



RHODE ISLAND

brain week

2018

CELEBRATING BRAIN SCIENCE
AND BRAIN HEALTH



DISCOVER THE BRAIN ALL OVER AGAIN

overview



Brain Week Rhode Island was created in 2016 by Cure Alliance for Mental Illness, a national advocacy organization promoting increased research on mental illness. After doubling in scope from 2016 to 2017, Brain Week RI 2018 boasted 2000 attendees and featured dozens of notable panelists, performers, and top experts in their respective fields – doctors, administrators, professors, dancers, artists, patients and patient advocates among others!

Our goal is to showcase the wealth of neuroscience activity and advocacy in Rhode Island. We are a small state but pack a hefty punch when it comes to our brainy contributions in the international arena. From basic research that aims to understand basic brain function, to cutting edge clinical work that restores lost function to people with neuromuscular disorders, most Rhode Islanders don't even realize we are on the map. Brain Week Rhode Island aims to promote a growing biomedical economic sector that holds great promise for Rhode Island's future. In the process, we aim to make brain science a household topic of conversation!

We are grateful to all of our sponsors, including our presenting sponsors, the Carney Institute for Brain Science at Brown University and the George & Anne Ryan Neuroscience Institute at the University of Rhode Island. We appreciate all those who worked to make Brain Week RI such a success and those who will continue those efforts for Brain Week RI 2019! We are also grateful to the Dana Foundation whose international Brain Awareness Week campaign inspired our venture and provides us with reading materials for the public. Finally, we are thankful to all of our attendees, whose curiosity about the brain fuels our efforts every year.

Sincerely,

Victoria Heimer-McGinn, PhD
Chair, Brain Week Rhode Island
Assistant Professor of Neuroscience
Psychology Department
Roger Williams University

Hakon Heimer
Chair, Cure Alliance for Mental Illness
Faculty of Health and Medical Sciences
Advisor to the Dean
University of Copenhagen

2018 events report



PROVIDENCE BRAIN ART FAIR & OPENING RECEPTION SAT. MARCH 10TH

HOSTED BY: Brain Week Rhode Island & RI Museum of Science and Art

ATTENDEES: ~100

PROFILE: Families with children of all ages, teens, young adults, and older adults

A fun reception featuring brain art by Rhode Island kids and adults. The event was a fun networking opportunity for sponsors, organizers, and partners. The mood was lively as attendees participated in a brain art workshop, ate delicious food, and explored a museum full of zany neuro-experiments! Among these experiments were explorations of how light bends, sound distorts, and perspective is not always as it seems. The Brain Art Competition had wonderful entries from both children and adults, with mediums ranging from stencil drawings to sculptures, and interpretations ranging from literal to abstract. Guests admired the pieces, and artists were judged and rewarded. Finally, speeches by various notable guests, including RI Secretary of Commerce Stephan Pryor and Professor Diane Lipscombe, brought energy and enthusiasm for the upcoming events.



BRAINY SCHOOL VISITS THROUGHOUT FEBRUARY AND MARCH

HOSTED BY: Brain Week Rhode Island
Brown University Neuroscience Graduate Program (NSGP)

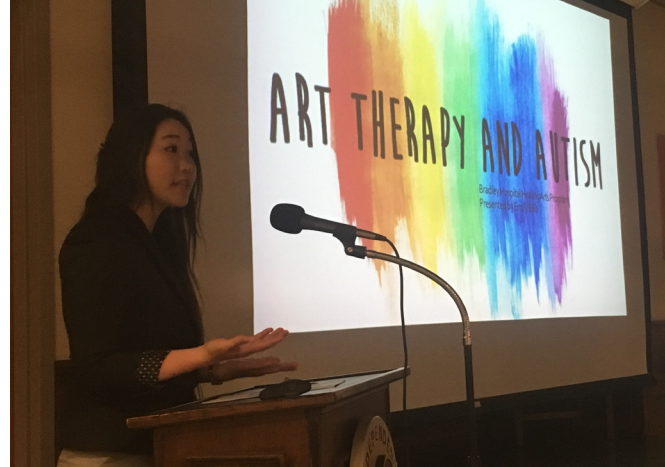
ATTENDEES: 1800+

PROFILE: PK, elementary, middle school, and high school; public and private

Now in its third successful year, the program has been expanded to reach over 1,800 students, compared to ~500 students in 2016. A team of graduate students and postdocs from Brown University and Providence College visited 64 classrooms at 16 schools. Outreach to underserved student populations was a priority, although all schools that requested a visit were accommodated. At the visits, researchers brought preserved human brains as a springboard for lively discussions about decision-making, memory, sleep, the senses, injury, and disease. The students of all ages got to hold the plasticized brains, and were needless to say thrilled with the experience. Even administrators and teachers from other disciplines stopped by to learn a little about the brain!

NOTABLE SPEAKERS: John Stein, PhD
Victoria Heimer-McGinn, PhD





THROUGH OUR EYES: Visual and Performing Arts by People with Autism SATURDAY MARCH 10TH

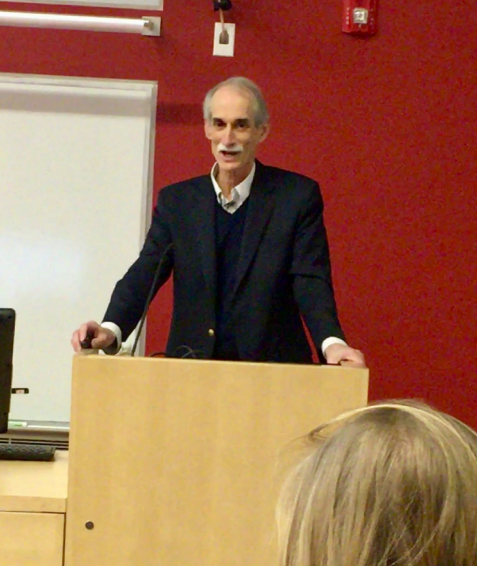
HOSTED BY: Rhode Island Consortium for Autism Research and Treatment (RI-CART)
Bradley Hospital

ATTENDEES: ~150

PROFILE: Families with children of all ages, young adults, and older adults

A lively exhibition of visual art by people on the autism spectrum was beautifully curated at the Museum of Work and Culture in Woonsocket. Featuring bold sculpture, painting, photography, and embroidery, the wonderful artists showcased many unique creative perspectives. Guests enjoyed a brief discussion about art therapy as a tool for expression in individuals with autism. The event was well attended, including by families not usually involved in the autism community. Therefore, the event provided a wonderful opportunity for people who are not on the spectrum (especially children!) to interact and identify with the artists. Artists ranged in age from toddlers to older adults.

CURATED BY: Matthew Best



GOOD NEWS: GENES AND ALZHEIMER'S RESEARCH **MONDAY MARCH 12TH**

HOSTED BY: Memory and Aging Program at Butler Hospital

ATTENDEES: ~70

PROFILE: Mostly older adults (non-clinicians)

An informal public lecture about the latest research in Alzheimer's prevention and early detection. The participants were extremely engaged and the Q&A discussion went well beyond the clinical aspects of the disease. Topics included the genetic basis and risk factors of the disease, and the mechanism of action of some novel treatments. Participants also learned about ongoing clinical trial opportunities for people with no current diagnosis. Many registered for "GeneMatch", a clinical trial program available at Butler Hospital. We thank the Butler Hospital Memory and Aging Program for making this event possible.

NOTABLE SPEAKERS: Stephen Salloway, MD

PRECISION MEDICINE & THE BRAIN **WED. MARCH 14TH**

HOSTED BY: Hassenfield Child Health Innovation Institute
Rhode Island Consortium for Autism Research and Treatment at Brown University

ATTENDEES: ~50

PROFILE: Adults of all ages

A lecture that explored the role of genetics in bringing Precision Medicine to the Brain! The panelists focused on opportunities and challenges in using "big data" from large healthcare systems, including genetics, to enhance the care of people with autism and other neuropsychiatric disorders and recognize symptoms of such disorders early on to provide patients with accurate diagnoses.

NOTABLE SPEAKERS: David Ledbetter, PhD, FACMG
Christa Lese Martin, PhD, FACMG
David Housman, PhD



OBSESSIVE COMPULSIVE DISORDER: WHEN TOO MUCH IS NOT ENOUGH **WEDNESDAY, MARCH 14TH**

HOSTED BY: Center for Neurorestoration and Neurotechnology
at the Providence VA Medical Center - Butler Hospital

ATTENDEES: ~70

PROFILE: Mostly adults; mixture of healthcare professionals and general public

A panel discussion to educate attendees about OCD and OCD-related traits. The panel was composed of clinical and research specialists in various areas related to OCD, and a woman with OCD who shared her story. The format of the panel was extremely effective as it was divided by topics, rather than by speaker, and the moderator did a fantastic job of keeping the audience engaged. For each topic, one of speakers gave a brief lecture and then opened the floor for Q & A. The setting was cozy and encouraged a comfortable environment where attendees and panelists conversed freely. Discussion topics included OCD symptoms and traits (adults and pediatric), OCD treatments, brain areas involved in OCD, and ongoing research.

NOTABLE SPEAKERS: Benjamin Greenberg, MD, PhD
Nicole McLaughlin, PhD
Amy Cameron, PhD
Angela Petty

DANCE FOR ALL PEOPLE: DANCE FOR AGING AND MOVEMENT CHALLENGES
THURSDAY, MARCH 15TH

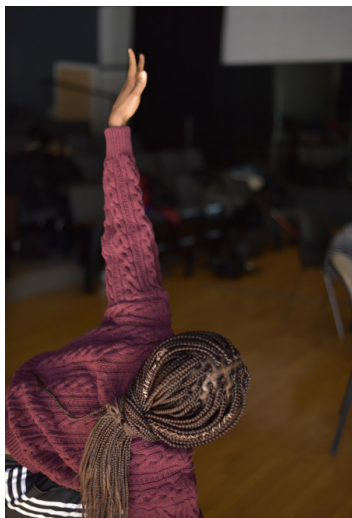
HOSTED BY: ARTISTS AND SCIENTISTS AS PARTNERS (ASaP) Program

ATTENDEES: ~30

PROFILE: Older adults and young adult volunteers

An ongoing movement class designed for the aging population. The choreographies help participants increase coordination, strength, and flexibility, while releasing body tension, and improving balance and gait. An equal number of older adults and young adult volunteers promotes healthy inter-generational support and collaboration. A special Brain Week edition featured discussions about the physiological and cognitive benefits of exercise and social engagement.

NOTABLE PRESENTERS: Rachel Balaban
Victoria Heimer-McGinn, PhD



NEURO-ADVOCACY IN LIL' RHODY: BRAIN HEALTH, BRAIN ILLNESS, AND BRAIN RESEARCH

THURSDAY, MARCH 15TH

HOSTED BY: Cure Alliance for Mental Illness
Association for Migraine Disorders
Epilepsy Foundation of New England

ATTENDEES: ~40

PROFILE: Adults of all ages

A panel of patient advocates, neuro-advocacy institutional leaders, and medical professionals discussed how to bring about change in care, further research support, and raise awareness for many neurological disorders and conditions that affect so many. From a multitude of perspectives, the panelists delved into the ways in which they have pushed for change in legislature, hospital systems, insurance plans, and in our societal outlook on many neurological conditions.

NOTABLE SPEAKERS:

Tom Enright, Esq
Macrina Hjerpe, Esq
Mary Genco
Jim McNulty
Bill Murphy
Julian Rodriguez-Drix, MPH Candidate
Jerome Sanes, PHD
Debra Sharpe, MA
Catherine Taylor

MODERATED BY:

Kara Stavros, MD
Frederick (Rick) Godley, MD, FACMG
Hakon Heimer



STILL ALICE: MOVIE SCREENING WITH PANEL DISCUSSION
THURSDAY, MARCH 15TH

HOSTED BY: Brown Undergraduate Film Forum (BUFF)

ATTENDEES: ~20

PROFILE: Adults of all ages and professional backgrounds

A movie screening of Still Alice, about a woman who develops early-onset Alzheimer's in her 50's, was followed by a panel discussion of the science behind the story. Topics included the neurobiological basis of memory formation and memory impairments, a "myth-buster" section about the portrayal of the disease, and a show-and-tell section including preserved human brains. In its third year, this event is the product of a collaboration between the student group BUFF and the Brain Week committee.

NOTABLE SPEAKERS: Paul Malloy, PhD
Victoria Heimer-McGinn, PhD



STORY COLLIDER – PROVIDENCE 2018
FRIDAY, MARCH 16TH

HOSTED BY: The Story Collider, AS220

ATTENDEES: ~90

PROFILE: Adults of all ages

A unique evening of personal stories related to the brain and brain injury. We heard breath-taking stories of survival, what it is like to raise children with brain injuries, and how scientists are investigating the brain (even their own). From laughter to tears, the story-tellers laid it on the line with truth, which always leads to beauty. We listened, we learned, we are now more aware: an informative and lovely evening for all in attendance.

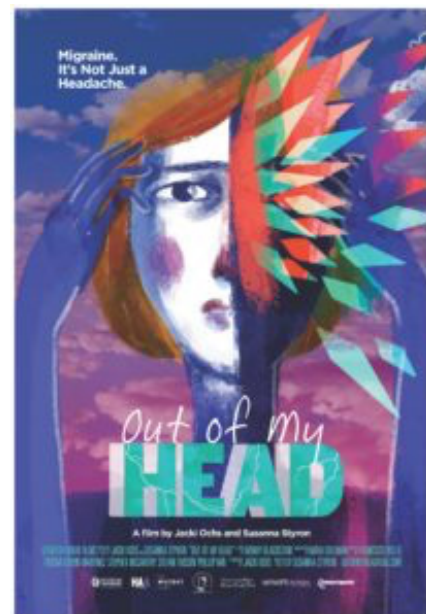
NOTABLE SPEAKERS: Dana Boebinger
Kevin Wilson
Amy Hogarth
Richard Muto
Jose Rosario

OUT OF MY HEAD: SCREENING AND MIGRAINE Q&A
FRIDAY, MARCH 16TH & SUNDAY, MARCH 18TH

HOSTED BY: Association of Migraine Disorders

ATTENDEES: ~70

PROFILE: Adults of all ages



Out of My Head is a stunning documentary created by Jacki Ochs and Susanna Styron about the exhausting search for a daughter's migraine attacks, far from mere "headaches," that threaten her independence and quality of life. Despite the sheer number of people suffering from migraines, roughly one billion worldwide, migraines remain widely misunderstood, stigmatized, and poorly treated. The film chronicles the fear and hopelessness of migraine sufferers as well as that of their families and loved ones. Following the screening, attendees enjoyed a Q&A session to discuss the revelations of migraine conditions on display in the film.

SPECIAL THANKS TO: Frederick Godley, MD



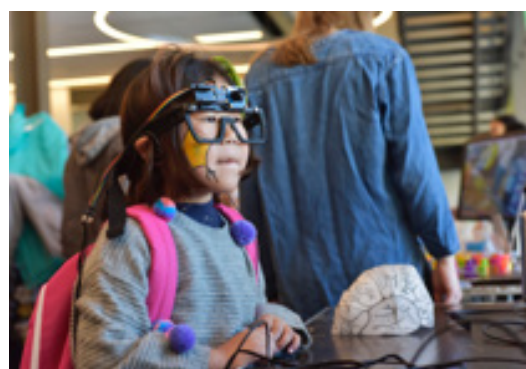
BROWN BRAIN FAIR
SATURDAY, MARCH 17TH

HOSTED BY: Brown Brain Bee
Carney Institute for Brain Science at Brown University

ATTENDEES: 600+

PROFILE: All ages (children and adults of all ages)

Now in its third year, the Brown Brain Fair delivered an even more impressive selection of neuroscience demos for all ages. The event is a free, family-friendly event featuring creative, hands-on demonstrations and activities to entertain, educate, and inspire. Activities included a virtual reality demonstration of spatial awareness, eye-tracking goggles, a remote control robot, neuron face painting, learning about the effects of sleep on a healthy brain, infant brain health booths, and stations to learn about how physical trauma affects neurological functioning. Hundreds of all ages attended!





PEACELOVE STUDIOS CREATORS WORKSHOP
SATURDAY, MARCH 17TH

HOSTED BY: Peace Love Studios

ATTENDEES: ~20

PROFILE: All ages, mostly young adults

Expressive art workshop with the goal of achieving mental wellness through art. Led by mental health advocate José Rosario, the activities challenged participants to engage in the process of artistic self-discovery. Participants left with a sense of empowerment and inner peace. Importantly, participants were introduced to the PeaceLove mindset that art, when focused on the process and not the product, can help heal the brain. The workshop was appropriate for all ages, including young children, young adults, and mature adults.



URI BRAIN FAIR SUNDAY, MARCH 18TH

HOSTED BY:

George & Anne Ryan Institute for Neuroscience
at the University of Rhode Island

ATTENDEES: 700+

PROFILE: All ages (children and adults of all ages)

In its second year now, the URI Fair had it all, from live performances to hands-on activities and a scavenger hunt. The event was a free, family-friendly event featuring creative, hands-on demonstrations and activities to entertain, educate, and inspire. Activities included a 3-D tour of the human brain; prism goggles to learn how the brain controls movement; finding out how exercise, a healthy diet, and mindfulness are good for the brain; a virtual reality experience of Alzheimer's disease and dementia, using brain waves to control a video game, and firing up a giant neuron. Alongside other exciting activities and booths, kids enjoyed Marvelous Marvin's "Brain Circus" performance, in which he demonstrates the importance of exercise and reading on brain health through dazzling skill with juggling, hula hoops, rhythm sticks, and more. Hundreds of all ages attended!



MENTAL TAPAS: REFRAMING MENTAL ILLNESS 2018

TUESDAY, MARCH 20TH

HOSTED BY: Cure Alliance for Mental Illness

ATTENDEES: ~40

PROFILE: Mostly adults

An evening of music, dance, stories, and science about mental illness. We learned about the developmental nature of mental illness and about ongoing de-stigmatization efforts in our state. We also learned through anecdote. A heartfelt dance and spoken word performance gave us a glimpse into growing up with a mother who suffers from mental illness. An amazing tale about overcoming adversity in the face of tragedy, trauma, abuse, and disease gave us all some perspective. And somewhere in between science and art, Marvelous Marvin brought us Brain Circus, a fun and informative act about what goes on inside our heads. Live musical interludes brought the performances together seamlessly. We thank the Rhode Island chapter of the National Alliance on Mental Illness and PeaceLove Studios for collaborating in this event.

NOTABLE SPEAKERS:

Kevin Bath, PhD
Geoffrey Green
Karen Hetzel, PhD
Cheyenne Isom
Marvin Novogrodski
(a.k.a. Marvelous Marvin)
Jeremiah Rain





BRAIN WEEK RI 2018 SPONSORED BY

BROWN INSTITUTE
FOR **BRAIN
SCIENCE**



THE
UNIVERSITY
OF RHODE ISLAND
GEORGE & ANNE RYAN
INSTITUTE FOR
NEUROSCIENCE

CUREalliance
for mental illness



Center for Neurorestoration
and Neurotechnology

