

Museum hosts Sixth Annual Brain Awareness Week

More than 800 middle- and high-school students from Maryland, Virginia, and Washington, D.C. learned about the brain while participating in hands-on activities with neuroscientists at the Sixth Annual Brain Awareness Week at the National Museum of Health and Medicine, held March 14-18, 2005.

Six stations were designed and operated by collaborating institutions called Partners-In-Education. This year's Partners included the Dana Alliance for Brain Initiatives, Georgetown University, George Mason University's Krasnow Institute, Howard University, the National Institutes of Health, Walter Reed Army Medical Center and the National Museum of Health and Medicine. Each of these organizations was represented by neuroscientists who conducted a station highlighting an aspect of the brain and/or brain science.

The program links scientists, students, clinicians, journalists and educators, with the goal of bringing information to the public about the brain and brain science. "It gives the students an opportunity to meet scientists with a unique perspective and with distinct and credible information about the brain," said Adrienne Noe, Ph.D., director of the museum.

The event hosted two separate programs, one for high-school students, which took place on March 10 and 11, and the other for middle-school students, which ran from March 14-18.

The high-school program was designed by the Museum to give students more advanced knowledge of the brain, as discovered through current research projects at universities, and to highlight current brain issues that are relevant to adolescents. This program featured Barry Komisaruk, Ph.D., Rutgers University, whose presentation explored the intricacies of

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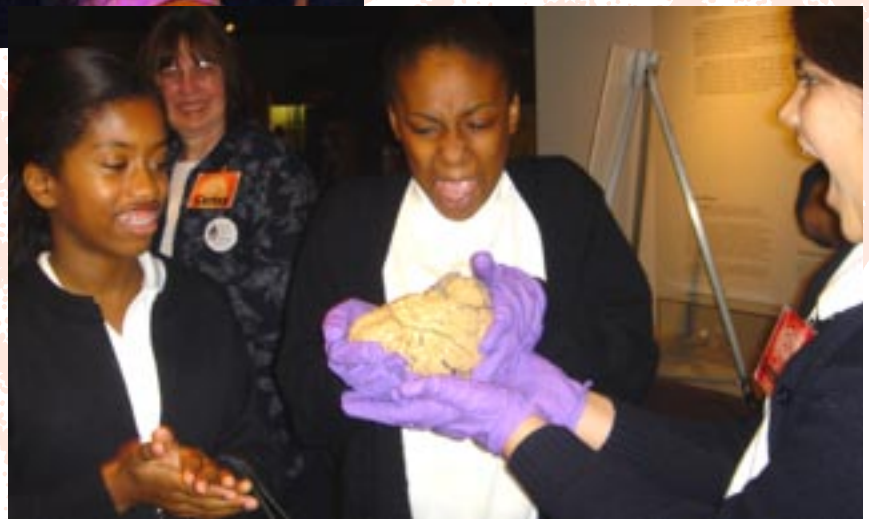


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- From top: Liam Senior, Jody Frye, Brian Tomenga, Kyla Whitmore, Donovan Duvall (left to right) from Sidwell Friends School in Washington, D.C., probe a gelatin brain for "tumors" (grapes) and "infection" (darker strands of gelatin).
- Archie Fobbs, curator of the Neuroanatomical Collections at the museum, points out different sections of the brain for students.
- Camille Bough, Melissa Morgan, and Emily Sahadeo of Concordia Lutheran School in Washington, D.C., get their chance to hold a brain as teacher Edith Damron looks on.

New Staff:

Jana Justan

Jana Justan is the new exhibit specialist at the National Museum of Health and Medicine. She comes with 20 years of experience in developing and designing exhibits at a variety of museums. Most recently she worked as an exhibit developer at the Georgia Sports and Music Hall of Fame in Macon, Ga.

Prior to that she worked for the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of American History as a visual designer, where she developed the "First Ladies: Political Role – Public Image"



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exhibit and the "Rhythm and Blues: Black American Popular Music" exhibit, as well as many others.

Justan holds a master of fine arts degree from the University of Notre Dame in Notre Dame, Ind. and a bachelor of fine arts degree from Jacksonville University in Jacksonville, Fla. She also restores oil paintings at her home and is currently working on a piece from the Museum of Aviation near Robins Air Force Base in Warner Robins, Ga. She resides in Silver Spring, Md.

Courtney MacGregor

Courtney MacGregor is the museum's public affairs specialist. She earned her bachelor's degree in public relations in May 2004 from James Madison University in Harrisonburg, Va., where she produced a media kit for the Harrisonburg Red Cross. While in college, she held three intern-

ships: as an administrative assistant in corporate communications for Medialink Worldwide in Washington, D.C., as a technical associate in radio public



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relations for the North American Network in Bethesda, Md., and as public relations coordinator for Basic Concepts in Rockville, Md., where she was responsible for introducing the

small special education company to the practice and use of public relations. She is a member of the International Association of Business Communicators and the Association of Women in Communication.



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'Brainy' new helmets are a hit with students

To complement the lessons that were stressed throughout the Brain Awareness program—**wear your helmet when biking or skateboarding and your seatbelt in the car**—students attending the Friday session of Brain Awareness Week were given multiuse sports helmets designed to look like a brain. 135 students from Parkland Middle School in Rockville, Md., Blessed Sacrament School, Bolling Area Home Educators, and Holy Trinity School, all in Washington, D.C., received free helmets courtesy of The Lynn Fund, which obtains support from the Defense Veterans Brain Injury Center (DVBIC). This helmet meets Consumer Product Safety Commission standards.

Parkland Middle School student Terri Dean fits her friend Allyson Testamark with her new brain helmet.

The helmets are part of the "Use Your Brain" project, whose goal is raising awareness and preventing traumatic brain injury (TBI). TBI is the result of a blow to the head that causes the brain to move around violently in the skull. This can often result in serious damage—bleeding, tearing and swelling—to brain tissue and nerves.

Warren Lux, deputy director of the DVBIC at Walter Reed Army Medical Center, says the brain has a consistency similar to gelatin. "If you just whip [it] around in space, you would stretch and tear those nerve fibers," Lux says. "That's what the core injury is in traumatic brain injury."

The helmets were given to all participants in Friday's program. The Lynn Fund plans to continue to give away the helmets at bicycle and skateboarding events and other athletic venues where falling is common. The helmets will also be given away at church and school fundraisers, community events and police and fire departments. To receive more information on the "Use Your Brain" helmet project, visit www.thelynnfund.org or www.dvbic.org.

Alice Marie Stevens, education coordinator for the DVBIC, said, "We are pleased that our first helmet event was during Brain Awareness Week at the National Museum of Health and Medicine, at our headquarters, Walter Reed Army Medical Center. If the overwhelming enthusiasm and interest from the NMHM event continues, then this project will be very successful."

National Museum of Health and Medicine

The museum is an element of the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology on the campus of Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, DC

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www.nmhm.washingtondc.museum

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Open daily from 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Closed Dec. 25.

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— Upcoming Events —

May 22, 2005, 1 p.m.

- Book signing and lecture. Michael Sledge, author of "Soldier Dead," will discuss the complicated physical, social, religious, economic, and political issues concerning the remains of men and women who die while serving their country. Sledge examines the question of why recovering the remains of service people matters and provides a thorough analysis of the processes of recovery, identification, return, burial, and remembrance of the dead.



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June 4, 2005, 11 a.m. – 2 p.m.

- National Safety Month, hosted at the museum. Medical professionals and educators will be on site to distribute information about safety issues, with a specific focus on protecting the brain. To further promote brain safety, the Brain Injury Association of America will give one free multiuse sports helmet, designed to look like a brain, to each of the first 200 who participate in the health screenings, based upon size availability. The screenings will include blood pressure, cholesterol, blood sugar, and body fat levels.

June 8-9, 2005, 12 p.m.

- Screening of "Battle Circus," a 1953 film based on a U.S. Army doctor's experience in a mobile surgical hospital during the Korean War. The film will be shown in two parts with an introduction from Alan Hawk, Historical Collections manager.

More information for all programs can be found at www.nmhm.washingtondc.museum/events/events.html.

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