Advancing Interdisciplinary Collaboration in Neuroscience at UC Davis: The UC Davis Neuroscience Consortium

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Collaborators/Mentors: Allison Brashear MD, MBA, former Dean UCD SOM; Kim Barrett PhD, Vice-Dean for Research UCD SOM; Susan Murin MD, MBA, Interim Dean SOM; Kim McAllister PhD, Director, Center for Neuroscience; Prasant Mohapatra PhD, Vice Chancellor of Research, University of California, Davis

Background + Objective

UCD Neuroscience

- 300+ Faculty
  - 7 Centers
    - 6 Schools/Colleges
      - 41 Departments
        - 2 Campuses

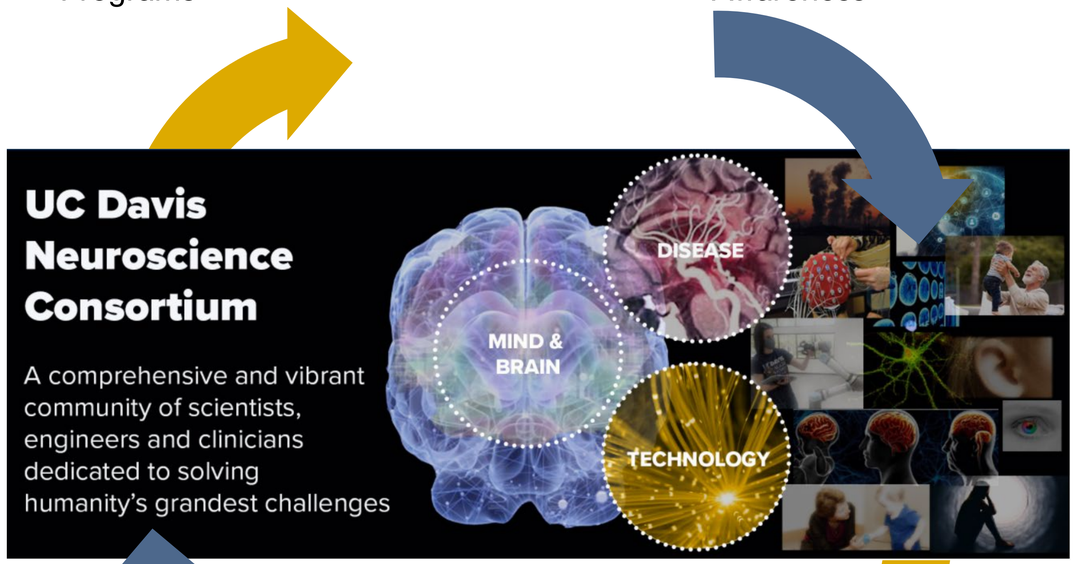
Methods + Approach

COLLABORATE

- Convene Neurosciences Steering Committee
- Promote Interdisciplinary Programs

COMMUNICATE

- Establish Website
- Inform about Resources
- Promote Community Awareness



INCENTIVIZE

- Provide planning grants to support development of new collaborations leading to large interdisciplinary applications

FACILITATE

- Host Retreat for Community
- Encourage Interactions
- Establish Funding & Review Process for Planning Grants

Outcomes + Impact

Launched Website October 2021

Full-Day Workshop to be held Summer 2022

Planning Grants for Large Interdisciplinary Neuroscience Requests

Advance Brain Health

Develop Innovative Technologies

Increase NIH Funding

Strengthen Educational Programs

Improve External Rankings

More Accessible Neuroscience Community

UCDAVIS HEALTH | Department of Neurology

ELAM

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ABSTRACT: 2022 ELAM Institutional Action Project

Project Title: Advancing Interdisciplinary Collaboration in Neuroscience at UC Davis: The UC Davis Neuroscience Consortium

Name and Institution: Amy Brooks-Kayal, MD, University of California Davis School of Medicine

Collaborators/Mentors: Allison Brashear MD, MBA, former Dean UCD SOM; Kim Barrett PhD, Vice-Dean for Research UCD SOM; Susan Murin MD, MBA, Interim Dean SOM; Kim McAllister PhD, Director, UC Davis Center for Neuroscience; Prasant Mohapatra PhD, Vice Chancellor of Research, UC Davis

Topic Category: Research

Background, Significance of project: UC Davis (UCD) has faculty engaged in neuroscience located in 7 Centers, 6 Schools/Colleges, and 16+ Departments on two campuses. Despite the sheer number, breadth, and quality of the different neuroscience programs and investigators at UCD, a major challenge has been a lack of strategic integration. Geographical and traditional departmental boundaries present significant administrative and physical constraints on our ability to achieve the level of interdisciplinary collaboration required to solve the most pressing problems in brain health.

Purpose/Objectives: To integrate the disparate entities engaged in Neuroscience at UC Davis into a cohesive whole. To realize their potential to create one of the world's strongest neuroscience communities, we need greater organization and collaboration among our neuroscience investigators, centers, and departments. We also need mechanisms to facilitate, incentivize, and support interdisciplinary team science.

Methods/Approach:

- In collaboration with leaders from both campuses, create the "UC Davis Neuroscience Consortium" as a unified identity and single point of access to the UCD Neuroscience community (completed)
- Design and launch a UC Davis Neuroscience Consortium website (ucdnc.ucdavis.edu), offering both search tools and integrative tags linking the many departments, centers, programs, and 300+ faculty engaged in Neuroscience at UC Davis (completed)
- Plan, fund, and then implement a full-day retreat to catalyze the formation of new interdisciplinary teams interested in developing large team neuroscience applications (in progress)
- Establish Planning Grant program to support the preparation of large interdisciplinary neuroscience applications (in progress)
- Develop a sustainable, long-term funding mechanism to support the website, annual retreats, and planning grants (in progress).

Outcomes/Results: The UC Davis Neuroscience Consortium website (ucdnc.ucdavis.edu) was successfully launched in October 2021 as a single point-of-access for UCD neuroscience. Next, to provide a forum for investigators to learn about research that may synergize with their own and provide a platform for new interdisciplinary collaborations; a full-day workshop will be held in June 2022. With the support of the Vice-Chancellor of Research and the Administrative Coordinating Council of Deans (ACCD), I have identified sources of funding for the workshop, as well as for Planning Grants to support the preparation of large interdisciplinary neuroscience applications. The call for proposals for planning grants will be announced at the retreat, with funding beginning in Q1 2023.

Impact: This project will advance UC Davis as a leader in academic neuroscience by bringing together researchers from multiple schools and departments with interests spanning basic science of brain functions, biomedical engineering, social and physical sciences to cutting-edge clinical and translational research. Facilitating easy appreciation of the breadth and depth of Neuroscience through the UCDNC website will improve external rankings, strengthen our educational programs, and make our neuroscience community more accessible to all. Identifying synergies among researchers and supporting team-based interdisciplinary science through the retreat and planning grants will increase funding from NIH, other federal and non-governmental agencies, as well as industry partnerships. Most importantly, it has the potential to catalyze the development of innovative technologies and discovery of new treatments that will advance brain health.