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This Week's News and Reflections (09/21/07)
The Federation of Behavioral, Psychological,
& Cognitive Sciences
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This email newsletter is sent to members of the Federation plus interested governmental agency officials. Its goal is to inform researchers in the field about Federation activities, funding issues, and other relevant topics.

If you would like to learn about the Federation's foundation, i.e., Foundation for the Advancement of Behavioral & Brain Sciences, please visit www.fabbs.org.

FEDERATION ELECTS MCCLELLAND, FELDMAN, CUTHBERT, KRUEGER TO KEY BOARD POSTS

The Federation is pleased to announce the results of its election, as indicated below:

James L. McClelland, PhD (Stanford University) was elected to the post of Federation President (beginning the term as President-Elect in January 2008). McClelland is renowned for his work on combining computational and experimental approaches to better understand cognitive and linguistic processes. McClelland received his PhD from the University of Pennsylvania and held academic posts at the University of California, San Diego; Carnegie Mellon University; and moved to Stanford University last year where he has started to build a Center for Mind, Brain, and Computation. He is a member of the National Academies of Science, former President of the Cognitive Science Society, and he has participated in various high-level councils and committees in governmental agencies (notably the Advisory Council of the National Institute of Mental Health).

Robert S. Feldman, PhD (University of Massachusetts, Amherst), a noted social psychologist, was voted in as Federation (and FABBS') Treasurer. Feldman's research program focuses on verbal deception in adults and children. He received his PhD from the University of Wisconsin, Madison and he is Professor of Psychology as well as Associate Dean of the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. Feldman has substantial budgetary and fundraising experience making him well-suited to this post. He currently serves on the board of the Federation's "sister" organization, the Foundation for the Advancement of Behavioral and Brain Sciences (FABBS).

Bruce N. Cuthbert, PhD (University of Minnesota), elected as an At Large Member of the Federation board, received his PhD from the University of Wisconsin, Madison in clinical psychology and psychophysiology. He has held a variety of posts over the years, at a variety of institutions including Walter Reed Army Institute of Research, the University of Florida's Medical School, the National Institute of Mental Health and now the University of Minnesota. His interests are in developing psychophysiological models and measures of affective processes to better understand mood and anxiety disorders. Cuthbert has served as President of the Society for Psychophysiological Research among other service.

Gerald P. Krueger, PhD, CPE, (Principal Scientist, Krueger Ergonomics Consultants), located in the DC-metro area, was voted in as an At Large Member of the Federation board. Krueger is an adjunct professor of military psychology at the Uniformed Services University for the Health Sciences. Before this, and for many years, Krueger was a scientist working for the U.S. Army. Krueger received his doctorate from Johns Hopkins University and has authored many articles and book chapters. He is an active member of the Human Factors and Ergonomics Society, serving as their council representative to the Federation for many years.

We welcome these four individuals to such important service! To view information on the Federation's current leadership, visit: <http://www.thefederationonline.org/leadership.php>

NIH ANNOUNCES PIONEER & NEW INNOVATOR AWARDEES: BEHAVIORAL, SOCIAL SCIENTISTS GRAB A FEW SPOTS!

The awardees of the highly-coveted Pioneer and New Innovator NIH awards were made public this week. Five-year grants, given to 41 scientists, costing NIH more than \$105 million total were awarded to a variety of scientists, many of whom are in the early-career stage. These awards are designed to tap into risky and innovative research programs that could lead to "transformative discoveries" according to NIH Director Elias Zerhouni.

One recipient was social psychologist **Lisa Feldman Barrett**, PhD (Boston College), and another **Kristen C. Jacobson**, PhD (University of Chicago). Also receiving an award was social scientist **Peter Bearman**, PhD (Columbia University). For the complete story and the exhaustive list of the 41 awardees, visit: <http://www.nih.gov/news/pr/sep2007/od-18a.htm>

SEPTEMBER, THE MONTH OF FALL ADVISORY MEETINGS AT NIH: PEER-REVIEW, AND STRATEGIC PLANS ABOUND

As you may have noticed, most institutes at the National Institutes of Health hold Advisory Council meetings three times per year to review grants, set up task forces, and address issues of concern for the NIH as a whole, and the institute in specific. Four institutes of interest to our scientists have met in the last two weeks and, understandably, there was redundancy in the presentations and issues raised. Those institutes covered in this article are: the National Institute of Drug Abuse (NIDA), National Institute of Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA), National Institute of General Medical Sciences (NIGMS), and the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH). Let me discuss two big initiatives present at these meetings.

ENHANCING PEER-REVIEW: The large-scale, on-going NIH-wide Enhancing Peer Review Initiative (which I have been reporting on for months now) was a major item for the various Advisory Councils to discuss. The first stage of gathering information technically ended earlier this month and some "emerging ideas" have been identified, including such concepts as:

- NIH should focus on reviewing a project versus funding of an individual
- value of conducting retrospective versus prospective reviews
- use separate review criteria for projects that lack preliminary data
- allow for a dialogue between the applicant and reviewers
- when considering small business grants (SBIR), academicians may not be the right persons to conduct the reviews

- allow the investigator to indicate when an application is the “primary” one compared to others they may have in the pipeline
- provide more useful feedback to the applicants
- consider instituting a pre-application process
- maximize reviewer quality by providing incentives such as possibly making it mandatory for NIH grant holders to serve as reviewers and/or offer increased support, more flexible service
- reconsider the level of anonymity of reviewers
- devise scales and group scores based on psychometrics

This list of suggestions is far from exhaustive but represents some of what the community is thinking about in terms of improving the peer-review process. At the NIMH meeting, in fact, it was pointed out that these emerging ideas won’t result in an implementation based on a “village vote” – that is, the peer-review committee won’t add up how many times a comment was made and include those with the highest counts in the final plan. A more considered approach will be used for final selection and implementation.

STRATEGIC PLANS: Clearly this is the season for developing strategic plans at the NIH, to cover about a five-year span. The NIGMS asked for input from the scientific community several months ago on ideas to include as they formulated their strategic plan and we learned that they have a draft document soon to be released. In contrast, the NIMH staff internally devised a draft plan over the summer and, in early October, they expect to release the draft for community input. (When that is released, we will let you know.) NIAAA appears to be finished with its strategic plan, and can be accessed on <http://pubs.niaaa.nih.gov/publications/StrategicPlan/StrategicPlan2007.doc>

SOME OTHER, SPECIFIC ITEMS OF DISCUSSION

NIGMS: At the NIGMS Advisory meeting, Dr. Jeremy Berg, Director of NIGMS, led a discussion on certain aspects of their draft strategic plan; and the Advisory Council had a very thoughtful exchange of ideas. For example, one council member indicated that he has noticed that there can be two labs that are equally productive on the surface but one produces scientists going onto successful careers and the other results in scientists not even receiving proper authorships. He wondered if there would be a way to assess those important kinds of differences in the coming years and fund labs with those variables in mind. There was also a lengthy discussion on careers, for example, since most PhD MDs will not be able to make the transition to independent scientist status, should they encourage applicants to think about this earlier in their careers and not malingering in post doc positions, for example. Some indicated that post docs are often used as “cheap, smart labor” but others indicated that these posts are critically important as one waits for an academic opening. It was also considered whether too many students are accepted into PhD programs given the job market, however, some council members indicated that doctoral work is great training for careers outside of the laboratory.

NIMH: Dr. Thomas Insel, Director of the NIMH, raised the issue of whether there are too many PhDs in the pipeline (just as was discussed last week at NIGMS, see above) and said that since NIMH includes Training as a major focus, it is an especially important issue for the Council to consider. He asked the Council to help him answer questions like “what kinds of scientists will we need in 2017, in 2027?” and how many will be needed to optimize the goals of the NIMH? Insel’s vision is to “transform treatment and recovery, and cure mental disorders” in the next decade. He stated that science funded at NIMH should be focused on “discovering causes and cures” and this apparently will be the theme of their strategic plan. Insel indicated there are three fundamental facts to consider: (1) the landscape of science has changed and will change further in the next decade, (2) our current approach to diagnosis and treatment of mental disorders needs to be transformed, and (3) our success needs to be measured by scientific discovery and public health impact. (As I

noted above, when the draft document of the NIMH strategic plan is released, it will be announced in this newsletter.)

Also of note, **Howard Kurtzman**, Chief of the Cognitive Science Program, has departed the NIMH to accept a position as Deputy Executive Director for Science at the American Psychological Association.

NIDA: (as reported by Meghan McGowan) Dr. Nora D. Volkow presented her Director's Report to the Council and public. Of note is an NIH-wide push to fund new, innovative research projects. They are looking for new investigators who propose highly innovative research projects with impacts in behavioral science. As it stands, 23 researchers will be chosen to receive \$1.5 million over 5 years, for direct costs.

Encouraging new researchers seemed to be the topic of the day. Dr. Volkow mentioned new NIH data which indicates experienced researchers and new primary investigators (PIs), who are first time grant applicants, are equally likely to be funded. However, experienced researchers, in a competitive renewal are 2.5 times more likely to get funded than new PIs. The Advisory Council spoke at length about why this may be, ways to remedy it, and mentioned this data should be made to available to University administrators, so they may continue to effectively support new faculty. This is a growing concern at NIH, as the average age of investigators continues to rise. Volkow indicated that NIDA is pleased to provide one-on-one grant writing mentorship for new PIs.

On August 29-31, there was an NIH Neuroscience Blueprint Neuroplasticity Workshop. Participants included researchers from a number of Institutes, including NIDCR, NIA, NIDA and NIAAA. Resources that would advance the field of neuroplasticity were discussed at this workshop. Neuro-psychologists funded by NIDA were underrepresented at this meeting. Opportunities such as this are invaluable and researchers are encouraged to attend such meetings.

On a fun note, the HBO production *The Addiction Project* earned the American Academy of Television Arts and Sciences' Board of Governors Award, the highest honor given. On September 8, 2007, Dr. Volkow accepted this award this Los Angeles. HBO and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation worked with NIAAA and NIDA to present a scientifically sound production. To view some segments of this *Project*, visit www.hbo.com/addiction.

A copy of the Director's Report will be available shortly, at <http://www.nida.nih.gov/about/welcome/volkowpage.html>.

NIAAA (as reported by Meghan McGowan) Dr. Ting-Kai Li presented his Director's Report to the NIAAA Advisory Council on September 20th. NIAAA funding success rate has been flat, as has their budget, at 30%. However, they note while their funding rate remains the same, other Institutes are declining. NIAAA will fund 27 new investigators, aligning with NIH's initiative to fund new researchers.

Dr. Timothy Hays, from OPASI, presented a new initiative – the Research, Condition and Disease Categorization (RCDC) Project. This NIH-wide effort will allow the NIH to more efficiently and effectively report to Congress and the public the amount that is spent in specific researches and disease areas. RCDC uses software to search titles, abstracts and specific aims of funded projects for relevant concepts, as defined by NIH experts. These concepts will be used to classified research into 360 disease and research categories. RCDC will not affect the application/review process, nor will it affect the way NIH allocates money. This new Project will supposedly allow NIH to produce a quick and accurate portrayal of funded research and will offer a consistent categorization of funding. The RCDC presentation will yield dollar amounts within research categories that are different

from what has been previously reported; however, they indicated this will be due to the change in methodology, not actual funding changes. RCDC will be presented to the public in 2008. For more information, visit: <http://opasi.nih.gov/>

To learn more about NIAAA and this Advisory Council meeting, visit:
<http://www.niaaa.nih.gov/AboutNIAAA/AdvisoryCouncil/>

“ELECTIONS: HOW VOTERS REALLY THINK AND FEEL” NEXT FABBS’ SCIENCE CAFÉ, AT NATIONAL PRESS CLUB

FABBS is still accepting RSVPs for its upcoming science café on October 24, open to the public, called “Elections: How Voters Really Think and Feel.” This will feature presentations by Professors Eugene Borgida (University of Minnesota) and Alexander Todorov (Princeton University), noted experts in the field. The café will be held at the National Press Club in DC and admittance requires a ticket. Sage Publications is the corporate sponsor of this event. Please visit this link to read more about the café and to reserve space: http://www.fabbs.org/Events/Oct_2007_Cafe/index.html

TRANSLATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR NEUROSCIENTISTS AT THE NIMH

The National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) is seeking talented neuroscientists to advance and direct the extramural grant support of research leading to new knowledge of neurobehavioral development and the pathophysiology of child and adolescent mental disorders. Currently, there are two openings for Program Officers in the NIMH Division of Developmental Translational Research (DDTR), which supports a portfolio of \$134 million in extramural research grants. Research in humans, animals, and model systems are supported within this division with the goal of translating basic research findings to a better understanding of clinical disorders in children and adolescents and developing better treatments and interventions. These Program Officer positions offer broad exposure to cutting-edge issues in developmental science as well as productive engagement with the research community. The positions provide the opportunity to influence priorities, develop new research initiatives, and contribute to the advancement of science on a national and international level. Individuals with specialties in molecular, cellular, systems, cognitive, behavioral and/or developmental neuroscience, who are interested in applying their research knowledge to fostering the understanding of child and adolescent mental disorders, are invited to submit a preliminary application. Experience investigating brain-behavior relationships is required, and knowledge of developmental approaches is strongly preferred. The positions require doctoral-level research training, postdoctoral research experience, and strong analytic, written and oral communication and organizational skills. Candidates should send a CV with bibliography and a letter of background and interest to Ms. Pamela Mitchell, pmitchel@mail.nih.gov. Review of applications will begin on October 1, 2007, but applications will be accepted and considered until the positions are filled.

FEDERAL REPORTS & GRANT OPPORTUNITIES NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

Can a Robot Get High School Students Interested in Studying Science and Engineering in College?

http://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=pr07120

Center for the Environmental Implications of Nanotechnology

http://www.nsf.gov/publications/pub_summ.jsp?ods_key=nsf07590

Type: Program Announcements & Information Subtype : Biology Subtype : Education

Subtype : Engineering Subtype : Geosciences Subtype : Math/Physical Sciences Subtype :

Social/Behavioral Sciences

GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY OFFICE

September 11: Problems Remain in Planning for and Providing Health Screening and Monitoring Services for Responders, by Cynthia A. Bascetta, director, health care, before the House Committee on Homeland Security. GAO-07-1253T, September 20.

<http://www.gao.gov/cgi-bin/getrpt?GAO-07-1253T>

Highlights - <http://www.gao.gov/highlights/d071253thigh.pdf>

FEDERATION SOCIETY NEWS CORNER...

Upcoming Federation society annual meetings:

OCTOBER

Human Factors and Ergonomics Society

October 1-5, Baltimore, MD

www.hfes.org

International Society for Developmental Psychobiology

Oct 31 – Nov 4, San Diego, CA

www.isdp.org

Society for Experimental Social Psychology

October 11-13, Chicago, IL

www.sesp.org

Society of Multivariate Experimental Psychology

October 18-20, Chapel Hill, NC

www.smep.org

Society for Psychophysiological Research

October 17-21, Savannah, GA

www.sprweb.org

Society for Research in Psychopathology

October 4-7, Iowa City, IO

www.psychopathology.org

NOVEMBER

National Academy of Neuropsychology

November 14-18, Scottsdale, AZ

www.nanonline.org

Psychonomic Society

November 15-18, Long Beach, CA

www.psychonomic.org

Society for Computers in Psychology

November 15, Long Beach, CA

<http://home.scip.ws>

Society for Judgment and Decision Making

November 17-19, Long Beach, CA

www.sjdm.org

PLEASE SUPPORT THE BEHAVIORAL & BRAIN SCIENCES

No doubt the most significant activity the Federation has engaged in during the past year is the creation of the **Foundation for the Advancement of the Behavioral and Brain Sciences (FABBS)**. The Federation developed FABBS as a vehicle for supporting and expanding this work. In short, FABBS was created to take over much of the task of educating the public and their congressional representatives about the behavioral and brain sciences and the contributions these disciplines make to society. FABBS is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization whose work is supported by tax-deductible contributions and grants. We urge you to respond generously as the future health of our scientific enterprise is at stake. *The President of FABBS is James Pomerantz (Rice University), the President-Elect is Susan Fiske (Princeton University), the Secretary is Elaine Hull (Florida State University), and the Treasurer is Judith Albino (University of Colorado).* Please visit: www.fabbs.org.

NOTE: The current featured scientist on the FABBS site is Dr. Anne Treisman. To learn more about her, visit: http://www.fabbs.org/treisman_honor.html.

Have a great weekend!

Barb

Barbara A. Wanchisen, Ph.D.
Executive Director

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All of our e-newsletters are archived on the American Psychological Association's "List Archives." To access the archives, visit listserve.apa.org. Click on "List Archives and List Management", which will take you to a list of options. For archived newsletters, click on the third option, "Online Mailing List Archives", which will take you to another long list of options. Scroll down this alphabetical list and click on "FederationNewsletter." You will now be viewing all of our past newsletters, archived by month. Click on each month to access the newsletters sent out during that time period.

FOR A LIST OF OUR COMPLETE LEADERSHIP, CLICK ON:

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3. In first line of the text area, by example, if your name is Joe Smith, type:
SUB federationnewsletter Joe Smith

If you have trouble getting onto the list, just send me an email and I will take care of it but this method above will be more efficient (well it should be!).

BRIEF REMINDER ON HOW TO UNSUBSCRIBE (SIGN OFF) FROM THE LIST SERV NEWSLETTER.....

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In signing off, be sure you are emailing from the email account that is to be unsubscribed.
If you have any trouble, just send me an email and we will do it for you.

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Special acknowledgment is extended to Ms. Meghan McGowan, the Federation's Policy and Program Specialist and Mr. Steven Schwark, the Federation's Program Assistant. Also thanks are extended to the APA for hosting this list serve.
