**Neuroscience 2016**

**PRESS EVENTS SCHEDULE**

Unless otherwise noted, all events will take place in **Room 15A** at San Diego Convention Center.

**SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 12**

2-2:30 p.m. — Media Availability: Drs. Shekhar Saxena and Huda Akil

**Dr. Saxena** serves as director of the Department of Mental Health & Substance Abuse at the World Health Organization and is this year’s Dialogues Between Neuroscience and Society lecturer. With 30 years of experience as a psychiatrist, Dr. Saxena will shed light on how neuroscience can help impact mental health in his lecture, “Global Mental Health and Neuroscience: Challenges and Opportunities,” taking place from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. in Ballroom 20.

**Dr. Akil** is a professor of psychiatry and research at the University of Michigan and former SfN president who will serve as a panelist during the Dialogues Between Neuroscience and Society lecture, providing insight into the strong connection between basic science and mental health.

**SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 13**

9 a.m. — Press Conference: Neuroscience of Emotion & Social Behavior

Humans are social animals and neural networks underpin all emotions and social interactions. Understanding how these networks spur us to console or fear each other, among other things, will open the door to helping people with schizophrenia, autism, and anxiety disorders. Researchers will discuss how a hormone involved in social bonding and a neurotransmitter involved in reward work promote social interaction in mice; how structural differences in the brain may explain a tendency to dread social situations; and how infants’ brains respond to different emotions.

11 a.m. — Press Conference: Sensory Experience Guides Development

Early sensory experiences profoundly influence the developing brain. Environmental enrichment, sensory stimulation, and sensory deprivation all shape the connections and organization in the brain, in addition to affecting behavior. Scientists discuss animal research exploring how deafness, excessive sensory stimulation, and environmental enrichment may alter the brain and behavior.

1 p.m. — Media Availability: NIH Directors

Directors from several of the institutes at National Institutes of Health (NIH) will discuss news coming out of the agencies and important areas of focus in science and health.

2 p.m. — Press Conference: Zika: An Emergent Threat

Long considered a mostly harmless mosquito-borne virus, Zika rapidly emerged from obscurity to dominate headlines. Linked to neurological birth defects in infants, the virus can also afflict adults and is associated with Guillain-Barre Syndrome, a disorder associated with temporary paralysis. Researchers discuss the newest finding associated with Zika, including how the virus damages neural stem cells, how it promotes the growth of non-neural stem cells, and how “mini-brains” offer a means to study infection and test for new therapeutics.

4 p.m. — Press Reception, Room 17A

Join your colleagues and SfN leaders for complimentary hors d’oeuvres and beverages. Remarks by SfN President Hollis Cline.
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 14

9 a.m. — Press Conference: All in the Family

DNA sequence is not destiny. The external environment contributes to how the information stored in DNA translates into traits like height and risk for disease. Sometimes, the air we breathe and the food we eat affect not just ourselves, but our offspring as well. Researchers investigate how parents’ experiences — like stress, diet, and drug use — may contribute to their offspring’s risk for various neurodevelopmental disorders such as autism, schizophrenia, and depression.

10:30-11:15 a.m. — BrainFacts.org PitchFest, Press Room 15B

Meet with the editors of BrainFacts.org to pitch your favorite ideas from the annual meeting and beyond. Contributors eager to tell the story of the brain are all welcome to join this event, where BrainFacts.org editors will give feedback on your pitch and facilitate the process for you to become a potential contributor.

11:30 a.m. — Press Conference: Going Rogue

The damage caused by Parkinson’s disease arises from the accumulation of rogue forms of a protein called alpha-synuclein. Scientists discuss research in animals describing how the misfolded clumps of protein may spread from neuron to neuron and even from gut to brain. Also, new research in animals and humans offers potential therapeutic strategies to treat this common neurodegenerative disorder.

1:30 p.m. — Press Conference: Targeting the Cannabinoid System

Targeting cannabinoid receptors — which bind both natural neurotransmitters and the psychoactive ingredient in marijuana — may provide some of the therapeutic benefits of marijuana without the side effects. Scientists explore opportunities to tap into the brain’s cannabinoid system in order to develop therapies for difficult conditions like chronic pain, alcoholism, and post-traumatic stress disorder.

3:30 p.m. — Press Conference: New Technology, New Opportunities

Novel technologies and improved methods for common techniques are opening up opportunities for better understanding and potential new treatments for brain disorders. Researchers discuss new techniques for mapping individual neurons and developing new animal models as well as nonsurgical methods for deep brain stimulation and a safer way to edit DNA.

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 15

10 a.m. — Press Conference: Getting to the Root of Autism

The prevalence of autism spectrum disorder in the U.S. has been increasing — in 2010 and 2012, 1 in 68 children received an autism diagnosis. Researchers here reveal a link between pesticides and autism behaviors in a rat model, explore the role of oxytocin and sociability in mice and prairie voles, and explore the neurobiological basis for social impairment in autistic children.

11:30 a.m. — Press Conference: Untangling Alzheimer’s

By 2025, an estimated 7 million people in the U.S. will be diagnosed with Alzheimer’s disease. Despite its prevalence, the underlying causes for most cases of Alzheimer’s disease are currently unknown, and there is no preventative medicine or treatment. Research presented includes the role of circadian rhythms in the risk for Alzheimer’s, evidence for protective mechanisms against Alzheimer’s, and the development of a biomarker for regenerative therapies.