



APRIL, 2017

IRANIAN NEUROSCIENTISTS COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

PRESIDENT'S NOTE

Dear IRNSC members,

This is our first issue of the newsletter in the Persian New Year, 1396. I wish you a promising and fulfilling New Year and I hope, as a community, we achieve our goals and bring positive changes to the world around us.

Iranian Neuroscientists Community (IRNSC) is a long-honored non-profit organization dedicated to promoting scientific communication among Iranian neuroscientists. Recently the community shed its skin to have young scientists more involved in its leadership. As the new president of the community, I express my sincerest appreciations to everyone who has made it possible including the founders (Drs. Shekarabi, Kiaei, and Omrani), the former organizers, donors who have generously placed their trust in the community, and all the members who have helped IRNSC grow. I would also like to thank the new executive committee for volunteering to take the responsibility of running the organization. I am very optimistic that the younger generation with such a high level of enthusiasm, blessed with the support of founders and senior members, will move the community forward.

My special thanks goes to Mr. Parsa for redesigning and launching our new website (www.IRNSC.org). The new design is more user-friendly and automatically manages membership renewal/registration. This work is still in progress and we would be more than happy to receive your feedback on how we can improve it.

We have summarized progresses in this, as well as many other fronts, in this newsletter. You will find information about our new generation of organizers as well as our latest social event held in mid-November at Marriot Marquis, San Diego.

IRNSC needs your support in fundraising and membership payments, and involvement in any area to help leverage our resources to push the community forward. I hope in the next few years, the community will reach its milestones including, but not limited to, a significant increase in the number of our active memberships, scientific presentations during Society for Neuroscience (SfN) meetings, and providing more budget to distribute over travel awards to Iranian students and researcher applicants from all over the world. So please stay tuned.

Please do not hesitate to contact us with your suggestions and comments,



Warm regards,

Mahmood Hoseini, Ph.D.

Mahmood.Hoseini@IRNSC.org



NEW ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

Meet IRNSC's new organizing committee, made up of existing and new members. The latter are introduced in this issue.

Dr. Mahmood Hoseini

Mahmood.Hoseini@IRNSC.org

❖ **President (Nov 2016 – Nov 2017)**



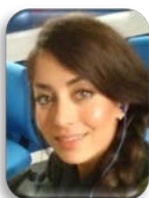
Dr. Hoseini received his M.Sc. in Physics (Complex Systems) from the Sharif University of Technology, Tehran, and his Ph.D. in Neurophysics, Neuroscience from Washington University in St. Louis.

“My research has been mostly focused on modeling coordinated activity and data analysis of intra- and extracellular recordings from the perspective of oscillations. The highlights of my study are: i) gamma band oscillations modulate coordination, and ii) how does network architecture play a role in neural coordination. My future goal is to uncover how oscillations and coordinated activity work together in information processing in the brain.”

Dr. Nazanin Mirzaei

❖ **President-elect (Nov 2017 – Nov 2018)**

Naz.mirzaei@gmail.com



Dr. Mirzaei received her M.Res. in Experimental Neuroscience and her Ph.D. in Neurodegeneration, Neuroscience from Imperial College London.

“I am interested in deciphering the link between neuroinflammation and the onset/progression of neurodegenerative disorders such as Alzheimer's disease, with particular emphasis on the role of astrocytes in regulating homeostasis and neurovascular coupling in the brain under normal and disease conditions.”

Dr. Hamid Reza Ramezanzpour

❖ **Secretary-elect (Nov 2017 – Nov 2018)**

Hamidreza.ramezanzpour@gmail.com



Dr. Ramezanzpour completed his Masters in Electrical and Radiation Engineering in Iran, and his Ph.D. in Neuroscience at the University of Tuebingen.

“I am primarily interested in gaze-following and face processing systems and their deficits in psychiatric disorders such as in autism and schizophrenia. During my Ph.D., I contributed to better understanding of functional organization of the superior temporal sulcus involved in the processing of face-related information using invasive microelectrode recordings in awake monkeys and fMRI in humans.”

Mr. Mohammadbagher Parsa

mbparsa@gmail.com



Mr. Parsa is currently a software engineer at Neuralynx Inc, as well as a Computer Science student at Montana State University. He holds a Masters degree in plant genetics from Isfahan University of Technology. Previously, he worked as a research associate in Dr. Noudoost's lab. Mr. Parsa is very passionate about scientific software development.

Dr. Behnam Ghasemzadeh (advisory)

behnam.ghasemzadeh@marquette.edu

IRNSC FOUNDERS, EX-OFFICIO

Dr. Masoud Shekarabi (IRNSC founder)

Masoud.shekarabi@temple.edu

❖ Former-Interim President
(Aug 2016 – Nov 2016)

❖ Secretary (Nov 2005 – Nov 2017)

Dr. Mahmoud Kiaei (IRNSC founder)

mkiaei@uams.edu

❖ Treasurer (Nov 2005 – Nov 2017)

Dr. Mohsen Omrani (IRNSC founder)

omranim@gmail.com

❖ Former President (Nov 2005– Nov 2012)

Professor Amir Rezvani

azadi@duke.edu

❖ Former President (Nov 2012 – Nov 2014)

Dr. Arezoo Campbel

❖ Former President (Nov 2014 – Aug 2016)

MEMBERSHIP & PAYPAL ACCOUNT COMMITTEE

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Dr. Mahmoud Kiaei

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Dr. Masoud Shekarabi

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TREASURER'S REPORT (2016-2017)

The treasure report for the past financial year is reflected here. Herein, I have outlined IRNSC's financial status:

Income:

Membership dues and donations collected at SfN	\$350.00
Membership dues and donations collected via PayPal	\$240.00
Donation by Prof. Rezvani, for Tax return filing expense	\$150.00
Donation by Dr. Omrani for IRNSC domains renewals	\$165.00
Donation by Dr. Kiaei	\$1000.00
TOTAL	\$1905.00

Expenses:

Registration of IRNSC, SfN program, by Dr. Kiaei	\$380.00
Tax return filing expense paid by Prof. Rezvani	\$150.00
Social Event at SfN, Hilton Bayfront paid by Dr. Kiaei	\$1,494.89
TOTAL	\$2,024.89
Donations and membership fees	\$-1905.00
Net	\$95.00

We would like to invite donors to consider donating funds for IRNSC and sponsor social event 2017 planned to be hold at SfN meeting in Washington, DC on November 13, 2017.

We presented two travel awards and the prize for each award was \$500.00. One of the awards was sponsored by Dr. Omrani's family in the honor of his grandparents. The second one was sponsored by Dr. Tahvildari's family in the honor of late Dr. Babak Tahvildari. Babak was one of the founders of IRNSC.

IRNSC is a registered scientific community and received with tax exemption under IRC Section 501 © (3) and Tax exemption # 26053758001595. Therefore, all donations are tax exempt.

The most important and immediate help you can do for IRNSC is to pay your dues today. Here is how to pay your Membership Dues:

To pay your membership dues or make donations, go to WWW.IRNSC.com and under MEMBERS tab, scroll down the page and click on PayPal then make payment via PayPal. We hope you can help us by your donation today.

Membership fees:

Faculties, professionals, employed scientists, consultants \$50.00 or more; Postdocs \$30.00 or more; Students \$15.00 or more.

We organizers would like to add more activities, like sponsorships, awards to students which depend on funding. If you wish to sponsor a sponsorship or student awards in your own name or tribute to someone else that to be awarded during our social events, please contact us.

I would like to thank Dr. Masoud Skekarabi to serve as interim president and handling the travel awards application processing and reviews. He has done an outstanding job!! He wasn't able to travel to San Diego to be present at the social and dinner and receive thanks.

Yours sincerely,

Mahmoud Kiaei, Ph.D.
IRNSC's Treasurer
mkiaei@uams.edu
(Tel: 1-917-378-1373)



SOCIETY FOR NEUROSCIENCE 2016 SOCIAL EVENT

At SfN 2016 in San Diego, the IRNSC annual social event was held at the Hilton San Diego Bayfront Hotel on November 13, 2016, from 6.30-8.30 pm (room Aqua 300). The turnout was considerable and it was great to see familiar faces and welcome some new members. During the event, several new members expressed their enthusiasm and interest to participate in the organization of IRNSC.

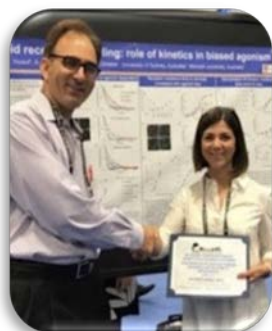


As per tradition, the recipients of the two prestigious travel awards were announced during the award presentation ceremony. Both recipients presented research posters at SfN 2016.

This annual event was continued with a dinner at Bandar Persian Restaurant in San Diego, Gaslamp Quarter area.

2016 TRAVEL AWARD RECIPIENTS

Recipient of the ‘*Dr. Babak Tahvildari Travel Award for Excellence of Science*’:



Dr Setareh Sianati

Post-doctoral researcher interested in finding novel and more effective ways for pain management, with a particular focus on cellular and molecular mechanisms in opioid receptor signaling in pain pathways. Dr. Sianati is currently working in the Pain and Addiction Laboratory headed by Professor Macdonald (Mac) Christie at the University of Sydney, where she also completed her Ph.D. on “Mu-opioid receptor signaling mechanisms: quantifying bias and kinetics” in the same research group.

Setareh.sianati@sydney.edu.au

Recipient of the ‘*Jamal and Zahra Omrani Travel Award for Excellence of Science*’:



Miss Yasaman Razavi, M.Sc.

PhD student investigating the role of neurogenesis in addiction under the supervision of Professor Abbas Haghparast in the Cellular and Molecular Research Center, Iran University of Medical Sciences, Tehran, Iran. Miss Razavi presented a poster on changes in apoptotic factors in the nucleus accumbens on morphine-induced conditioned place preference in the rat with emphasis on the involvement of acute and subchronic physical stress.

Razavi.Yasaman@gmail.com

INTERVIEW WITH PROFESSOR AMIR REZVANI

We had the pleasure of conducting an interview with a former president of IRNSC, Professor Amir Rezvani (azadi@duke.edu), who was also a past president of the North Carolina Triangle chapter of the Society for Neuroscience.

Please tell us about your academic background.

“After finishing high school at Darolfonnon High School in Tehran, I continued my studies at the University of Tehran, receiving a B.Sc. in Biology and a M.Sc. in teaching Biology. In 1976, I came to the US and got a Masters in Physiology from the University of Central Missouri. In 1979, I joined the Department of Physiology at the University of Illinois and in 1983 received my Ph.D.

Following the completion of my Ph.D., I joined the Department of Psychiatry of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC-CH) as a post-doctoral researcher. In 1986, I was hired as an assistant professor at UNC-CH and remained there for 15 years before moving to Duke University.”

What are your main research interests?

“My research for the last 25 years has been focused on addiction using genetic animal model of human alcoholism.”



Please tell us about your current position and department as well as what makes your institute a suitable place of study for young/other neuroscientists?

“Currently, I am professor of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at the School of Medicine of Duke University. I am also associate director of the Addiction Division. What makes Duke University a special place to work is its resources and the sense of collaboration among faculty. Duke University has

put significant emphasis on Neuroscience by creating an institute called Duke Institute for Brain Sciences (DIBS) for studying neuroscience. One of DIBS’s goals is to promote innovative approaches to problems of nervous system functions that lie at the boundaries of traditional disciplines.

The institute tries to create a suitable collaborative environment for students, post-docs and faculty for learning about the nervous system. In addition to DIBS, the Departments of Neurobiology and Psychology and Neuroscience provide great opportunities for undergrad and graduate students as well as post-docs.”

In your opinion, what has been the most exciting finding – by you or others – in your research field in recent years?

“The most interesting finding was the discovery of co-morbidity of depression and heavy alcohol drinking in a line of rats (Fawn-Hooded rats) with central and peripheral genetic serotonin deficiency. We and other scientists have used these rats to better understand alcoholism as well as depression in relation to the serotonergic system. This line of rats has been also used to screen novel medication for the treatment of alcoholism in humans.”

Who or what was the biggest influence in your career?

“My high school science teachers in Iran were very influential in my decision to go into biological sciences. But the biggest influence was one of my professors in the faculty of science at Tehran University, Dr. Abdollah Sheibani. He instilled in me the love of science and serving humanity through science. His passion for life sciences and teaching was exemplary. During my 6-year study at Tehran

University, I never missed his class and I always looked forward to his lectures. In addition to his passion for life sciences, he was in love with Iran's history and its rich culture. So, I had a good reason to love him and learn from him and follow his path."

What has been the most contributing factor to your success?

"In two words, passion and determination."

Do you have any advice for junior scientists hoping to pursue a career in neuroscience?

"The best advice that I can give is to follow your passion. In my opinion, studying the brain and its function is the most interesting subject in life sciences, but you have to be passionate about it to succeed. There are a lot of ups and downs in scientific research, but this is part of the endeavor and what makes it so exciting. Be resilient, motivated and have a research goal. Find a mentor – preferably a successful scientist with a great track record."

What is the next step for you?

"I have been in academia for more than 30 years. My next step is to continue my research on addiction and cognition and be more involved in teaching which is my passion. I hope to transfer my experiences in science to the public through workshops, seminars and lectures both here and in Iran."

How long have you been a member of IRNSC and would you recommend it to others? If so, why?

"I have been associated with IRNSC for more than 7 years and I was the president from 2012-2014. This purely scientific organization was established over a decade ago by a few devoted young Iranian neuroscientists in the US. The mission of IRNSC is to promote and facilitate scientific collaboration and connection among Iranian neuroscientists worldwide. The organization has grown significantly and I believe it currently has more than 300 members. I definitely recommend getting involved

with IRNSC especially for young neuroscientists to collaborate with other talented Iranian neuroscientists across the world."

BASIC AND CLINICAL NEUROSCIENCE (BCN) – CALL FOR PAPERS

Basic and Clinical Neuroscience (BCN – <http://bcn.tums.ac.ir>) is a peer-reviewed journal, publishing original articles that contribute to the advancement of science in the field of the neurosciences with an emphasis on both basic and clinical research, theory, practice, policy and education. BCN provides a venue to share critical hypotheses, exchange clinical experiences and strategies, communicate research findings, express important conceptual perspectives, and define policy and practice initiatives and issues. The journal is designed to respond to the needs of practitioners, researchers, educators, and administrators who develop, promote, and apply evidence-informed knowledge in their lives and work. Published four times a year by Tehran University of Medical Sciences (TUMS), BCN seeks manuscripts from researchers, practitioners, educators, and administrators in the field of neuroscience from around the world.

WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA

Get in touch with us by visiting our new and improved website www.IRNSC.com and find us on social media via the following platforms:

Facebook: www.facebook.com/IRNSClub

Twitter: www.twitter.com/IRNSClub

LinkedIn: Coming Soon!

Let us know about your recent findings or publications using the twitter handle **@IRNSClub** or by using the above links and we could include it in our next newsletter.