Collaborative Program in Neuroscience (CPIN)
University of Toronto
Newsletter – Vol. 36, No. 4 – December 2019

Image credit: Creative Commons

Happy Holidays from CPIN!

CPIN would like to wish all members a happy holiday season.
The CPIN Office will be closed from December 23, 2019 to January 3, 2020 inclusive.

Featured In This Issue

Welcome New CPIN Faculty Members We would like to welcome **Dr. Carol Schuurmans** as a new faculty member to the CPIN community. Please see page 2 for details.

Welcome New CPIN Students Please see page 2 for details.

Congratulations to CPIN Graduating Students Please see page 2 for details.

News – CPIN Faculty Congratulations to CPIN faculty member **Dr. Robert Gerlai** on receiving the 2019 IBNS Outstanding Achievement Award and becoming The John Carlin Roder Distinguished Professor in Behavioural Neuroscience. Please see page 3 for details.

The 2020 Toronto Brain Bee Please see page 4 for details.

Neuroscience Opportunities Please see page 4 for details.

2019-20 CPIN Distinguished Lectureship Series

http://www.neuroscience.utoronto.ca/events/lectureship.htm

CPIN Emerging Leaders in Neuroscience Lecture
Speaker | **Amanda Woerman**, PhD, Assistant Professor, Biology Department, University of Massachusetts Amherst
Title | *Using cellular assays to identify disease-causing alpha-synuclein and tau strains*
Date | **Monday, January 20, 2020**
Time | 2:00 PM
Location | MSB 2170, Medical Sciences Building, 1 King's College Circle
Host | Dr. Gerold Schmitt-Ulms, Associate Professor, Department of Laboratory Medicine and Pathobiology, Tanz Centre for Research in Neurodegenerative Diseases, U of T

Reminder: CPIN Trainees: Please fill in the online **Lecture Report & Evaluation Form** as a record of your attendance to the Distinguished Lectureship Series within one week of attending the talk.

CPIN Newsletter

Zhong-Ping Feng
Director
CPIN
Graduate Studies

Iulia Park
Administrator
CPIN Office

CPIN Office
p.neuroscience@utoronto.ca
Tel.: 416 978 8637

Lead Faculty
Faculty of Medicine

CPIN Participating Units
Applied Psychology & Human Development
Biochemistry
Biomaterials & Biomedical Engineering
Cell & Systems Biology
Computer Science
Dentistry
Laboratory Medicine & Pathobiology
Medical Biophysics
Medical Science
Music
Pharmaceutical Sciences
Pharmacology & Toxicology
Physiology
Psychology
Public Health
Rehabilitation Science

Contributors:
Heart & Stroke/ Richard Lewar Centre of Excellence in Cardiovascular Research

Human Biology Program

Krembil Research Institute

St. Michael's Neuroscience Research Program

Collaborative Program in Neuroscience (CPIN)
University of Toronto
Newsletter – Vol. 36, No. 4 – December 2019

Welcome New CPIN Faculty Members

http:/ / www.neuroscience.utoronto.ca/ communications/ news_cpin_faculty_members.htm

We would like to welcome **Dr. Carol Schuurmans** (Professor, Departments of Biochemistry, Laboratory Medicine and Pathobiology, Ophthalmology and Visual Sciences, U of T; Dixon Family Chair in Ophthalmology Research and Senior Scientist, Sunnybrook Research Institute) as a new faculty member to the CPIN community.

Dr. Carol Schuurmans completed her BSc and MSc degrees in Microbiology at the University of Alberta and her PhD degree in Medical Genetics at the University of Toronto. She then undertook postdoctoral studies at the Institut de Génétique et de Biologie Moléculaire et Cellulaire in Strasbourg, France. Dr. Schuurmans joined the Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology at the University of Calgary as an Assistant Professor in 2001, and became full Professor in 2014. In July, 2016, Dr. Schuurmans joined the Sunnybrook Research Institute and became full Professor in the Department of Biochemistry at the University of Toronto. Her research is focused on the specification of neural cell fates and the control of tissue morphogenesis in the developing central nervous system, in particular in the retina and neocortex. She is now applying her knowledge of neural development to understand the injury response, and to create lineage conversion strategies for cell replacement therapies.

Dr. Schuurmans describes "the overarching goal of my laboratory is to understand how neurogenesis is regulated and cell fate choices are made in the developing central nervous system – in particular, in the retina and neocortex. Currently we focus on two families of transcription factors – the proneural genes Neurog1, Neurog2 and Ascl1, encoding basic-helix-loop-helix transcription factors, and members of the pleiomorphic adenoma gene (Plag) family, including Zac1, Plag1 and Plag-l2, encoding zinc finger transcription factors. We have also begun to examine how different signaling molecules (e.g., ERK, Pten) influence transcriptional networks to control retinal and cortical neurogenesis and tissue morphogenesis. More recently we have begun to apply the knowledge we have gained from studying embryonic development to interrogate the molecular response of neural progenitor cells to injury, and to design novel lineage conversion strategies for cellular repair."

Welcome New CPIN Students

http:/ / www.neuroscience.utoronto.ca/ students/ currentstudents.htm

We would like to extend a warm welcome to the following new CPIN Trainees:

Last Name	First Name	Home Unit	Degree	Supervisor
Henechowicz	Tara	MUS	PhD	Dr. Michael Thaut
Li	Guijin	IBBME	PhD	Dr. José Zariffa
Shah	Prajay	IBBME	PhD	Dr. Taufik Valiante
Stogios	Nicolette	IMS	MSc	Dr. Margaret Hahn

Congratulations CPIN Graduating Students

http:/ / www.neuroscience.utoronto.ca/ students/ currentstudents.htm

Last Name	First Name	Home Unit	Degree	Supervisor
Guet-McCreight	Alexandre	PSL	PhD	Dr. Frances Skinner
Sinopoli	Vanessa	IMS	PhD	Dr. Paul Arnold

Reminder: CPIN Student Completion Form CPIN graduate students who have completed both their home department and CPIN trainee requirements must fill in the online completion form located at the link below:
http:/ / www.neuroscience.utoronto.ca/ students/ cpin_student_completion_form.htm

Collaborative Program in Neuroscience (CPIN)
University of Toronto
Newsletter – Vol. 36, No. 4 – December 2019

News – CPIN Faculty Members

http:/ / www.neuroscience.utoronto.ca/ communications/ news_cpin_faculty_members.htm

Congratulations to CPIN Faculty member **Dr. Robert Gerlai** (UTM Psychology) on receiving the 2019 IBNS Outstanding Achievement Award and becoming The John Carlin Roder Distinguished Professor in Behavioural Neuroscience.

The Outstanding Achievement Award is the highest recognition awarded by the International Behavioral Neuroscience Society (IBNS). It recognizes the recipient for his/ her outstanding professional achievement in the field of behavioral neuroscience research and consistent and long-standing contributions to the Society. The IBNS is a non-profit scientific organization founded in 1992. It has members from 34 countries and consists of scientists, clinicians, teachers, and others with a background and interest in the relationship between brain and behavior.

The purpose of Distinguished Professorship at the University of Toronto is to advance and recognize individuals with highly distinguished accomplishments and those who display exceptional promise, who maintain an extraordinary level of activity in their research and scholarly work, and have achieved pre-eminence in their field in line with the University's stated objectives and emerging priorities. Robert's distinguished professorship is named after Dr. John Carlin Roder. Dr. Roder was a world-renowned Canadian neuroscientist, a pioneer of neurobehavioural genetics who made fundamental discoveries about the neurobiological mechanisms of neuropsychiatric and neurodegenerative diseases using animal models. Dr. Roder died of Huntington's Disease in 2018.

Dr. Gerlai received his Ph.D. from the Hungarian Academy of Sciences with the highest distinction in 1989. He has held numerous academic positions in Europe and North America and he also held leadership positions in the US biotechnology and biopharmaceutical research industry working as a senior research scientist and Vice President before joining University of Toronto in 2004 where he has been full professor at the Department of Psychology since 2008, and where he currently holds the John Carlin Roder Distinguished Professor in Behavioural Neuroscience title.

Dr. Gerlai received several awards including the Distinguished Scientist Award (2013) from the International Behavioral and Neural Genetics Society (IBANGS), the John Wiley Distinguished Speaker Award (2014) from the International Society of Developmental Psychobiology (ISDP), the University of Toronto Mississauga Excellence in Research Award (2015) and the Outstanding Achievement Award (2019) by the International Behavioral Neuroscience Society (IBNS).

Dr. Gerlai has published over 300 papers in peer reviewed scientific journals and books, with a cumulative citation number over 15000 and an H index of 62, covering his research on the molecular and neurobiological mechanisms of animal behaviour. He is member of editorial boards of eight peer reviewed scientific journals, and associate or section editor of an additional three. He has edited major handbooks on molecular genetic approaches in behavioural neuroscience (published in 1999, 2018, 2020) by Elsevier. He has been serving as a referee for major grant funding agencies across the world (North America, Europe and Asia). He is founding member of IBANGS, and is Elected Fellow of IBNS, and was the first two term President of this Society.

Since his tenure started at UTM, Dr. Gerlai has been serving the Campus and the University as chair and member of several committees. For example, currently he is Vice-Chair of the Campus Affairs Committee.

Dr. Gerlai is considered one of the leaders of neurobehavioural genetics in the world and the father of zebrafish behavioural neuroscience research. His research at UTM reflects his multidisciplinary background spanning psychology, neuroscience, pharmacology and genetics. His laboratory uses zebrafish and studies such questions as the mechanisms of alcohol abuse, fetal alcohol spectrum disorders, and of learning and memory.

Upcoming Events

U of T Neuroscience Seminars
http:/ / neuroscience.utoronto.ca/ events/ seminar.htm

Conferences and Meetings
http:/ / neuroscience.utoronto.ca/ events/ Conf_M.htm

Collaborative Program in Neuroscience (CPIN)
University of Toronto
Newsletter – Vol. 36, No. 4 – December 2019

2020 Toronto Brain Bee

http:/ / www.neuroscience.utoronto.ca/ events/ brainbee.htm

The Toronto Brain Bee organizing committee will be hosting the 2020 Toronto Brain Bee Annual Competition on Friday, April 3 at the University of Toronto.

The Brain Bee is a knowledge-based competition for high school students in the GTA region. It tests the knowledge of the students in neuroscience and provides an ideal environment for promoting outreach and enhancing interaction between the neuroscience community at the University of Toronto and the general public.

The winner of the Toronto Brain Bee competition goes on to represent Toronto in the National competition at McMaster University and potentially the International Brain Bee, which in 2020 will be held in Washington, DC.

The competition has been historically run by CPIN graduate students, faculty members, and postdoctoral fellows, whose contributions to organize and host the event has been an integral part of its success over the years. CPIN trainees have been actively involved in delivering presentations to high-school students, providing registration and coordination help, acting as event scorers, interviewing the participants, event photography and assisting in other tasks related to the event.

CPIN members who would like to volunteer to help organize and run the 2020 Toronto Brain Bee competition please fill out the volunteer form at: http:/ / www.neuroscience.utoronto.ca/ events/ brainbee/ brain_bee_volunteer_form.htm

Related Links:
Official Toronto Brain Bee webpage: http:/ / www.neuroscience.utoronto.ca/ events/ brainbee.htm

High-school Participant Registration Link: http:/ / www.neuroscience.utoronto.ca/ events/ brainbee/ torontobbreg.htm

Neuroscience Opportunities

http:/ / www.neuroscience.utoronto.ca/ communications/ Positions_Available.htm

Postdoctoral Fellow Positions

Post-doctoral research fellow position in Neural Engineering
"Electrical Neuromodulation of Bladder Function: A Mechanism of Action Study"
Institute of Biomaterials and Biomedical Engineering (IBBME)
University of Toronto
Click here for details

Postdoctoral Fellow position
Global Mental Health and Mood Disorders,
UofT Dept. of Psychiatry & CAMH
Click here for details

Medical Innovation Fellow (6-8 positions)
VP Research – Research Western
Western University
Click here for details