

Public Education & Communication Committee
Annual Report
September 2006

Part 1 — Charter Updates

Advise

- Advise the Council of the Society for Neuroscience on print and electronic products, and services that promote the concepts and explain the progress and promise of neuroscience research.
 - Continued the production of *Brain Briefings*, *Brain Research Success Stories*, and *Brain Facts*
 - Several new products are in the planning stage such as a series on unexpected advances in one area of research derived from a completely different discipline. Homepage and Web site were redesigned to make them more informative and user-friendly. New search feature makes finding topics of interest much easier. Neuroscience in the News Web feature informs members and the public of published stories on neuroscience research in a timely manner. Patient video series helps inform members, the public and elected officials about the human toll of neurological and psychiatric disorders.
- Serve as a source of information to Council on education issues pertaining to neuroscience education in the K-12 sector and our member's efforts to engage in public education and outreach.
 - Strategy for K-12 neuroscience education: Summer institute, educational partnership, successful scientist-teacher partners.
 - Second decade of Brain Awareness campaign – evaluation and strategic planning completed proposing growth of campaign as a partnership between Dana Alliance for Brain Initiatives (DABI) and SfN.
 - *Brain Briefings*, designed for use by high school biology teachers, continue to be the most visited site on the SfN Web site (after annual meeting and membership directory).
- Advise Council on potential strategic partnerships with other professions/associations to accomplish the goals of the SfN strategic plan.
 - Association of Neuroscience Departments and Programs (ANDP) partnership has been enhanced. Opportunity created to collaborate around the Carnegie Initiative on the Doctorate and ANDP feature in *Neuroscience Quarterly*.
 - Successful Coalition on Animals in Research Education (CARE) serves as vehicle for partnering with scientific societies and biomedical research organizations for delivery of animal research message.
 - FUN collaboration for K-16 strategy should be enhanced.

- Advise Council on the messages the Society should communicate through the membership to a variety of public audiences.
 - Development of core concepts in neuroscience for teachers and the public.
 - Successful collaboration between GPA and PECC to execute Public Advocacy Forum. Explore collaboration at the cluster level in the future.

Represent

- Represent SfN in its partnership relationships with the National Science Teachers Association (NSTA), National Association of Biology Teachers (NABT), the Dana Alliance for Brain Initiatives (DABI), and other educational organizations.
 - National Science Teachers Association and National Association of Biology Teachers (NSTA/NABT) – grow presence into a major partnership to raise visibility of neuroscience. Plan meeting NSTA executive staff. No representation at NABT for 2006 & 2007 due to overlap with AM.
 - Association of Science Teacher Educators and American Educational Research Association (ASTE/AERA)– establish partnership with professional groups that train science teachers and perform research on scientific approaches to classroom instruction.
 - Science Olympiad – establish partnership in medical sciences.
 - DABI – execute strategic initiatives for second decade of joint campaign
 - Annual Report highlights programs and science, and serves to inform potential partners about the mission and goals of SfN.
 - SfN works annually with DABI to execute two Brain Bee competitions—one in NYC and one in Washington, DC.

- Facilitate communication between the Society and media, including the transfer of new scientific knowledge developed by SfN members to the media, K-12 teachers, education leaders, advocacy groups, elected officials and the public.
 - Publication and distribution of *Brain Facts*, *Brain Briefings*, and *Brain Research Success Stories*.
 - K-12 teachers/education leaders: Thousands of teachers reached through workshops, information dissemination, web-based resources and targeted outreach. Ten Neuroscientist-Teacher Travel Awards in 2006. Maintain the Neuroscientist-Teacher Partner Program at sfn.org. Teacher & school participation in BAW worldwide.
 - 2006 Public Advocacy Forum, “Becoming Media Savvy”, will outline how scientists should better interact with members of the media.
 - Elected officials: Elected officials are invited to participate in BAW activities.
 - Public: The public is invited to participate in BAW activities in places such as community centers, schools, nursing homes, assisted living facilities, etc.
 - Media: Established Science Journalism Student Award to bring two

students to the annual meeting and become familiar with neuroscience and establish comfort with the field which will result in an interest in the field as their career develops. Annual meeting press book 1 includes 18 press conference news releases involving work of some 100 scientists; part 2 of the press book highlights some 700 potentially newsworthy abstracts for the press.

Manage Activities

- Build the capacity of K-12 educators to integrate neuroscience content in science teaching activities through collaborative activities.
 - NSTA convention: Conducted workshops and reached thousands of teachers through the exhibit. Numerous SfN members present to interact directly with teachers.
 - Neuroscientist Teacher Partner Database serves as a catalyst to bring neuroscience directly to educators.
 - Disseminated Neuroscience Education CD, supported teacher professional development using SfN resources.
 - NTP travel awards—successful expansion to ten pairs.
 - Provided a suite of materials on line for teachers wanting to participate in Brain Awareness Week.
 - Worked cooperatively with creators of the “Wired to Win” IMAX film to showcase SfN education resources at the National Education Symposium reaching 50 teachers in a 5-day institute in Boston (Oct 2006).
- Execute initiatives aimed at increasing the involvement of SfN members and chapters in public education and outreach, such as Brain Awareness Week.
 - Strategic Initiatives generated for Brain Awareness campaign by joint effort of Dana Alliance and SfN.
 - Increased impact of Brain Awareness Campaign meeting at AM.
 - Refined and further expanded our efforts to document BAW efforts in 2006. 31% increase in number of reports submitted. Revised and enhanced the on-line feature that makes these reports available at www.sfn.org/baw.
- Increase involvement of SfN members and chapters in public education and outreach.
 - Coordination with chapters to encourage local involvement. Co-sponsorship of Next Generation award.
 - Better identification and recognition of Chapters participating in BAW.
- Catalyze a shift in the professional culture of SfN members and chapters to more consistently include and embrace public communication, outreach, and education about neuroscience.
 - Collaborated with ANDP on several fronts. Delivered a keynote address at their annual meeting aimed at the importance of public education and outreach.
 - Science Educator Award is now in it’s fourth year.
 - Public Advocacy Forum for media at Neuroscience 2006 will help members become more comfortable and provide tools for talking with

- media.
 - American Society of Cell Biology journal issue completed—sole focus on Neuroscience Education.
- Provide an electronic gateway via the SfN Web site to educational resources that will foster the integration of neuroscience content in education activities.
 - Web re-design completed to better position educational resources and provide a pathway for educators to access SfN resources.
- Facilitate collaborative activities with the Committee on Animals in Research that will deliver a balanced message on the use of animals in biomedical research to educators and the public.
 - Successful meetings of the Coalition for Animal Research Education (CARE) throughout 2006 involving numerous scientific societies and biomedical organizations in addition to NIH Office of Science Educ.
- Publicize to the media new neuroscience findings presented each year at the SfN annual meeting through a program of structured press briefings.
 - 18 press conferences at Neuroscience 2005 resulted in 254 original stories and more than 3,100 clips. Eighteen press conferences planned for Neuroscience 2006.
- Publicize new neuroscience findings published throughout the year in scientific journals.
 - As of September, 8 news releases produced from *Journal of Neuroscience* articles in 2006, compared with 10 in all of 2005. Tracking and reporting media mentions began early 2006; some media picking up news releases include *Science*, *Nature*, Associated Press, Reuters, *Washington Post*, and BBC.
- Promote interesting neuroscience research on topics of interest to the public through newsletters, brochures, the SfN Web site, and other print and electronic products.
 - Continued producing two-page *Brain Briefings* to inform educators and press about neuroscience:
 - 2006**
 - October - Migraine
 - Summer - Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder
 - June - Age-Related Macular Degeneration
 - May - Autism in Children
 - April - Treating Opiate Addiction
 - March - Huntington's Disease
 - February - Reading Failure
 - January - Gene Silencing
 - 2005**
 - December - Love and the Brain
 - November - Bipolar Disorder and the Brain
 - Continued to produce *Brain Research Success Stories*, highlighting recent success and future potential of neuroscience to government officials and the public:
 - Since November 2005: Autism, ALS, Nicotine Addiction,

Huntington's Disease, Reading Failure, Age-related Macular Degeneration, OCD, Migraine, Muscular Dystrophy

- *Brain Facts*, a primer on the brain and disorders, was reprinted due to overwhelming popularity; first printing was 15,000; second printing will be 25,000.
- Respond to media inquiries on neuroscience topics.
 - Performed on ongoing basis as needed by PI staff.
- Empower SfN members to engage in public dialogue and provide them with the tools to do so.
 - Collaboration with Professional Development cluster and University of Pittsburgh's Teaching Survival Skills and Ethics.
 - Execution of Public Advocacy Forum in Atlanta aimed at communication with the media.

Monitor

- Monitor trends in K-12 science education and curricula.
 - Growth in neuroscientist/teacher partnership program identifying successful models.
 - Partnership with NSTA/NABT/ASTE/AERA.
 - Attended the annual convention of the American Educational Research Association to review and discuss neuroscience research relating to teaching and learning.
 - Attended the annual meeting of the Association of Science Teacher Educators; presented to their Board of Directors and opened a dialogue regarding the presence of neuroscience content in graduate training programs for K-12 science teachers.
- Oversee the vetting of the scientific content of the Society's published materials by panels of scientists appropriately knowledgeable about the specific field discussed in the materials.
 - Ongoing on as needed basis for press releases and all publications.
- Maintain a media resource directory of neuroscientists who are knowledgeable and at ease when speaking to science writers
 - Currently includes about 150 scientists; Plans to expand and enhance usability for press.
- Coordinate with the Professional Development, Mentoring, and Development Cluster to provide media training to our membership.
 - Coordinating a Public Advocacy Forum for media training at Neuroscience 2006.
- Review the compilation of media stories about neuroscience in order to measure how effectively the intended messages are getting across to the media and whether they are being communicated appropriately to the public.
 - Monthly reports on media mentions. Meta and content analysis performed when possible as resources allow.
- Evaluate each year's program of press releases and press conferences for effectiveness.
 - Monthly reports on media mentions.

Coordinate and Communicate

- Coordinate and strategize with Government and Public Affairs Committee, the Committee on Animals in Research, as well as the Membership and Chapters Committees about suggestions for how to best use the Society's educational materials to inform policymakers and educators, and about new materials and products that should be developed and produced.
 - Points of intersection are between PECC and: Coalition on Animals in Research, Public Advocacy Forum and Membership and Chapters. In all areas, materials are being explored, better marketed and reviewed in a collaborative manner.
- Communicate with other Society groups such as the Program Committee and the editorial board of *The Journal of Neuroscience* as needed to help generate suggestions about key scientific discoveries, ideas and topics that should be targeted for communication to the media and the public.
 - Discussions ongoing; Exploring initiatives with Journal to increase media coverage.
- Coordinate activities with the other committees in the Public Outreach Cluster, which also includes the Committee on Animals in Research and the Government and Public Affairs Committee. The chair will serve as the committee's representative on the cluster steering committee.
 - Ongoing joint efforts with CAR and GPA.

Part 2 — Other Updates

Please provide updates on any other activities of the committee that are not already covered in the charter.

Development of proposal for a summer teacher institute
Sending 3 workshops to NSTA meeting – great applicant pool
Have identified keynote speaker for 2008 NSTA convention (neuroscientist)

Part 3 — Questions for Cluster Steering Committee / Council
Use the space below propose questions for discussion by the Cluster Steering Committee (if appropriate) and/or Council.

Formalize strategy for recurrent themes of Public Advocacy Forum at each of three sites for AM; planning for San Diego
Staff leadership and expertise on topic of animals in research
Joint strategy for identifying core concepts and focus of public education
Evaluation piece for individual and joint programs. Need for external consultant
Importance of Brain Awareness campaign to message delivery: How can committees within the cluster better support the campaign?
Need to capture on video training and inspirational segments
Integration of animal research into other publications targeted to public

Part 4 — Other Comments
Use the space below for any other comments.

Setting committee size and protocol for appointing new members
Directive regarding internal versus extramural funding for projects
Prepare SfN infrastructure for extramural funding opportunities
Number of staff and specialization required to support desired activities
Development of a public education lectureship (equivalent to Grass lecture in science)