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Society for Neuroscience Announces Awards for Excellence in Science Education and Outreach

WASHINGTON, DC — The Society for Neuroscience (SfN) will honor the winners of science education and outreach awards at Neuroscience 2016, SfN's annual meeting and the world's largest source of emerging news about brain science and health

“The creativity of this year's winners of our science education and outreach awards and their commitment to fostering excitement and understanding of neuroscience within broad and diverse audiences builds essential public support for scientific discovery,” said SfN President Hollis Cline.

Science Educator Award: Norbert Myslinski

SfN created the Science Educator Award in 2003 to recognize outstanding neuroscientists who have made significant contributions in promoting public education and awareness about the field. This year's Science Educator Award is supported by the Dana Foundation and includes complimentary registration and transportation to SfN's annual meeting, the opportunity to write a feature commentary on science education in eNeuro, and a \$5,000 honorarium.

Norbert Myslinski, PhD, is a member of the University of Maryland's Department of Neural and Pain Sciences in Baltimore. His passion and compassion has inspired more than 20,000 students to learn about the human brain. From kindergartens to graduate schools, from medical and nursing schools to prisons, he is a beloved teacher who demonstrates that neuroscience can be applied to all of our daily lives. Through his many writings and teachings, his summer research programs, his programs in brain art and literature, and his Youth Neuroscience Clubs of America, he motivates teenagers worldwide to pursue careers in the neuroscience. One program that Myslinski created and leads is the International Brain Bee. Consisting of 180 Chapters in 50 countries and 6 continents, and collaborating with hundreds of universities and organizations, the ultimate goal of the Brain Bee is to help treat and find cures for brain disorders by inspiring young men and women to enter the basic and clinical neuroscience.

Next Generation Award: John Meitzen, the Brain Matters Podcast Team and the Knowing Neurons Team

Established in 2007, the Next Generation Award recognizes SfN chapter members who have made outstanding contributions to public communication, outreach, and education about neuroscience. The award honors individuals or teams at the pre/postdoctoral level and junior faculty level with a \$300 honorarium and a \$750 travel award to attend SfN's annual meeting. Additionally, the recipient's chapter receives \$2,000 to continue outreach efforts in the coming year. This year, the junior faculty level award will be given to John Meitzen, PhD from North Carolina State University; the pre/postdoctoral level award will be shared by two graduate student teams.

John Meitzen, PhD, assistant professor at North Carolina State University, was instrumental in starting and organizing the Brain Awareness Night at the North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences. Now an annual event, it includes opportunities for young scientists to engage with the public through talks about their work and hands-on exhibits. Meitzen also developed an inquiry-driven neuroscience capstone course for undergraduates organized around Nobel laureate Nikolaas Tinbergen's "four questions." This successful framework encourages the students to actively consider a topic in neuroscience at multiple levels of analysis from molecular to evolutionary.

Anthony Lacagnina, Lauren Kreeger and Matthew Davis, all graduate students in The Institute of Neuroscience at The University of Texas at Austin, host and produce a podcast called "Brain Matters," which has quickly found a large audience. Through adept use of their website and social media, this innovative team has extended the reach of their conversations with neuroscientists.

Knowing Neurons is a neuroscience education and outreach website that was created by graduate students at the University of California, Los Angeles and the University of Southern California. The young scientists of Knowing Neurons, which include Katherine Fehlhaber, Joel Frohlich, and Joo Yeun Lee, explain complicated ideas about the brain clearly and accurately using powerful images, infographics, and animations to enhance written content. With an extensive social media presence, Knowing Neurons has become an important science communication outlet and resource for both students and teachers.

The [Society for Neuroscience](#) (SfN) is an organization of nearly 38,000 basic scientists and clinicians who study the brain and nervous system.