

Brain Awareness Week in Houston Texas started a little early with Mayor Bill White' s February 27th proclamation of March as "Brain Awareness Month".

The 14th Annual Public Forum for BAW was held on March 7, 2009 and the subject was "Stroke and Vascular Disease". The Forum was moderated by Dr. James Grotta, Professor and Chair of the Department of Neurology at The University of Texas Medical School at Houston, and the panel consisted of Dr. Andrew Barreto and Dr. Nicole Gonzales also of the Department of Neurology, Dr. Dong Kim, Professor and Chair of the Department of Neurosurgery, and Dr. Sharon Ostwald, Professor from the Center on Aging at the UT School of Nursing at Houston. The panel discussion was followed by a question/answer period, and the Forum was well-attended with many of the attendees identifying themselves as stroke survivors. A reception and demonstrations by local advocacy groups and several departments at UTMS-Houston and Memorial Hermann Hospital followed the event which was organized by The University of Texas Health Science at Houston Neuroscience Research Center.

On March 11, an op ed written by Dr. Byrne appeared in the Houston Chronicle, featuring Brain Awareness Month and the economic stimulus to Neuroscience Program's supported by the Economic Recovery Act.

And on March 19, the annual Brain Night was held at the McGovern Museum of Health and Medical Sciences. This free event was attended by over 330 middle school children and their families, and included hands on demonstrations of the human brain, the neuron, comparative brains, helmet safety demonstrations, abilities challenged demonstrations, and of course face painting and the many brain teasers the museum has to offer. The event was staffed by faculty, postdoctoral fellows and graduate students from the UTHSC-H Neuroscience Program, and was organized by the UTHSC-H Neuroscience Research Center.

These events were supported by the Neuroscience Research Center with the help of the SfN Chapter grant.

The Houston Society for Engineering in Medicine and Biology held its 26th Annual Meeting on March 19-20. There were three sessions on Neuroengineering, I: Modeling of CNS Activity, II: Analysis of CNS Activity and III: Brain Connectivity. There were also 2 sessions including papers on neuroscience: Electrophysiology: From Molecular Motors to Cells to Organs to the Body and Human Movement in Disease and Recovery.

Two reviewers for SfN travel grant applications were selected from each of the institutions having major research programs in Neuroscience: University of Texas-Houston (V. Dragoi and D. Baxter), Rice University (D. Burgund and T Schnur), Baylor College of Medicine (M. Rashad and K. Tolia) and University of Houston (J. Ziburkus and H. Ogmen).