The Program

8:30  
**Registration & Continental Breakfast** – Weinmann Hall, Tulane Law School, Multipurpose Room & Courtyard

Neuroscience Alumni Symposium

9:00  
**Welcome and Opening Remarks** – 110 Weinmann Hall  
Jill Daniel, PhD, Director, Tulane Brain Institute  
Nicholas Altiero, PhD, Dean of Tulane School of Science and Engineering

9:15  
"*New Insights into Auditory Hair Cell Mechanotransduction*”  
Anthony Ricci, PhD '92  
Edward C. And Amy H. Sewall Professor of Otolaryngology  
Director of Neuroscience Training Program  
Stanford University School of Medicine  
(Introduced by Brain Institute Faculty Dr. Norman Kreisman)

9:45  
"*Engineering Nerve Repair, Neuroprosthetics and Bioelectronics: A Neuroscience Approach*”  
Mario Romero-Ortega, PhD ’97  
Associate Professor of Bioengineering  
The University of Texas at Dallas  
(Introduced by Brain Institute Faculty Dr. Laura Schrader)

10:15  
**Coffee Break**

10:30  
"*Three Projects, 20 Years--My Life as a Neuro-Oncologist*”  
Scott R. Plotkin, MD, PhD ’98  
Associate Professor of Neurology  
Massachusetts General Hospital, Harvard Medical School  
(Introduced by Brain Institute Faculty Dr. Jeff Tasker)

11:00  
"*Everything I Ever Needed to Know About Running a Residency Program I Learned In Gary Dohanich’s Rat Lab*”  
Abby L. Spencer, MD, MS, FACP, BS ’98  
Associate Professor of Medicine  
Director of Internal Medicine Residency Program  
Vice Chair for Education, Medicine Institute  
Cleveland Clinic  
(Introduced by Brain Institute Faculty Dr. Gary Dohanich)

11:30  
**The Impact Of Stress: From Minutes to a Lifetime and Beyond**  
Johannes Bohacek, PhD, ’09  
Group Leader, Brain Research Institute  
University of Zurich  
(Introduced by Brain Institute Faculty Dr. Jill Daniel)

12:00  
Luncheon - Weinmann Hall Multipurpose Room and Courtyard
The Brain Institute at Tulane University

1:30  **The Tulane Brain Institute: Overview** – 110 Weinmann Hall
Jill Daniel, PhD, Director Tulane Brain Institute
Stacy Drury, MD, PhD, Associate Director, Tulane Brain Institute

2:00  **Keynote Lecture: “Regulation & Function of Neurogenesis in Adult Brains”**
Fred Gage, PhD
Vi and John Adler Chair for Research on Age-Related Neurodegenerative Disease
Professor, Laboratory of Genetics
The Salk Institute for Biological Studies
(Introduced by Brain Institute Faculty Dr. Ricardo Mostany)

3:30  **Brain Institute Launch Ceremony** – Flower Hall for Research and Innovation
Separate program to be distributed at ceremony.

4:30  **Reception** – President’s House, Two Audubon Place

A shuttle bus will be available for transportation to Two Audubon Place. Pick up on Freret Street at McAlister Place
The Speakers

Alumni Symposium

Tony Ricci, PhD is a Professor of Otolaryngology and Director of the Neuroscience Training Program at Stanford University School of Medicine. He received his PhD in Neuroscience in 1992 from Tulane University working with Drs. Charles Norris and Paul Guth. He moved to the University of Texas at Galveston to the lab of Dr. Manning Correia. In 1996 he moved to the University of Wisconsin to work with Dr. Robert Fettiplace, In 1999 he moved into a faculty position at the LSU Health Sciences Center in New Orleans. In 2006 he moved to Stanford University. In 2010 he was named the Sewall Professor in Otolaryngology. In 2013 he became director of the Neuroscience Graduate training program.

Mario Romero-Ortega, PhD is an Associate Professor of Bioengineering and Brain and Behavioral Sciences at the University of Texas at Dallas (UTD) and adjunct faculty in the Surgery department at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center (UTSW). He received his doctorate in Neuroscience from Tulane University and postdoctoral training at UTSW as Associate Member of the Christopher Reeve Paralysis Foundation Research Consortium on Spinal Cord Injury. He served as Director of the Regenerative Neurobiology Research Division at Texas Scottish Rite Hospital and Assistant Professor of Neurology and Plastic Surgery at UTSW. His research centers in the understanding of the molecular basis of axon guidance and target recognition and the development of Neural Engineering solutions for prevention of distraction spinal cord injury, peripheral nerve gap repair, neuroma pain prevention, and regenerative peripheral neurointerfaces for the control and feel of robotic prosthetic limbs. His research is funded by NIH, NSF, DARPA, Glasko- Smith Kline and Draper among others. He serves in the Editorial Board of the Journal of Bioelectronic Medicine, Associate Editor of Frontiers in Neuroscience and as Founder and Chief Scientific Officer for Nerve Solutions Inc. He is the recipient of the 2014 UTA College of Engineering Excellence in Research Award, the 2013 TechFortWorth Impact Award and "Ten Most Promising Life Science Company Award", and the 2013 Tech Titans Award in Technology Innovation.

Scott Plotkin, MD, PhD, is an Associate Professor of Neurology at Harvard Medical School and is the Associate Director of the Pappas Center for Neuro-Oncology at Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH). He graduated magna cum laude from Harvard University and received his MD/PhD from Tulane University. He completed his internship in internal medicine at Tulane and then neurology residency at MGH and Brigham & Women’s Hospital in Boston. Dr. Plotkin then completed a clinical fellowship in neuro-oncology at MGH and was a post-doctoral fellow where he studied in vivo models of the blood brain barrier. Dr. Plotkin joined the neurology faculty of Harvard Medical School in 2003 and is currently the director for the Family Center for Neurofibromatosis at Massachusetts General Hospital and the Director of the MGH/DFCI/BWH Neuro-Oncology Fellowship program.

Abby L. Spencer, MD, MS is Director of the Cleveland Clinic Internal Medicine Residency Program and Vice Chair for Education, Cleveland Clinic Medicine Institute. Dr. Spencer graduated Summa Cum Laude and Phi Beta Kappa with a BS in Behavioral Neuroscience from Tulane University in 1998, and received her MD from the University of Pittsburgh, School of Medicine in 2002. After taking a first semester “brain and behavior” course at Tulane and volunteering as a GED tutor at the New Orleans Women’s Penitentiary, she designed her own undergraduate major in behavioral neuroscience and spent her research time investigating the effects of estrogen on learning and memory. These were the early signs of her developing future in women’s health and medical education. In 2005, Dr. Spencer completed her Internal
Medicine residency at the New York Presbyterian Hospital, Weill-Cornell Medical Center. In 2007, she completed a fellowship in General Internal Medicine with a concentration in Women’s Health and earned a Masters in Medical Education from the University of Pittsburgh. In addition to administrating, teaching, and mentoring within the residency program, Dr. Spencer has led several initiatives to redesign curriculum and assessment systems, enhance and build resident resilience, improve ambulatory education, and build a culture of empathic communication. Her interests within medical education center on innovative curriculum development, transitions of care/patient safety education, women’s health, primary care, clinical reasoning, and faculty development around teaching, leadership, and mentoring skills. She has presented nearly three dozen National educational workshops and precourses and has won teaching and mentorship awards for several of them.

**Johannes Bohacek, PhD** is a group leader at the Brain Research Institute at the University of Zurich in Switzerland. He studied Psychology in Austria at the University of Graz, completed a Master’s degree in Applied Biopsychology at the University of New Orleans, and earned a PhD in Neuroscience from Tulane University in the lab of Professor Jill Daniel in 2009. He conducted his postdoctoral training at the ETH Zurich with Professor Isabelle Mansuy. His research focuses on the molecular and behavioral impact of stress and on epigenetic inheritance.

**Keynote**

**Fred H. Gage, PhD** is a Professor in the Laboratory of Genetics. Dr. Gage’s work concentrates on the adult central nervous system and unexpected plasticity that remains throughout the life of all mammals. In addition, he models human neurological and psychiatric disease using human stem cells. He also studies the genomic mosaicism that exists in the brain as a result of mobile elements that are active in the genome. Dr. Gage is a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, a Member of the National Academy of Sciences and the National Academy of Medicine, the American Philosophical Society, and a Member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. Dr. Gage has served as President of the Society for Neuroscience in 2002, and past President for the International Society for Stem Cell Research 2012.