The 2021 Klerman & Freedman Awards

AUGUST 2021
The Brain & Behavior Research Foundation is pleased to honor and recognize the extraordinary work of six outstanding young researchers with our annual Klerman & Freedman Prizes for exceptional clinical and basic research in mental illness. The Klerman and Freedman prizes recognize innovative thinking and remarkable talent across the field of neuropsychiatry.

The prizewinners are selected by committees of the Foundation’s distinguished Scientific Council. Led by Dr. Herbert Pardes, this group of 180 prominent mental health researchers rigorously evaluates every grant application, identifying the most promising, high-quality science. The Council carefully selects those with the greatest potential for significant breakthroughs. Recognition for scientists early in their career helps them go on to receive further funding and is a precursor to further accomplishments.

These six prizewinners have previously received awards through the BBRF Young Investigator Grant program, which supports early-career scientists as they gather pilot data and “proof of concept” for their innovative clinical and basic research. Our Young Investigator grants provide the seed funding young researchers need to pursue their hypotheses, concepts, and strategies that our Scientific Council believes have the greatest chance of advancing the field.

We applaud these researchers for their exceptional work, and we thank our generous donors for their support of brain and behavior research to fund scientists working to produce better treatments, cures, and methods of prevention for mental illness.

Together we will dramatically improve the lives of those living with mental illness and enable more people to live full, happy, and productive lives.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey Borenstein, M.D.
President & CEO
ANNUAL KLERMAN PRIZE
FOR EXCEPTIONAL CLINICAL RESEARCH

Nicholas L. Balderston, Ph.D.
University of Pennsylvania
Center for Neuromodulation in Depression and Stress

HONORABLE MENTIONS

Hengyi Cao, Ph.D.
Feinstein Institutes for Medical Research, Northwell Health
West China Hospital

Nolan R. Williams, M.D.
Stanford University

ANNUAL FREEDMAN PRIZE
FOR EXCEPTIONAL BASIC RESEARCH

Meaghan Creed, Ph.D.
Washington University in St. Louis
Washington University Pain Center

HONORABLE MENTIONS

Denise Cai, Ph.D.
Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai

Tomasz J. Nowakowski, Ph.D.
The University of California, San Francisco

About the Prizes
The Klerman & Freedman Prizes pay tribute to Drs. Gerald L. Klerman and Daniel X. Freedman, whose legacies as researchers, teachers, physicians and administrators have indelibly influenced neuropsychiatry. Their outstanding contributions to the field of brain and behavior research continue to inspire scientists who knew them, as well as those who are just entering the field.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>KLERMAN Prizewinners</th>
<th>KLERMAN Honorable Mentions</th>
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<td>1995</td>
<td>Dr. Rajiv Tandon</td>
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<td>Dr. Kim T. Mueser</td>
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<td>Dr. Jose V. Pardo</td>
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<td>1996</td>
<td>Dr. Hans C. Brieter</td>
<td>Dr. Steven E. Arnold</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Dr. Helen S. Mayberg</td>
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<td>1997</td>
<td>Dr. Schahram Akbarian</td>
<td>Dr. Andrew J. Francis</td>
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<td>Dr. Katharine A. Phillips</td>
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<td>1998</td>
<td>Dr. Michael Maes</td>
<td>Dr. Cameron S. Carter</td>
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<td>Dr. Mark R. Serper</td>
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<td>1999</td>
<td>Dr. Andrew L. Stoll</td>
<td>Dr. Shitij Kapur</td>
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<td>Dr. Brian F. O’Donnell</td>
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<td>2000</td>
<td>Dr. Susan K. Schultz</td>
<td>Dr. Mark S. George</td>
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<td>Dr. Sohee Park</td>
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<td>2001</td>
<td>Dr. Cameron S. Carter</td>
<td>Dr. Stephan Heckers</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Dr. Josephy R. Hibblen</td>
<td>Dr. Anissa Abi Dargham</td>
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<td>Dr. Sarah H. Lisanby</td>
<td>Dr. Jeffrey H. Meyer</td>
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<td>Dr. Perry F. Renshaw</td>
<td>Dr. Yvette I. Sheline</td>
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<td>2002</td>
<td>Dr. E. Sherwood Brown</td>
<td>Dr. Catherine Monk</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Dr. John W. Newcomer</td>
<td>Dr. Gerard Sanacora</td>
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<td>2003</td>
<td>Dr. Ramin Mojtabai</td>
<td>Dr. Anne L. Glowinski</td>
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<td>Dr. Gerard Sanacora</td>
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<td>2004</td>
<td>Dr. Helen Link Egger</td>
<td>Dr. Stephan Eliez</td>
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<td>Dr. Joan L. Luby</td>
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<td>2005</td>
<td>Dr. Melissa P. DelBello</td>
<td>Dr. Yuval Y. Neria</td>
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<td>Dr. Carolyn M. Salafia</td>
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<td>2006</td>
<td>Dr. Hilary P. Blumberg</td>
<td>Dr. Brian M. D’Onofrio</td>
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<td>Dr. Jennifer S. Silk</td>
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<td>2007</td>
<td>Dr. Beng-Choon Ho</td>
<td>Dr. Johanne Renaud</td>
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<td>Dr. Manpreet Kaur Singh</td>
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<td>2008</td>
<td>Dr. Gabriel Alejandro de Erausquin</td>
<td>Dr. Daniel Mueller</td>
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<td>Dr. Andrea Danese</td>
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<td>2009</td>
<td>Dr. Alina Suris</td>
<td>Dr. Mazen A. Kheirbek</td>
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<td>Dr. Bo Li</td>
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<td>2010</td>
<td>Dr. Daniel P. Dickstein</td>
<td>Dr. Chadi Abdallah</td>
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<td>Dr. Mani N. Pavuluri</td>
<td>Dr. Carrie J. McAdams</td>
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<td>2011</td>
<td>Dr. Chadi Calarge</td>
<td>Dr. Denis Jabaudon</td>
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<td>Dr. Alan Anticevic</td>
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<td>2012</td>
<td>Dr. Jess G. Fiedorowicz</td>
<td>Dr. Jennifer C. Felger</td>
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<td>Dr. Albert R. Powers III</td>
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<td>2013</td>
<td>Dr. James McPartland</td>
<td>Dr. Nolan R. Williams</td>
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<td>2014</td>
<td>Dr. Denis Jabaudon</td>
<td>Dr. Ellen Lee</td>
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<td>2015</td>
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<td>2016</td>
<td>Dr. Katie McLaughlin</td>
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<td>2017</td>
<td>Dr. Jennifer C. Felger</td>
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<td>2020</td>
<td>Dr. Ellen Lee</td>
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The Klerman Prize, established in 1994 by Myrna M. Weissman, Ph.D., in memory of her late husband, Gerald L. Klerman, M.D., honors exceptional clinical research by a BBRF Young Investigator Grantee. A distinguished psychiatric researcher and mentor at the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH), Dr. Klerman pioneered studies of psychototropic medications and developed and tested interpersonal psychotherapy. Dr. Weissman serves on the BBRF Scientific Council.

KLERMAN PRIZE SELECTION COMMITTEE

Responsible for selecting the Klerman Prizewinners, the following BBRF Scientific Council Members make up the Selection Committee:

**CHAIR**

**Robert M.A. Hirschfeld, M.D.**  
*Well Cornell Medical College, Cornell University*

**MEMBERS**

**Martin B. Keller, M.D.**  
*Brown University*

**Nina R. Schooler, Ph.D.**  
*State University of New York, Downstate*

**Karen Dineen Wagner, M.D., Ph.D.**  
*University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston*
“Winning the Klerman Prize is an incredible honor, and a reminder of the importance of the work to be done. More broadly, receiving support from BBRF has been instrumental in launching my career as an independent investigator and has facilitated my ability to push toward translating my basic scientific findings into potential new treatments for people with anxiety disorders.”
The research of Hengyi Cao is focused on the investigation of neural mechanisms underlying the pathogenesis of psychotic disorders such as schizophrenia. His lab combines imaging techniques such as functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI), genetic analysis, and behavioral assessments to study how psychosis-related risk factors alter the structural and functional organizations of the human brain, and how these alterations lead to behavioral abnormalities observed in the clinic.

The aim of these studies is to develop early prediction, early intervention, and treatment of these disorders. To date, Dr. Cao’s research has been conducted primarily in populations at clinical and/or genetic risks for psychosis, in first-episode patients, and in patients with long-term illness. This work has led to the discovery that altered connections between the cerebellum, thalamus, and systems in the cerebral cortex are a potential neural trait associated with psychosis. Such change may predict future development of psychosis before illness onset and be present across the entire course of the disorder.

“Winning the Klerman Honorable Mention is absolutely a great honor to me. I am thrilled and grateful that my work is recognized and appreciated by the psychiatric community, which strongly encourages me to proceed with my research to promote the understanding of psychotic disorders. The BBRF grant also offers me, for the first time, as an independent principal investigator to conduct a new project, and helps me transit smoothly from a postdoctoral trainee to research faculty.”
Nolan R. Williams has a broad background in clinical neuroscience and is board-certified in general neurology, general psychiatry, as well as in behavioral neurology and neuropsychiatry. In addition, he has specific training and clinical expertise in the development of brain stimulation methodologies under Mark S. George, M.D. Themes of Dr. Williams’ work include examining the use of spaced learning theory in the application of neurostimulation techniques; development and mechanistic understanding of rapid-acting antidepressants; and identifying objective biomarkers that predict neuromodulation responses in treatment-resistant neuropsychiatric conditions.

Results from his studies have gained widespread attention, most notably findings of a team he led demonstrating a novel protocol called SAINT for delivery of non-invasive brain stimulation to individuals with refractory depression. In that preliminary study, 90% of participants experienced a remission of depression symptoms after only 5 days of treatment. Those results have led to larger studies which seek to replicate the results.

“Receiving the Honorable Mention for the Klerman Award is an extraordinary honor. BBRF has been tremendously important for my career. My two BBRF grants launched my lab and facilitated the data that has ultimately resulted in two current NIMH grants. I could not be where I am without BBRF.”
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
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<th>Prizewinner 2</th>
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<td>Dr. Eric E. Turner</td>
<td>Dr. Emmanuel N. Pothos</td>
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<td>1999</td>
<td>Dr. Stewart A. Anderson</td>
<td>Dr. Elizabeth Van Bockstaele</td>
<td>Dr. Laurence H. Tecott</td>
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<td>2000</td>
<td>Dr. Edwin G. Abel</td>
<td>Dr. Wayne Drevets</td>
<td>Dr. Bernice E. Morrow</td>
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<td>2001</td>
<td>Dr. Kelsey C. Martin</td>
<td>Dr. Michael J. Caterina</td>
<td>Dr. Aurelio A. Galli</td>
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<td>2002</td>
<td>Dr. Jon R. Backstrom</td>
<td>Dr. Michael W. Quick</td>
<td>Dr. Fu-Ming Zhou</td>
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<td>Dr. Jose A. Esteban</td>
<td>Dr. William A. Carlezon</td>
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<td>2004</td>
<td>Dr. Luca Santarelli</td>
<td>Dr. Michael D. Ehlers</td>
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<td>Dr. Lisa M. Monteggia</td>
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<td>Dr. Michael D. Ehlers</td>
<td>Dr. Steward A. Anderson</td>
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<td>Dr. Thomas A. Blanpied</td>
<td>Dr. Karoly Mirnics</td>
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<td>Dr. Evelyn K. Lambe</td>
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<td>Dr. Alexandre Bonnin</td>
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<td>2012</td>
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<td>Dr. Theodore D. Satterthwaite</td>
<td>Dr. Andrew A. Pieper</td>
<td>Dr. Sheena Ann Josselyn</td>
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<td>2015</td>
<td>Dr. Michael M. Halassa</td>
<td>Dr. Marie Carlen</td>
<td>Dr. Andrew A. Pieper</td>
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<td>2016</td>
<td>Dr. Kay Tye</td>
<td>Dr. Genevieve Konopka</td>
<td>Dr. Andrew A. Pieper</td>
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<td>2017</td>
<td>Dr. Iilana Witten</td>
<td>Dr. Carmen Andreeescu</td>
<td>Dr. Andrew A. Pieper</td>
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<td>2018</td>
<td>Dr. Byungkook Lim</td>
<td>Dr. David Foster</td>
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<td>2019</td>
<td>Dr. Anna Victoria Molofsky</td>
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<td>Dr. Andrew A. Pieper</td>
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<td>2020</td>
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<td>Dr. Elena Ivleva</td>
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<td>Dr. Aristotle N. Voineskos</td>
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<td>Dr. Kristen J. Brennand</td>
<td>Dr. Nandakumar Narayanan</td>
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<td>Dr. Conor Liston</td>
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<td>Dr. Lorna A. Farrelly</td>
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FREEDMAN PRIZE

The Freedman Prize honors the late Daniel X. Freedman, M.D., a pioneer in biological psychiatry and psychopharmacology and a founding member of the Brain & Behavior Research Foundation Scientific Council. It is awarded to a BBRF Young Investigator Grantee for exceptional basic research.

FREEDMAN PRIZE SELECTION COMMITTEE

Responsible for selecting the Freedman Prizewinners, the following BBRF Scientific Council Members make up the Selection Committee:

**CHAIR**

Ariel Y. Deutch, Ph.D.
Vanderbilt University

**MEMBERS**

Joseph T. Coyle, M.D.
McLean Hospital
Harvard Medical School

Cecilia Flores, Ph.D.
McGill University

Peter W. Kalivas, Ph.D.
Medical University of South Carolina

Husseini K. Manji, M.D., FRCPC
Johnson & Johnson PRD
Visiting Professor, Duke University

Eric J. Nestler, M.D., Ph.D.
Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai

Marina Picciotto, Ph.D.
Yale University
Yale School of Medicine

Bryan Roth, M.D., Ph.D.
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
Meaghan Creed seeks to optimize neuromodulation therapies for disorders of reward processing, specifically for affective symptoms of chronic pain and substance use disorders. Deep brain stimulation (DBS) is a surgical therapy whereby current is passed through electrodes implanted into specific brain nuclei. While the indications for DBS are expanding, the mechanisms by which DBS induces its effects in the context of affective symptoms are not well understood at the cellular, synaptic or circuit levels, making it difficult to optimize.

Dr. Creed’s lab seeks to leverage insight from optogenetic circuit-dissection studies to understand how basal ganglia circuit function is altered by the comorbid experience of chronic pain and addictive substances, and then to apply cell-type specific pharmacology and electrophysiology to design neuromodulation protocols to alter circuit function and normalize symptoms of impaired reward processing.

“It’s an honor and incredibly humbling to be selected for this award, particularly from this impressive cohort of BBRF Young Investigators. Support from my BBRF grant has allowed our lab to reach out in a completely new technical direction. It’s my goal to help develop neuromodulation protocols to increase treatment options for patients and to develop an improved understanding of the neurobiology underlying specific symptoms, which may help predict and optimize patient responses to different therapeutic strategies.”
I am deeply grateful to receive this honor. Many thanks to BBRF for recognizing the interdisciplinary approaches and collaborative efforts of our team. The BBRF grant was critical in supporting us in exploring high-risk, high-reward ideas. It gave us freedom and flexibility to develop novel technology to access new insights about how the brain integrates traumatic events with recent events to make predictions about the future.”
Tomasz J. Nowakowski’s research is beginning to unravel how genes involved in mental health disorders are expressed across the many cell types of the developing human brain. In particular, his most recent work highlights a role of neural progenitor cells in the differentiation of cerebral cortical areas during development, and a novel role for developmental pathways implicated in autism, schizophrenia, and depression, in the early stages of brain development.

This research has involved identifying the molecular features distinguishing human radial glia, which act as neural stem cells. Through a series of studies, he has uncovered molecular definitions of cell types in the developing human brain, and revealed new distinctions among excitatory neurons located in cerebral cortical areas.

Insights from the lab’s current research also has the potential to better inform how simple environmental factors, including dietary supplements, could and should be carefully controlled during pregnancy in order to support the development of healthy brain networks that are resilient to genetic anomalies.

“The Freedman Prize Honorable Mention represents an important milestone in my career, as it recognizes the first research project successfully initiated in my laboratory. It is a great distinction not only for me, but also for the trainees in my lab who made it possible. Thanks to the discretionary nature of the funding provided in my BBRF grant, I was able to pursue high-risk research which would perhaps not have been possible otherwise.”
BBRF SCIENTIFIC COUNCIL

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Herbert Pardes, M.D.

VICE PRESIDENT EMERITUS
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Ted Abel, Ph.D.
Anissa Abi-Dargham, M.D.
Ni A. Addy, Ph.D.
Susanne E. Ahmari, M.D., Ph.D.
Schahram Akbarian, M.D., Ph.D.
Susan G. Amen, Ph.D.
Stewart A. Anderson, M.D.
Nancy C. Andreassen, M.D., Ph.D.
Victoria Arango, Ph.D.
Amy F.T. Arnsten, Ph.D.
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Wade H. Berrettini, M.D., Ph.D.
Randy D. Blakely, Ph.D.
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Robert W. Buchanan, M.D.
Peter F. Buckley, M.D.
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Tyrone D. Cannon, Ph.D.
William Carlezon, Ph.D.
Marc G. Caron, Ph.D.
William T. Carpenter, Jr., M.D.
Cameron S. Carter, M.D.
Peter Jeffrey Conn, Ph.D.
Edwin H. Cook, Jr., M.D.
Richard Coppena, D.Sc.
Christopher W. Cowan, Ph.D.
Joseph C. Coyle, M.D.
Jacqueline N. Crawley, Ph.D.
John G. Csernansky, M.D.
Z. Jeff Daskalakis, M.D., Ph.D.
Linda G. DeMornac, M.D.
J. Raymond DePaulo, Jr., M.D.
Ariel Y. Deutch, Ph.D.
Jacqueline Drevet, Ph.D.
Robert M. Drevets, M.D.
Lisa Beth Dixon, M.D., M.P.H.
Ralph DiLeone, Ph.D.
Ariel Y. Deutch, Ph.D.
Judith M. Ford, Ph.D.
Fred H. Gage, Ph.D.

180 Members (18 Emeritus)

180 Scientific Council Members (18 Emeritus)
51 Members of the National Academy of Medicine
32 Chairs of Psychiatry & Neuroscience Departments
16 National Institute of Health Chiefs & Directors
10 Members of the National Academy of Sciences
3 Recipients of the National Medal of Science
2 Former Directors of the National Institute of Mental Health and the current Director
1 Nobel Prize Winner

Herbert Y. Meltzer, M.D.
Kathleen R. Merikangas, Ph.D.
Richard J. Miller, Ph.D.
Karoly Minnies, M.D., Ph.D.
Bita Moghaddam, Ph.D.
Lisa M. Monteggia, Ph.D.
Charles B. Nemeroff, M.D., Ph.D.
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