

Neuroscience Program

The Interdisciplinary Program in Neuroscience for Undergraduates at Vanderbilt

January 2020 Newsletter



Vanderbilt Undergraduate Summer Research Program

The **Vanderbilt Undergraduate Summer Research Program (VUSR)** provides **Vanderbilt undergraduate students** with the opportunity to fulfill **10 weeks of full-time research (June 1, 2020 - August 7, 2020)** under the mentorship of **any full-time Vanderbilt or VUMC faculty member** during the summer. The goal of VUSR is to encourage and enhance student-faculty mentoring and joint research efforts.

- The main component of the program is the scholarly work done by the Vanderbilt undergraduate student (VUSR student) in collaboration with their faculty mentor.
- VUSR involves full-time work. Participants cannot enroll in summer session courses. Additional requirements are listed below.
- Out of 184 applicants, 87 students received awards in 2019.
- A \$5000 stipend is awarded, with a limited number of \$6000 Littlejohn and Goldberg Fellow awards made for exceptional applications.
- Students who accept VUSR stipends are required to:
 - attend a spring workshop to review program logistics
 - complete 10 weeks of full-time research with their faculty mentor over the summer
 - present at a roundtable discussion toward the end of the 10-week period
 - present at the [Vanderbilt Undergraduate Research Fair](#)
- An information session for students was held on November 6. Slides from the presentation are available [here](#).
- Vanderbilt faculty may sponsor only two applications per competition.

The deadline to submit is January 30, 2020 at 12 p.m. CT (noon)

Application, eligibility information, and FAQs are available [HERE](#)

Honors Program

Congratulations to Caroline Bodnya for successfully defending her theses in the Fall!

- **Modeling the Function of the BCL-2 Family Effectors in Early Human Brain Development**, Caroline Bodnya, Vivian Gama Laboratory

For more general information about the program's requirements, please visit the [Honors page](#) on our website.

NOTEWORTHY COURSE ANNOUNCEMENTS

THIS FALL Senior Seminar in Neuroscience with Dr. Elizabeth Catania

Normally offered in the spring, the Senior Seminar course (NSC 4969) will be offered this fall.

In turn, Dr. Catania's Developmental Neuroscience (NSC 3269) will be offered in the spring, where it is normally offered in the fall.

Faculty Spotlight Dr. Gaynor Wild

Adjunct Professor in Neuroscience
Teaches Psychopharmacology (NSC 3260) & Neurochemistry (NSC 3891-01)

Q: How did you get into Neuroscience?

A: I have been interested in brain since I was quite young. I started memorizing a book on brain anatomy when I was in high school. I don't remember exactly when this interest began.

Q: What do you like most about teaching at Vanderbilt?

A: The generally high morale

Q: Do you have any advice for students wanting to continue in this field?

A: I wish to encourage those with a genuine interest, but research in this area is difficult and getting more so. Funding issue problems have been worsening for quite some time. Think it over carefully. But, don't choose any profession unless you genuinely like everything about it.

Neuroscience Talks

One of the many strengths of Neuroscience at Vanderbilt is the wealth of neuroscience related talks by leaders in the field sponsored by VU and VUMC departments.

To take advantage, consider attending weekly Grand Rounds in Neurology, Neurosurgery, or Psychiatry. The Vanderbilt Brain Institute sponsors talks about a wide range of neuroscience topics, typically on Wednesday afternoons at 4:00pm. The Psychology department also has weekly lunch time seminars on Neuroscience and Cognitive Neuroscience.

Information about upcoming talks is oftentimes announced via the neuromajors listserv, or details can be found under the [Psychological Sciences events](#) or the [VBI seminar series](#) webpages.



If are interested in the Honors Program, there will be an informational meeting on Tuesday, February 4th at 5:00PM in Wilson Hall 316



The **NEUROMAJORS CLUB** hopes that you had a wonderful winter break! We will be sending out order links for Neuroscience apparel soon, so keep an eye out for that. We have several exciting events coming up this semester, including an event that shows the diversity of careers that people with a neuroscience degree can pursue, academic registration tips, and brunch at Dr. Smith's house. If you are not on the listserv and want to hear more about these events, add us on Anchorlink!

--- Francine Erfe
Neuromajors Club President



Brain Blast 2020

The Vanderbilt Brain Institute's annual public outreach event, **Brain Blast**, will take place on Saturday, March 28th from 10:00am-2:00pm.

K-8 kids and parents will visit booths designed by VBI labs and groups to build a neuron, touch real brains, and learn about cool science.

Interested in participating at this event? You can sign up to volunteer [HERE](#) or email [Kellie Williford](mailto:Kellie.Williford) for any additional info and questions.



Graduating Seniors & Neuro Faculty
SAVE THE DATE
Neuroscience Senior Reception
Thursday, May 7, 2020 from 3:00-4:30pm
Invitation to follow

Research News @ Vanderbilt

Vanderbilt researcher shares more than 3,000 brain scans to support the study of reading and language development

Vanderbilt University neuroscientist [James R. Booth](#) is publicly releasing two large scale neuroimaging datasets on reading and language development to support other researchers across the world who are working to understand how academic skills develop in childhood.

"We have been able to follow our curiosity and answer some really interesting questions with these datasets," said Booth, the Patricia and Rhodes Hart Professor of Educational Neuroscience at Vanderbilt [Peabody College](#) of education and human development. "My hope is that others will be able to reproduce some of our core findings and extend them in interesting new directions."

Available in the digital repository [OpenNeuro](#), together the datasets include more than 3,000 magnetic resonance imaging scans that explore brain structure and function in school-age children.

To read the full article, click [HERE](#)

Dr. Booth currently teaches one of the Neuro-major courses, Language and the Brain, which is offered in the fall semesters.

Article originally posted by [Joan Brasher](#) Jan. 10, 2020



Eight Vanderbilt faculty elected AAAS fellows for 2019

Program director David Zald, and research faculty Gordon Logan elected as fellows of the [American Association for the Advancement of Science](#), the world's largest general scientific society. Election as a fellow is an honor bestowed upon AAAS members by their peers.

[Gordon D. Logan](#), Centennial Professor of Psychology, for theoretical and empirical contributions to the understanding of attention, skill and executive control.

[David H. Zald](#), Cornelius Vanderbilt Chair, professor of psychology and professor of psychiatry and behavioral sciences, for distinguished contributions to the field of neuroscience, particularly for uncovering the neural and neuropharmacological systems involved in emotion and motivation.

To read the full list of elected fellows, click [HERE](#)

Article originally posted by [Kara Furlong](#) Nov. 26, 2019

Are you interested in having your research mentor be your Neuroscience advisor?

We are encouraging students who are working in labs with A&S faculty to recruit their PI to becoming their major advisor. Not only will this create a better distribution among the current Neuroscience advisors, but will also allow for a more personal student-advisor relationship.

If you or your mentor have any questions or concerns, feel free to reach out to our [Program Office](#) for more information.

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CONTACT
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