 1-5PM and November 16 8AM-5PM in Hall A-C](#). Also on [Saturday November 15, the Brain Awareness Campaign Event will be held in Hall E from 3-4:30PM](#). Come learn more about Brain Awareness activities that can improve our own outreach efforts and support our own NCF-SfN chapter poster that showcases the UF scientific and community initiatives during Brain Awareness Week.



Lab Spotlight: Dr. Sara Burke

The laboratory of Dr. Sara Burke is the youngest lab in the Department of Neuroscience and the McKnight Brain Institute. Dr. Burke established her lab here at UF in October 2013 after a productive post-doctoral career with Dr. Carol Barnes at the University of Arizona where she was an affiliate of UA's McKnight Institute. Dr. Burke's research integrates behavioral, physiological and molecular approaches to determine the neural changes that underlie cognitive decline in aging. Most notably, her work emphasizes the use of high-density microelectrodes to record neural activity from rats as they perform tasks that require the integration of information across brain regions. At present, there are many unanswered questions as to how interactions between higher association cortical regions to support cognition and how this is altered in old age. Dr. Burke aims to study anatomical and physiological connectivity to elucidate how systems-level interactions across brain regions change with age. Once characterized with respect to behavior and physiology, we can establish causative effects and explore interactions that will broadly improve cognition. As the Burke lab leads the way in the application of cutting-edge neurophysiology hardware to achieve large-scale recordings, she and her research collaborator, Dr. Andrew Maurer, are working to develop novel algorithms to handle and derive meaning from these "big data" projects. To this end, they are establishing new collaborations with faculty in electrical and computer engineering and biomedical engineering with complementary expertise to implement novel signal processing algorithms for deciphering the neural code.



In her first year at UF, Dr. Burke has praised the support from Neuroscience Department Chair, Dr. Lucia Notterpek, collaborations with others in the aged related memory loss program, especially Drs. Tom Foster and Jennifer Bizon, as well as other senior faculty who have generously offered to review ideas and grant applications. Within the lab, Dr. Burke has already assembled a strong team of trainees including postdoctoral associate Sarah Johnson and 2nd year IDP student, Sara E. Burke. The lab also welcomes undergraduates with interest to learn more about neuroscience research and is currently accepting students who are interested in completing IDP rotations. The multi-disciplinary approach of the Burke Lab is especially attractive to interested students who have a well-rounded knowledge of statistics and behavior and desire to integrate creative experimental designs to answer high level neuroscience questions. (Pictured (left-to-right) are IDP student Sarah E. Burke, postdoctoral associate Sarah Johnson, PhD, and professor Sara Burke, Ph.D.)



Editor's corner



The North Central Florida Chapter for the Society of Neuroscience held its fall general meeting on October 23rd at 5PM in the Biomedical Sciences Atrium. The meeting was well attended by faculty, post-docs and students as we welcomed returning and new members. **But even now, it's not too late to join!** Beginning with the 2014-2015 Academic Year, the NCF-SFN is introducing new membership packages to encourage new students to join and help existing members stay current with their dues. **First, all first-year students in the College of Medicine's Interdisciplinary Program (IDP) in Biomedical Sciences will be given a one-year NCF-SFN membership, free-of-charge!** While the IDP encompasses a number of academic disciplines, we'd like to give those students interested in neuroscience a leg-up in taking advantage of NCF-SFN's professional, scientific and community outreach activities. **Second, undergraduate students who pledge to volunteer with Brain Awareness Week outreach activities in Spring 2015 can enjoy a whole year of membership at half the regular price; only \$5!** The success of our outreach is thanks, in large part, to many enthusiastic UF undergrads who staff presentations at local

schools, community centers and at the McKnight Brain Institute; we hope more such aspiring scientists will join and support the mission of NCF-SFN in 2014-15. Finally, our third membership package is geared towards graduate students and postdoctoral fellows working in neuroscience labs. Rather than purchase a one-year membership for \$10, **we're offering students and postdocs the opportunity to buy a 3-year membership for \$25.** Save yourself the headache of having to remember to pay dues each year and also save \$5 using this pre-paid membership package!

Membership in NCF-SFN is well-worth the price of dues. **Your local chapter hosts meetings, symposia and other activities that provide professional, scientific and community enrichment opportunities.** Each year, NCF-SFN hosts informal gatherings that give chapter members across labs and departments an opportunity to come together and discuss research findings and career insights. Each spring, we host a week-long series of medical and scientific presentations that culminates in symposia given by nationally known scientists; in 2014 we hosted Dr. Mark Bear of MIT and Dr. Steven DeKosky of UVA. In this same week, we host a poster competition where undergrads, graduate students and postdocs can share their emerging scientific findings and compete for cash prizes. The resources of the NCF-SFN also support our extensive community outreach efforts which include teaching Gainesville Area school students about nervous system function as well as informational programs developed for the whole Gainesville community to improve awareness and understanding of common brain and neurological disorders. **In addition to these great local benefits, NCF-SFN is also your gateway to the national Society for Neuroscience.**

The Society for Neuroscience is the world's largest organization of scientists and physicians devoted to understanding the brain and nervous system with nearly 40,000 members in more than 90 countries and 130 chapters worldwide. SFN's premier event is the Annual Neuroscience Meeting which occurs every October or November and is hosted in major US cities such as Washington DC, Chicago and San Diego. To support travel to this meeting, NCF-SFN awards four \$200 awards to students and postdocs whose abstracts have been accepted for presentation. **This year's travel award winners were**

Dr. Caitlin Orsini, Sofia Beas, Lara Ianov and Emily Dabe. Furthermore, NCF-SFN can support students who are interested in joining the national SFN by providing a letter of recommendation that is required for new member applications.

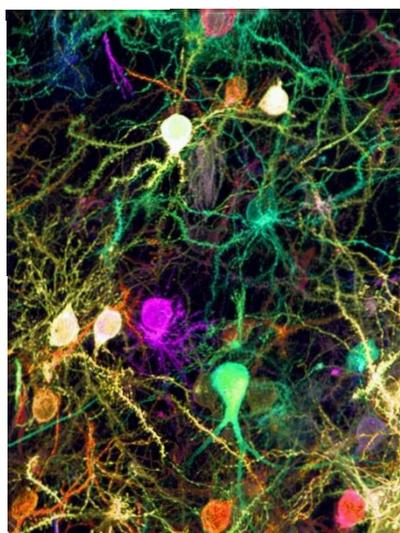
Membership in NCF-SFN is good from September 1st until August 30th of each academic year. Dues must be paid in full in order to submit abstracts to our poster competition or to compete for travel awards made by the Chapter. Apart from our new membership packages, undergrads, graduate students, postdocs and UF staff may purchase a one-year membership for \$10 and faculty can purchase a one-year membership for \$25. Dues may be paid by cash, check or credit card by NCF-SFN Treasurer, Danielle Sambo (dsambo@ufl.edu). Dues may also be paid via Google Wallet. Additional questions regarding chapter membership may directed to either NCF-SFN President Kim Hawkins (kim.hawkins88@ufl.edu) or Chapter Representative Joseph McQuail (jmcquail@ufl.edu).



Travel Award winner Sofia Beas



Travel Award winner Dr. Caitlin Orsini



Upcoming event dates:

SfN Conference: 11/15 – 11/19

UF Spring Break: 2/28 – 3/7

Cade Museum Classes: Saturday March 7: AM class for 6-9yrs; PM class for 10+yrs. Time TBD

Community Lecture: Wednesday March 11 – 6 to 7pm at the Depot Park building

Brain Awareness Week: 3/16 – 3/22

Make sure the pencil these dates in! More information regarding these activities will be given closer to the event dates!

