

PATRICK E. MURPHY  
18TH DISTRICT, FLORIDA

WASHINGTON OFFICE:  
1517 LONGWORTH HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20515  
(202) 225-3026  
FAX: (202) 225-8398  
[www.patrickmurphy.house.gov](http://www.patrickmurphy.house.gov)



Congress of the United States  
House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515-0918

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April 8<sup>th</sup>, 2013

The PRESIDENT,  
*The White House*

Dear Mr. President:

I write to offer my enthusiastic support for your new BRAIN Initiative and request the inclusion of world-renowned Florida neuroscientists Drs. David Fitzpatrick, Rod Murphey, and Ronald Davis on the federal committees appointed to refine the goals of BRAIN. I believe this initiative offers the best hope for developing new treatments for devastating brain disorders that diminish the quality of life for more than a billion people worldwide, and look forward to its implementation.

The 18<sup>th</sup> Congressional District of Florida stands ready to meet the goals of the BRAIN Initiative through its **Jupiter Neuroscience Community**, which includes two of the most prestigious scientific institutions in the world—The Max Planck Florida Institute and The Scripps Florida Research Institute—along with the fastest growing University in the state—the Florida Atlantic University (FAU). These institutions are immediately adjacent to each other in Jupiter, Florida, providing a proximity that has fostered the growth of a highly interactive community of neuroscientists with shared interests and complementary skill sets.

As the accompanying pages highlight, The Jupiter Neuroscience Community is exceptionally well-positioned to provide the intellectual, technical, and educational resources to drive advances in research that meet the scientific objectives of the BRAIN initiative. In turn, support from the BRAIN initiative would accelerate and amplify what is already an aggressive effort to understand brain function and dysfunction in the Jupiter Neuroscience Community.

I credit the development of the Jupiter Neuroscience Community and its highly collaborative and synergistic research environment in large part to the hard work of Drs. David Fitzpatrick, Rod Murphey, and Ronald Davis. I look forward to their inclusion on the federal committees appointed to help refine the goals of the BRAIN initiative, and encourage maximum collaboration with the Jupiter Neuroscience Community as a whole.

Sincerely,

Patrick E. Murphy  
MEMBER OF CONGRESS

ST. LUCIE COUNTY  
121 SW PORT ST. LUCIE BLVD  
ROOM 187  
PORT ST. LUCIE, FL 34984  
PHONE (772) 336-2877  
FAX (772) 336-2899

PALM BEACH COUNTY  
2000 PGA BLVD  
SUITE A3220  
PALM BEACH GARDENS, FL 33408  
PHONE (561) 253-8433  
FAX (561) 253-8436

MARTIN COUNTY  
171 SW FLAGLER AVE  
STUART, FL 34994  
PHONE (772) 781-3266  
FAX (772) 781-3267

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## **The Jupiter Neuroscience Community**

### *The Scripps Florida Research Institute*

- East coast campus of The Scripps Research Institute in La Jolla, California, among the largest private, not-for-profit research organizations in the world.
- More than 200 total principal investigators, including three Nobel laureates and members of some of the country's most prestigious scientific organizations including the National Academy of Sciences, the Institute of Medicine, and the American Association for the Advancement of Science.
- The Department of Neuroscience at Scripps Florida currently includes 12 outstanding scientists led by founding Chairman, Dr. Ronald Davis, who initiated the Department after a 20-year stint as the R.P. Doherty-Welch Professor of Science at the Baylor College of Medicine and the Director of Baylor's Center for Memory and Learning. The Scripps neuroscientists focus their research efforts largely on brain function and brain dysfunction, along with translating new discoveries into therapeutics that can help improve brain function.

### *The Max Planck Florida Institute for Neuroscience*

- First institute outside of Europe to bear the name and traditions of the prestigious German scientific association, the Max Planck Society.
- Max Planck scientists working in more than 80 institutes have a remarkable record of scientific accomplishment including 17 Nobel Prizes, 1100 inventions, and discoveries that span a broad range of disciplines including chemistry, biology, physics, astronomy.
- The Max Planck Florida Institute for Neuroscience currently includes 9 outstanding investigators who are implementing cutting edge technologies to elucidate the structure, function and development of the brain's neural circuits. The Institute is led by Dr. David Fitzpatrick, CEO, formerly the James B. Duke Professor of Neurobiology at Duke University Medical Center and founder of the Duke Institute for Brain Sciences. He is joined by eight other world-class neuroscientists, including the Nobel laureate Bert Sakmann, and investigators recruited from highly regarded research institutions including Harvard, MIT, Duke, and Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory.

### *The Florida Atlantic University*

- Serves 30,000 undergraduate and graduate students at multiple campuses. The campus in Jupiter, Florida, is home to the Harriet Wilkes Honors College.
- FAU is in a unique position to serve as an incubator for educating future neuroscientists, offering a B.S. degree in Neuroscience and Behavior and several Ph.D. degree programs in neuroscience including a joint program with the Max Planck Florida Institute. Undergraduate students at the Jupiter campus are pursuing research projects at Scripps Florida, Max Planck Florida Institute, and FAU. The neuroscience training programs are supported by a variety of state and federal grants.
- The neuroscience efforts at FAU are led by Dr. Rodney Murphey, an exceptional neuroscientist who also serves as Chair of the Dept. of Biology at FAU. Dr. Murphey is joined by five outstanding FAU faculty members who pursue neuroscience research in laboratories on the Jupiter campus.

### **Major Accomplishments of the Jupiter Neuroscience Community**

- Numerous publications in the highest impact scientific journals such as Nature, Science, Neuron, and Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences. The publications report fundamental discoveries that are relevant to autism, schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, and Alzheimer's disease, among others.
- Establishing cutting edge technologies for probing the structure and function of the brain, including a specialized electron microscope that allows for a complete reconstruction of brain circuits. In addition, a new microscope is being constructed for imaging the structure and function of neurons in the living brain, the first of its kind in the United States.
- Development of novel methodologies for visualizing the activity of neurons in the living brain using functional imaging, and for monitoring brain changes that occur with memory formation and forgetting.
- Discoveries that have shed light on age-related memory loss and possible treatments for cognitive aging.
- Numerous awards for pioneering research, including a prestigious Javits Neuroscience Investigator Award, NARSAD Investigator awards, Ellison Medical Foundation Scholar awards, and election to the American Association for the Advancement of Science, among others.
- Initiation of start-up companies based on neuroscience research.