



# The Jupiter Life Science Initiative - Neuroscience Program

Spring 2016

The **Jupiter Life Science Initiative** unites scientists in research and training programs from FAU's Charles E. Schmidt College of Science and Harriet L. Wilkes Honors College, The Max Planck Florida Institute for Neuroscience (MPFI) and The Scripps Research Institute (TSRI).

## People

- **Dr. Alex Keene** received the 2016 Young Scientist Award from the International Behavioural and Neural Genetics Society (IBANGS) and will deliver the Young Scientist Lecture at the annual IBANGS meeting in Bar Harbor, ME.
- **Brati Das** defended her thesis entitled "Molecular Mechanisms Of Ca<sub>v</sub>2.1 Expression And Functional Organization At The Presynaptic Terminal" in February (mentor Dr. Samuel Young, MPFI).
- **Zhongmin Lu** presented her thesis entitled "Presynaptic Determinants Of Synaptic Strength And Energy Efficiency At Drosophila Neuromuscular Junctions" last September (mentor Dr. Greg Macleod, FAU).
- **Shweta Singh** received FAU's Charles E. Schmidt College of Science 2015 Dissertation of the Year Award.
- **Ciny John** and **Shweta Singh** both received 2015-2016 Saurino Scholarships.
- **Karlis Justs** received the 2015-2016 Krinzman Scholarship.
- **Stephanie Kelly** and **Emir (Tyrone) Penserga** attended FAU Day in Tallahassee (11/2015) where they participated in FAU Government Relations and met with State Representatives to discuss FAU's IB Ph.D. program.

## International Connections

- Drs. Rod Murphey and Ken Dawson-Scully will serve on the Steering (RKM) and Selection (KDS and RKM) Committees in Bonn, Germany with MPFI faculty to interview and select ~20 students for the first trans-Atlantic International Max Planck Research School (IMPRS). IMPRS is a joint Ph.D. program between four institutions: FAU, University of Bonn and the associated Max Planck Institutes in Bonn, Germany and Jupiter, FL.
- Monica Risley, FAU IB student, will travel to Germany to be interviewed for IMPRS.
- Travel awards to the Bonn International Graduate School (BIGS) Meeting in Germany (11/2015) were granted to graduate students, Nanna Ásgeirsdóttir, Joan Lora and Jennifer Krill.
- The First Place award for Best Presentation at the BIGS Meeting in Germany was presented to Joan Lora.

## Events

- The *Tri-Institutional Neuroscience Seminar Series* (TINSS) hosted (since 6/2015): Dr. Jason Christie (MPFI), "Compartmentalized Signaling In Cerebellar Circuits", Dr. Greg Macleod (FAU), "A Role For The Vesicular Glutamate Transporter In Presynaptic pH Homeostasis", Dr. Gavin Rumbaugh (TSRI), "Synapse And Circuit Dysfunction In Cognitive Disorders" and Dr. James Schummers (MPFI) "New Insights into the specificity of neuron-astrocyte interactions".
- The *FAU/Scripps Neuroscience Seminar Series* presented: Dr. Mei Zhen (Mount Sinai Hospital, University of Toronto), "The C. elegans Motor Circuit: Development, Function And Disease Models", Dr. Akira Chiba (University of Miami), "A FRET-Based 'Social Interaction' Sensor System For Exposing In Vivo Protein Networks" and Dr. Michael Nitabach (Yale School of Medicine) "Adaptive Multisensory Decision Making".
- *SYNAPSE 2016*: With the Palm Beach Chapter of the Society for Neuroscience, FAU, MPFI and TSRI hosted this annual networking event for students and scientists in neuroscience. Over 200 people attended and 60 posters were displayed on topics such as behavioral studies, neural computations and molecular neuroscience.

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*Wiring the Brain...Development and Degeneration of the Brain...The Aging Brain...Stroke, Stress and Drug Discovery...Learning and Memory*

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