

EDITORIAL

Teach Me and I'll Remember

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'Teach me and I'll remember, involve me and I'll learn.'

- Benjamin Franklin

Each year the Faculty for Undergraduate Neuroscience (FUN) recognizes exceptional achievements of the society's members through the FUN faculty awards program. Traditionally the awards are announced during the FUN social and poster session at the Society for Neuroscience (SfN) meeting. Unfortunately, the FUN social and in-person business meeting at SfN were cancelled in 2020 and 2021 due to the Covid-19 Pandemic. While awardees during these years were recognized at virtual FUN business meetings, the FUN community spirit, excitement, and emotional warmth of an in-person ceremony was missed. The frenetic pace of life and work, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic, sometimes leaves us little time to pause and reflect on the accomplishments of our peers. Here we take a moment to do this. We congratulate the 2020 and 2021 FUN faculty awardees in a new way to recognize their educational achievements in this JUNE issue and for the JUNE archives.

Covid-19 has changed the way we teach and reshaped the ways in which the FUN community interacts. The annual in-person SfN FUN social and meeting and the in-person triennial FUN workshops have traditionally been at the heart of the FUN community and how members communicate. We hope that a return to these gatherings is on the horizon. However, new traditions that embrace ways of communicating virtually with each other are also obviously here to stay. These new ways of connecting online are an opportunity for enhancing diversity, equality and inclusivity as they allow those who cannot attend SfN or the FUN business meetings to stay engaged with our society.

Here we recognize the 2020 and 2021 awardees by announcing them in JUNE, along with their occasionally edited testimonials that describe their educational activities. We suggest that going forward, FUN faculty awards be announced annually not only in person at the SfN FUN social and business meetings, but also in a stand-alone editorial in the following Spring edition of JUNE. This approach would be inclusive of all FUN members in a 21st century online landscape. All members of FUN, both those who can attend SfN, as well as those who cannot, can celebrate and learn about our colleagues' achievements. To the past, current, and future Award winners: Our FUN community is grateful for your inspiring contributions to

teaching neuroscience. The FUN executive committee does plan to recognize these COVID era award winners in San Diego at the SfN meeting this fall, in our traditional way.

2020 FUN AWARD WINNERS

CAROL ANN PAUL EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR:

Christina Ragan, Georgia Institute of Technology, United States

Dr. Christina Ragan's contributions to neuroscience education at various stages along her academic journey have been numerous and influential. One of her nominators notes her contributions to the greater neuroscience community. *"We first connected in early 2018 through the Teaching Resources for Biological Psychology and Neuroscience Facebook page that Christina founded and continues to actively support. I have found this page to be an incredible resource that allows me and over a thousand members to connect, share, and learn about new and effective teaching techniques."* Her commitment to teaching her own students is also highly regarded, as well as her outreach activities with Brain Awareness Day. Her commitment to community engagement has made impacts on the local and regional scale through efforts such as Brain Awareness Day and through engagement with home schooled students. She has also served as a research mentor for numerous students, many of whom have received grants for their work, co-authored research publications, and presented their work at scientific conferences. For her dedication to her students in the classroom, in the laboratory, and in her leadership in the neuroscience community, Dr. Ragan is well deserving of the Carol Ann Paul Educator of the Year Award.

FUN MENTOR AWARD:

Valerie Haftel, Morehouse College, United States

Valerie Haftel has mentored many undergraduate neuroscientists at her home institution, Morehouse College, as well as other colleges and universities in the Atlanta area. Her impact as a mentor and as a teacher also extends internationally through partnerships in Germany and India. Valerie worked tirelessly to secure extramural funds to provide scholarships, build programs, and support student research. As a formal teaching mentor for postdoctoral fellows, Valerie shares her passion for mentorship and serves as a role model for other young neuroscientists wanting to follow in her footsteps.

FUN SERVICE AWARD:**Dr. Alo Basu, College of The Holy Cross;****Dr. Jason Chan, Marian University;****Dr. Yuanyuan “Connie” Kang, University of Houston-Downtown;****Dr. Melanie Leussis, Emmanuel College, United States**

Alo Basu, Jason Chan, Connie Kang, and Melanie Leussis planned not one, but two FUN summer events in 2020 at the height of the Covid-19 pandemic. They were all set to run the in-person FUN Summer Workshop at Davidson College when the coronavirus pandemic hit, and that meeting was cancelled. Rather than give up, they quickly pivoted to create the first ever FUN Summer Virtual Meeting. They put together a proposal for the FUN Executive committee in record time. They added speakers and sessions to address remote instruction needs, in addition to securing continued participation from stellar presenters already signed up to help FUN learn about enhancing diversity, equity, and inclusion in our classrooms and labs. They included smaller group time for less formal conversations that was priceless and restorative. This event was a smashing success, and it buoyed the spirits of all who attended. It helped us all to cope better with sudden transitions to remote instruction, while keeping FUN's commitment to continuing education about how we can better support all of our students. As a group they embodied the 'can-do' spirit of educators adapting to a new world of online teaching all around the world at every educational level.

FUN CAREER AWARD:**William Grisham, University of California, Los Angeles, United States**

For many years, Bill Grisham has been a large presence in FUN. As noted by a fellow member who nominated Bill, *“A quick look at the list of FUN awards over the past years reveals that one of our star FUN Neuroscience Educators is missing. With his long service to FUN, his educational advances, especially for online learning, his past leadership of JUNE, and his constant intelligent and creative advice for FUN new faculty as well as us elders, it's time to recognize Bill formally.”* Bill has contributed to FUN in numerous ways, including publishing numerous articles in JUNE, serving on the editorial board for over a decade and as Editor-in-Chief for two years. He has led numerous workshops over the years at the FUN summer workshops and has led panels at Society for Neuroscience dedicated towards teaching and mentoring. His articles in JUNE have been recognized numerous times for awards as well. Bill was way ahead of the curve in creating online resources for teaching and he has been a pioneer in this domain for many years. During the Covid-19 Pandemic, Bill made a major contribution to the community by sharing his vast knowledge and resources for online learning tools with fellow FUN members. Bill's many contributions to FUN through several decades make him well deserving of the FUN Career Award.

2021 TESTIMONIALS**CAROL ANN PAUL EDUCATOR OF THE YEAR:****Stefan Pulver, University of St Andrews, Scotland**

Stefan is the first person based outside North America to win

a FUN award. For many years, he has taught students while also leading efforts aimed at teaching teachers. As a graduate student, he developed new undergraduate lab exercises using neurogenetic tools in fruit flies. As a postdoc, Stefan co-founded the CrawFly faculty workshops and taught at CrawFly and at FUN Workshops. He has published multiple papers in JUNE and other education journals, one of which was the first to demonstrate how to deploy optogenetics in classrooms. As a faculty member, Stefan led development of inexpensive fluorescent microscopes with the aim of increasing access to technology in underserved communities. Stefan teaches and mentors undergraduates, but he has also created an innovative neuroscience Masters program that promotes engagement with undergraduate education. This has resulted in 18 masters students at St Andrews independently publishing in JUNE without faculty co-authors. Throughout his career, Stefan has worked to create new funding sources for educators. Together with Colleagues at ADInstruments, Stefan created the CrawFly International Scholarships, which enable educators from around the world to attend CrawFly Workshops. Through these efforts and others, Stefan has taught hundreds of students and neuroscience faculty and influenced how neuroscience is taught both in the United States and abroad.

FUN MENTOR AWARD:**Laura Been, Haverford College, United States**

Laura conducts NIH-funded undergraduate-driven research into the impact of peripartum fluctuations in estradiol on neural and behavioral plasticity in rodents. She has mentored more than 48 students in her lab, including 34 senior thesis students. 30 of her lab members have gone on to PhDs, Medical School, Master's degree programs, or research positions. She brings her students to regional and national meetings, including virtual meetings during the COVID-19 pandemic. She has shown commitment to conducting research with students and has published 19 manuscripts with student coauthors.

FUN SERVICE AWARD:**Lorenz Neuwirth, SUNY Old Westbury, United States**

Lorenz has served as the co-chair of the FUN Equipment Loan program, consolidating its records and vendor contacts to ensure smooth transitions for its future chairs. He was the 2018 recipient of the FUN Carol Ann Paul Educator of the Year Award. He is a member of the new FUN Diversity, Equity and Inclusivity Committee, and the drafter of FUN's updated DEI statement and DEI climate survey. With Shawn Bates and Marc Nahmani, Lorenz is gathering support for and organizing a new equitable and inclusive FUN mentoring program.

FUN AWARD FOR FOSTERING DIVERSITY AND INCLUSIVITY:**Julio Ramirez, Davidson College, United States**

Julio was fostering diversity and inclusivity in neuroscience long before they became buzzwords across academia. He is a founding member of FUN and JUNE, and he created the FUN Support of Mentors and Students program, garnering

support from NSF and HHMI to fund students from underrepresented groups and their mentors, making real research experiences available to students who might not otherwise be able to take time off from paying work to engage in research. He received the FUN Career Award in 2001, and the FUN Distinguished Mentor Award in 2011. He received the NSF Director's Award for Distinguished Teaching Scholars in 2004, and the Presidential Award for Excellence in Science, Mathematics and Engineering Mentoring from President Barack Obama in 2009. He has mentored an unusually large number of minority and women neuroscientists, many of whom have gone on to become leaders at FUN and SfN. He is part of the Neuroscience Scholars Program at SfN, which has expanded SfN's support for graduate students and postdocs from underrepresented minority groups by a factor of more than 10. As a member of SfN Council, Julio has been instrumental in drafting statements and policies regarding family separation at the southern border and diversity, inclusion and equity after the murder of George Floyd. Overall, Julio has inspired a whole new generation of educators who also work hard to expand research opportunities for students from all backgrounds.

FUN CAREER AWARD:

Ron Bayline, Washington and Jefferson College, United States

Ron is a professor and past Chair of his Biology Department. He has served as FUN Treasurer for two terms, FUN President-Elect, President, and Past President, and is currently on the FUN President's Advisory Board. He has already been recognized with the FUN Service Award in 2013—even before he had been FUN President. When FUN's financial stability and ability to move forward with investments and new online purchasing platforms were jeopardized, Ron launched a dogged search for the lost FUN Articles of Incorporation. When they were not found, Ron took it upon himself to commission the drafting of new Articles of Incorporation, and convinced Washington and Jefferson to serve as the legal home of FUN, stabilizing FUN's financial standing for decades to come.—He has secured grants to support his mentoring and research with

scores of students, exploring muscle development in the moth *Manduca sexta*. Ron devotes time to creating new ways for students to present their research. He was instrumental in creating the Neuroscience Undergraduate Research Virtual Symposium (NURVS), allowing dozens of students to present their research despite pandemic lockdowns.

FUN LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD:

Eric Wiertelak, Macalester College, United States

Eric is a Professor and Chair of his Psychology Department, Past President of FUN and past Chief Editor of JUNE. His teaching portfolio includes creative courses that explore the neuroscience of dance and traditional medicines' effects on pain relief. He has been a mainstay of the FUN Workshop Committees for many years. He has published multiple articles on the teaching of neuroscience and has been heavily involved on the editorial board of JUNE. He founded the FUN Program Assessment Service and has always volunteered for FUN booth duty and discussion sessions. He has solicited donations from vendors to support the FUN Travel Awards. He received the 2007 Career Achievement Award, and the 2009 FUN Mentor Award. He has successfully transitioned the Workshop Committee to its new generation of leaders. He mentors junior scientists who seek out his advice and he advocates quietly, but powerfully for them when they need help. His calm thoughtfulness with a twist of wit has lightened many FUN business meetings and he has a gift for building consensus amongst colleagues. Over the years, Eric has worked tirelessly and selflessly to keep the engines of FUN running smoothly. It is hard to imagine FUN without Eric.

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