



# The University of Texas Systemwide Brain Research Summit

## SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

NOV. 7-8, 2022  
AUSTIN, TX



**Jorge Almeida, M.D., Ph.D.**

Director, Bipolar Disorder Center,  
Associate Professor of Psychiatry &  
Behavior Services, UT Austin

Jorge Almeida, M.D., Ph.D., is an Associate Professor in the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at Dell Medical School and director of the Bipolar Disorder Center at UT Health Austin.

Dr. Almeida's neuroimaging research focuses on the use of functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging (fMRI) to investigate biomarkers of bipolar disorder using functional connectivity and pattern recognition analysis. He also directs the Bipolar Disorder Center, a specialized, coordinated and competitive out-patient-centered care team that is evidence-based and outcome-driven to achieve higher levels of health care value at the lowest cost.

Dr. Almeida funded activities includes: a) longitudinal investigation of the brain development in individual at risk to develop bipolar disorder using neuroimaging; b) neuronavigation guided transcranial magnetic stimulation to treat bipolar depression using the SNT protocol; c) transcranial infrared laser stimulation for cognitive enhancement in bipolar disorder; d) value-based care to identify and treat UT SELECT health insurance plan members with bipolar disorder at UT System, UT Austin, UT Permian Basin and UT El Paso.



**Audrey Brumback, M.D.,  
Ph.D.**

Assistant Professor of Neurology &  
Pediatrics, UT Austin

Dr. Brumback is a pediatric neurologist and Assistant Professor at Dell Medical School at The University of Texas at Austin. She earned her MD and PhD degrees at the University of Colorado and then trained in the Neuroscience Pathway in the Child Neurology residency at the University of California, San Francisco followed by postdoctoral training in autism and neurodevelopment.

Her professional interests are focused on helping people with neurodevelopmental conditions thrive. Clinically, Dr. Brumback diagnoses and cares for people of all ages with developmental brain conditions with a special focus on autism. Her research program is aimed at understanding how genetic and epigenetic changes associated with autism change the physiology of thalamocortical brain circuits. Her long-term goal is to develop therapies by modulating the activity of specific circuits in the brain.



**Astrid E. Cardona, Ph.D.**

Professor and Department Chair, Molecular Microbiology & Immunology, UT San Antonio

Dr. Astrid Cardona is Professor and Chair of the Department of Molecular Microbiology and Immunology at The University of Texas at San Antonio. Dr. Cardona, is a scientist educator with a B.S. degree in Biology from the University of Antioquia, Medellin, Colombia. In 2002 she received her Ph.D. in Microbiology and Immunology from The UT Health Science Center, San Antonio, and continued her post-postdoctoral training in autoimmunity and neurodegeneration at the Cleveland Clinic. She joined UTSA in 2009 and established a research program in neuroinflammation. Dr. Cardona's laboratory studies the interplay between the nervous system and the immune system in diabetes and multiple sclerosis. She is interested in clarifying the protective and detrimental roles of the innate immune system, determining the origin of tissue injury factors that account for disease progression, and testing neuroprotective therapies via modulation of immune cell function. Her research has been supported by the NIH, the National Multiple Sclerosis Society, the San Antonio Area Foundation, and the San Antonio Medical Foundation. Dr. Cardona is the recipient of the TAMACC Women of Distinction Award and the UTSA Faculty Mentor Award for Undergraduate Research. Dr. Cardona is a member of the American Society for Neurochemistry and the American Association of Immunologist, and fellow of the IAspire Leadership Academy.



**Maria Chahrour, Ph.D.**

Associate Professor, Eugene McDermott Center for Human Growth and Development, Department of Neuroscience, Center for the Genetics of Host Defense, UT Southwestern Medical Center

Dr. Maria Chahrour is a tenured Associate Professor at the Eugene McDermott Center for Human Growth and Development, the Department of Neuroscience, the Center for the Genetics of Host Defense, and the Department of Psychiatry at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center (UTSW). She is also an Investigator at the Peter O'Donnell Jr. Brain Institute.

She obtained her undergraduate degree in Biology from the American University of Beirut prior to attending the University of North Texas for a graduate degree in Forensic Genetics and Baylor College of Medicine for a Ph.D. in Molecular and Human Genetics. She joined Harvard Medical school and Boston Children's Hospital as a postdoctoral fellow and later as an instructor in the Division of Genetics and Genomics.

The overall interest of the Chahrour lab is to understand the molecular mechanisms underlying autism spectrum disorder and related neurodevelopmental conditions, through disease gene identification and functional studies to delineate the impacted pathways and inform the development of targeted therapies.



**Kathryn A. Cunningham, Ph.D.**

Chauncey Leake Distinguished Professor of Pharmacology, Director, Center for Addiction Research, UT Medical Branch

My laboratory has catalyzed translational research advances in neuropsychopharmacology with a particular emphasis on substance use disorders (SUDs), the underlying neurobiology of behavior, and new target and drug discovery. While investigators typically pursue research from a single perspective (e.g., basic or clinical endeavors), my strategy is to discover key mechanism-based advances in cellular and animal models and move this knowledge into human psychopharmacology research to develop effective and safe therapeutics to maximize human function. I have strong collaborations with chemists, cellular biologists, bioengineers, preclinical and clinical scientists with the goal to develop innovative diagnostics and therapeutics based upon biosignatures of SUDs with the molecular precision to effectively prevent and manage these disorders across diverse populations. My research program has been continuously funded by NIDA for 30 years and we have made numerous seminal observations and developed new technologies which are described in 180+ peer-reviewed publications. I am an active educator, mentor and board member for community programs and work regionally and nationally to foster clinical research, awareness and knowledge of SUDs and their appropriate treatment.



**Alexandra Czap, M.D.**

Assistant Professor of Neurology,  
McGovern Medical School  
Department of Neurology, UT Health  
Science Center - Houston

Dr. Alexandra Czap is Assistant Professor of Neurology and Neurosurgery at the University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston. She is board certified in neurology as well as vascular neurology by the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology and neuro-oncology by the United Council for Neurologic Subspecialties.

Dr. Czap received her Bachelor of Science in physiology and neurobiology from the University of Connecticut Honors Program. After completing her undergraduate degree, Dr. Czap spent two and a half years as a Cancer Research Training Award Fellow at the National Cancer Institute in Bethesda, Maryland. She graduated from the University of Connecticut School of Medicine and completed neurology residency training at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center. She is dual fellowship trained in neuro-oncology at Massachusetts General Hospital and Dana Farber Cancer Institute and in vascular neurology at UTHealth McGovern Medical School, where she completed her T32 Research Training Grant with the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke.

Dr. Czap's research interests include workflow optimization in the prehospital setting through mobile stroke units. Since joining as faculty at UTH, she has received the Society of Vascular Interventional Neurology Pilot Grant and the American Academy of Neurology Lawrence M. Brass Stroke Research Award, funded by the American Heart Association and American Brain Foundation to support her research efforts.



**William Dauer, M.D.**

Professor and Director, Peter  
O'Donnell Jr. Brain Institute, UT  
Southwestern Medical Center

William T. Dauer, M.D., a neurologist acclaimed for his research into dystonia and Parkinson's disease, joined UT Southwestern Medical Center in July 2019 as the inaugural Director of the Peter O'Donnell Jr. Brain Institute.

Most recently, Dr. Dauer was Director of the Movement Disorders Group and the Morris K. Udall Center of Excellence for Parkinson's Disease Research at the University of Michigan.

For nearly two decades, Dr. Dauer's groundbreaking research has focused on the molecular basis of dystonia and the mechanisms of neurodegeneration in Parkinson's disease. His findings have elucidated the critical role of the torsinA protein in the progression of dystonia, which is marked by disabling, involuntary movements. The studies of his Udall Center team dissecting the neurobiologic basis of falls in Parkinson's are being used to pioneer a therapy for this currently untreatable symptom.

Dr. Dauer is an elected member of the American Society for Clinical Investigation, and has been honored with the Dystonia Medical Research Foundation's Fan Award and Columbia University's Harold and Golden Lamport Award for excellence in clinical science research.

He attended medical school at Washington University in St. Louis. After postdoctoral work at Massachusetts General Hospital and a medical internship at Beth Israel Hospital in Boston, he completed his residency in neurology and fellowship in Parkinson's disease and related movement disorders at Columbia University in New York, where he established a laboratory in 2001. In 2009, he joined the faculty of the University of Michigan Medical School.



**Marc Diamond**

Director, Center for Alzheimer's and  
Neurodegenerative Diseases, UT  
Southwestern Medical Center

Marc Diamond, M.D., is a native of Berkeley, California. He graduated from Princeton University in 1987 with an A.B. in History. He entered the UCSF School of Medicine in 1987, and he carried out research on transcriptional regulation by the glucocorticoid receptor for two years with Keith Yamamoto, Ph.D. as a Howard Hughes Medical Student Research Fellow. Dr. Diamond received his M.D. from UCSF in 1993 where he also completed an internship, residency, and chief residency in Neurology in 1997. He completed a postdoctoral fellowship in the laboratory of Dr. Yamamoto until 2001, working on two polyglutamine diseases—spino-bulbar muscular atrophy and Huntington's disease. Dr. Diamond joined the faculty of the Department of Neurology at UCSF from 2002-2009, before moving to Washington University in St. Louis in 2009, as the David Clayson Professor of Neurology. He joined the faculty of UT Southwestern Medical Center in 2014 as the founding director of the Center for Alzheimer's and Neurodegenerative Diseases. He is interested in neurodegenerative diseases linked to protein aggregation, and the role of prion mechanisms in the normal and abnormal physiology of protein amyloids.





**Adrienne N. Dula, MSCI,  
Ph.D.**

Assistant Professor of Neurology and  
Diagnostic Medicine, Dell Medical  
School, UT Austin

Dr. Dula is a biomedical engineer and neuroimaging scientist with formal training in clinical trial research (Masters of Clinical Investigation) from Vanderbilt University. She is currently an Assistant Professor of Neurology and Diagnostic Medicine at Dell Medical School at The University of Texas Austin. Dr. Dula's research program focuses on development and translation of in vivo neuroimaging techniques with the ability to relay specific information on tissue anatomy, function, microstructure or biochemistry that can be implemented in the clinic. This encompasses evaluation of standard of care clinical image data, protocol development for advanced image acquisition, and analysis to development of computational prognostic models.

Dr. Dula's specific research initiative involving acute ischemic stroke patients directly relates hemodynamic and anatomical imaging factors to observed sex differences in stroke severity and outcomes. Her lab is identifying those factors that differentiate males and females using retrospective and multisite prospective analyses, specifically those features of the supporting circulation (collateral flow) that maintains the brain tissue in the event of a stroke.



**Bess Frost, Ph.D.**

Bartell Zachry Memorial  
Distinguished Professor for  
Research in Neurodegeneration,  
Associate Professor; Barshop  
Institute for Longevity and Aging  
Studies, UT Health Science Center -  
San Antonio

Dr. Frost is the Bartell Zachry Professor for Research in Neurodegenerative Disorders at the Barshop Institute for Longevity and Aging Studies, the Glenn Biggs Institute for Alzheimer's and Neurodegenerative Disorders, and the Department of Cell Systems and Anatomy at the University of Texas Health San Antonio. Dr. Frost obtained her B.S. in biochemistry and molecular biology from the University of Texas, Austin in 2004. She went on to earn her Ph.D. in 2009 from the University of California San Francisco, where she pioneered work that ignited a now prominent area of research, which is that tau adopts prion-like characteristics that help explain its pathological spread through the brain and the diverse disease phenotypes of the human tauopathies. Dr. Frost performed her postdoctoral training at Harvard Medical School, where she developed a multi-system approach to studying the toxic effects of pathogenic forms of tau on DNA packaging and nuclear architecture by interweaving studies in *Drosophila*, mouse and human tauopathy.

The research focus of Dr. Frost's laboratory revolves around the basic neurobiology connecting toxic forms of tau to neurotoxicity. Based on these findings, Dr. Frost and her team have recently initiated a Phase IIa clinical trial in which they are testing the antiretroviral drug 3TC in patients with early Alzheimer's disease. Dr. Frost's scientific contributions have earned her a UT Health San Antonio Presidential Excellence Award, an O'Donnell Award in Medicine from The Academy of Medicine, Engineering and Science of Texas, a Standout Achievement Award from CurePSP, and the Oskar Fischer Prize.



**Mitzi Gonzales, Ph.D.,  
ABPP-CN**

Associate Professor, Department  
of Neurology, UT Health Science  
Center San Antonio

Dr. Gonzales is an Associate Professor of the Department of Neurology and Glenn Biggs Institute for Alzheimer's and Neurodegenerative Diseases at the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio. She is a board-certified clinical neuropsychologist and serves as the co-leader of the South Texas Alzheimer's Disease Research Center (ADRC) Clinical Core. She earned her Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology from the University of Texas at Austin and completed her postdoctoral fellowship in Clinical Neuropsychology at the VA Northern California Health Care System. Her research broadly focuses on identifying mechanisms and biomarkers of advanced age-related cognitive decline and dementia in effort to aid timely diagnosis, monitor progression, and advance treatment discovery. Her research leverages clinical neuropsychology, structural and functional neuroimaging, and geroscience approaches. A primary aim is to understand the underlying mechanisms linking biological aging with dementia risk and develop interventions that slow the rate of cognitive decline.



**Dr. Joshua A. Gordon, M.D.,  
Ph.D.**

NINDS Adjunct Investigator and  
NIMH Director

Dr. Gordon has served as Director of the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) since 2016. Dr. Gordon earned his M.D. and Ph.D. degrees from the University of California, San Francisco, and completed a Psychiatry residency at Columbia University, where he served on the faculty from 2004 until he left to join NIMH.

Dr. Gordon's research employs an integrative systems approach towards understanding the neurobiology underlying working memory and its disruption by genes of relevance to schizophrenia, demonstrating the role of neural dynamics in neural communication and describing how genetic variance confers risk for disease by altering these dynamics.

Dr. Gordon is a member of the National Academy of Medicine. His work has been recognized by the Rising Star Award from the International Mental Health Research Organization, the A.E. Bennett Award from the Society of Biological Psychiatry, and the Daniel H. Efron Research Award from the American College of Neuropsychopharmacology.



**Peter M. Grace, Ph.D.**

Associate Professor and Chair ad  
interim, Department of Symptom  
Research, UT M.D. Anderson Cancer  
Center

Dr. Peter Grace is Associate Professor and Chair ad interim of the Department of Symptom Research, University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center, in the Department of Symptom Research. He received his PhD in Pharmacology from the University of Adelaide, Australia, and completed postdoctoral training at the University of Colorado Boulder, studying the neuroimmunology of pain and opioid analgesia. Dr. Grace has received numerous awards for his research, including the PsychoNeuroimmunology Research Society Robert Ader New Investigator Award and the Rita Allen Foundation Award in Pain. With support from the National Institutes of Health, the Department of Defense, and industry partnerships, his research seeks to unravel the neuroimmune mechanisms of chronic pain and its control.



**John Hart, M.D.**

Distinguished Chair in Neuroscience  
and Professor of Behavioral and  
Brain Sciences, UT Dallas; Professor  
of Neurology and Psychiatry, UT  
Southwestern Medical Center

Dr. John Hart Jr. is presently a Distinguished Chair in Neuroscience and Professor in Behavioral and Brain Sciences at the University of Texas at Dallas (UTD) and Professor of Neurology and Psychiatry at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center. Dr. Hart previously trained and was a faculty member at the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine and Hospital. Dr. Hart is also Past-President of the Society for Behavioral and Cognitive Neurology and the Behavioral Neurology Section of the American Academy of Neurology. He is a leading expert in how the human nervous system stores and retrieves memory and knowledge known as semantic memory. His laboratory focuses on studies of normal semantic memory and applying neuromodulation techniques to remediate related deficits in multiple sclerosis, traumatic brain injury (TBI), toxin exposure (Gulf War Illness), and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) as well as being PI of the multicenter study of aging and dementia in Hispanics as part of the Texas Alzheimer's Research and Care Consortium (TARCC).



**Seth Hays, Ph.D.**

Associate Professor, Department of  
Bioengineering, UT Dallas

Seth Hays received his BS in biomedical engineering from the University of Texas at Austin and his Ph.D. in neuroscience from University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center. Dr. Hays is an Associate Professor in the Department of Bioengineering at the University of Texas at Dallas where he is developing novel neurostimulation therapies for stroke, PTSD, and other neurological disorders. He is currently performing three clinical trials evaluating these technologies. Dr. Hays serves as the principle investigator on grants totaling over \$22M with active funding from NIH, DARPA, and CDMRP. Dr. Hays has authored over 60 peer-reviewed publications and was awarded the prestigious American Heart Association Robert G. Siekert New Investigator for Stroke Award in 2015.



**Jenny Hsieh, Ph.D.**

Professor and Department Chair,  
Department of Neuroscience,  
Developmental and Regenerative  
Biology UT Health Science Center -  
San Antonio

Jenny Hsieh is the founding chair of the Department of Neuroscience, Developmental and Regenerative Biology in the College of Sciences at the University of Texas at San Antonio. She is also the founding director of the UTSA Brain Health Consortium. She holds the Semmes Foundation Distinguished Chair in Cell Biology. Dr. Hsieh and her trainees studied many of the genes responsible for newly generated neurons in the adult mammalian hippocampus. Her work showed that aberrant neurogenesis contributes to temporal lobe epilepsy. Her most recent work focuses on using human brain organoid models to study neurodevelopmental and neurodegenerative disorders. Among Dr. Hsieh's proudest professional achievements is mentoring young scientists and advocating on behalf of women and underrepresented minorities in science.



**Sara Hussain, Ph.D.**

Assistant Professor, Department of  
Kinesiology and Health Education,  
UT Austin

Dr. Sara Hussain is a human neurophysiologist and Assistant Professor in the Department of Kinesiology and Health Education at the University of Texas at Austin. She obtained her BS and PhD in Human Physiology from the University of Iowa before completing postdoctoral training at the Human Cortical Physiology and Neurorehabilitation Section at the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke.

Dr. Hussain's research focuses understanding the oscillatory mechanisms of human motor control, developing new interventions that target these mechanisms, and translating these interventions to the post-stroke brain. To achieve this, she combines non-invasive neurophysiological techniques with behavioral assessments and machine learning. She is currently developing personalized closed-loop brain stimulation to improve hand function in chronic stroke survivors.



**Asma Khan, Ph.D., B.D.S.**

Associate Professor, Department  
of Endodontics, UT Health Science  
Center - San Antonio

Dr. Asma Khan obtained her Dental Degree from India and a PhD in Neuroscience from University of Maryland, Baltimore. She completed a fellowship in Clinical Research from the NIH. Her current clinical projects include the development of new diagnostics and analgesics. Her research projects also include the role of extracellular vesicles and microRNAs in pain.



**Navid Khodaparast, Ph.D.**

Co-Founder & Chief Science Officer,  
Spark Biomedical

Dr. Navid Khodaparast received a Ph.D. in Neurophysiology that focused on using Vagus Nerve Stimulation (VNS) to promote restorative brain plasticity and treat neurological disease. His research is considered foundational for the principle of targeted neuroplasticity training and has led to multiple VNS clinical trials for stroke rehabilitation. Dr. Khodaparast has nearly 15 years' experience in translating neuromodulatory therapies to treat neurological and psychiatric disorders. He is a scientifically driven entrepreneur, has led clinical research at multiple early-stage medical device companies involved in Parkinson's, Cardiac Disease, and Substance Use Disorder.

Over the past 5 years Dr. Khodaparast has been a Principal Investigator for multiple NIH & DoD funded studies, his publications are well-cited, and is an inventor of transcutaneous auricular neurostimulation. More recently, Dr. Khodaparast co-founded and serves as Chief Science Officer for Spark Biomedical, where he responsible for overseeing the company's clinical research initiatives and works to advance the technology into new potential indications.





**Michael P. Kilgard, Ph.D.**

Margaret Fonde Jonsson Professor of Neuroscience, Director of the Texas Biomedical Device Center, UT Dallas

Dr. Michael Kilgard is one of the leading researchers in the area of directing neural plasticity for the treatment of serious neurological and psychiatric disorders. He invented precisely timed vagus nerve stimulation (VNS) and has showed it can enhance plasticity and rehabilitation in multiple animal models and in patients with stroke, tinnitus, spinal cord injury, and PTSD. In 2021, VNS was FDA approved as the first neurotechnology proven to improve function after stroke. Dr. Kilgard has 27 patents and has published 130 papers in top journals, including Nature, Science, Nature Neuroscience, Stroke, and Neuron. He is the recipient of the University of Texas Regents' Outstanding Teaching Award. Dr. Kilgard is the director of the Texas Biomedical Device Center ([txbdc.com](http://txbdc.com)) and has received more than \$20 million in research funding from the National Institutes of Health and Department of Defense.

Dr. Kilgard trained in biochemistry and genetics at the University of California at Berkeley and in neuroscience at the University of California at San Francisco. Dr. Kilgard is also an Eagle Scout and was born and raised in Texas.



**Walter Koroshetz, M.D.**

Director of the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke

Walter Koroshetz is the Director of the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS). He works to advance the mission of the Institute, to improve fundamental knowledge about the brain and the nervous system, and to use that knowledge to reduce the burden of neurological disorders. He joined NINDS as the Deputy Director in 2007. Before coming to NIH Dr. Koroshetz was a Harvard Professor of Neurology, Vice Chair of Neurology at the Massachusetts General Hospital, director of Stroke and Neurointensive Care, and a member of the MGH Movement Disorders clinic. He co-leads with Dr. Gary Gibbons (NHLBI) the NIH RECOVER Initiative focused on understanding and treating the Post Acute Sequelae of COVID-19.



**Michael J. Lacagnina, Ph.D.**

Instructor, Department of Symptom Research, UT MD Anderson Cancer Center

Dr. Michael Lacagnina is an Instructor in the Department of Symptom Research at the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center working alongside Dr. Peter Grace. His research is aimed at deciphering the complex interactions between the immune system and the nervous system that drive chronic pain, seeking to identify new therapeutic strategies for pain relief. His current work focuses on understanding how lymphocytes and glial cells in the spinal cord and brain contribute to the manifestation of neuropathic pain through autoimmune neuroinflammatory mechanisms. Dr. Lacagnina received his Ph.D. in neuroscience at Duke University and completed his postdoctoral training with Dr. Grace at MD Anderson Cancer Center.



**Sandy Magaña, Ph.D., MSW**

Professor and Director, Texas Center for Disability Studies; Steve Hicks School of Social Work, UT Austin

Sandy Magaña, PhD, MSW, holds the Professorship in Autism and Neurodevelopmental Disabilities in the Steve Hicks School of Social Work at the University of Texas at Austin and is the Director of the Texas Center for Disability Studies. She received a Master of Social Work from California State University, San Bernardino, and her Ph.D. from the Heller Graduate School of Social Policy at Brandeis University. Dr. Magaña completed post-doctoral training from the NICHD funded Post-Doctoral Program in Developmental Disabilities Research at the Waisman Center, University of Wisconsin-Madison. She was a faculty member in the UW-Madison School of Social Work for 12 years and later served as a Professor at the Department of Disability and Human Development at the University of Illinois at Chicago. Her current research includes investigating racial and ethnic disparities among children with autism and developmental disabilities and developing culturally relevant interventions to address these disparities. She has received funding for her research from the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH), National Institute on Aging (NIA), National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) and National Institute on Disability, Independent Living and Rehabilitation Research (NIDILRR).



**Louise D. McCullough, M.D.,  
Ph.D.**

Chief of Neurology, Memorial Herman Hospital - Texas Medical Center; Distinguished Chair and Professor of Neurology, UT Health Science Center - Houston

Dr. Louise McCullough is the Roy M. and Phyllis Gough Huffington Distinguished Chair and Professor of Neurology at McGovern Medical School at UTHealth and Chief of Neurology at Memorial Hermann Hospital – Texas Medical Center. She is a physician-scientist and a practicing vascular neurologist with clinical expertise in sex/gender disparities, the microbiome, stroke and aging, and acute stroke treatments. She is well recognized for her work in cerebral vascular disease for her research identifying sex differences in cell death pathways during stroke. Working closely with the Society for Women’s Health Research (SWHR) and the Office of Research on Women’s Health (ORWH), she was instrumental in the National Institute of Health’s requirement to include female animals in basic and translational studies.

Dr. McCullough received the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS) Javits Neuroscience Investigator Award, the NINDS Landis Award for Outstanding Mentorship, the Inaugural American Heart Association (AHA) Outstanding Stroke Research Mentor Award and the AHA Merit Award. She completed her PhD in Neuroscience and her MD from the University of Connecticut.



**Gladys Maestre, M.D., Ph.D.**

Professor of Neuroscience and Human Genetics, Director of the Rio Grande Valley Alzheimer’s Disease Resource Center for Minority Aging Research, Co-Director of South Texas Alzheimer Disease Research Center, UT Rio Grande Valley

Gladys Maestre, MD, Ph.D. is a professor of neuroscience at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley School of Medicine. She is a neuroscientist who has worked with Alzheimer’s Disease and related dementias for more than 20 years. As PI on several NIA and Fogarty International Center funded grants, her research has explored cultural, educational, and genetic risks for Alzheimer’s disease and cognitive decline, as well as cognitive function and health among minorities and ethnically diverse populations across the life span. Currently, she is the PI of the Rio Grande Valley AD Resource Center for Minority Aging Research, an NIA-funded resource center committed to enhancing the diversity of the workforce in AD research. She is also the Co-PI of the South Texas AD Research Center, an NIA-funded research center focused on novel precision, personalized medicine approaches to educate, support, and improve prevention, treatment, and care for patients with AD and related dementias. These two centers are committed to reducing health disparities among Hispanics in South Texas through advanced research in AD, dementia, and minority aging.



**Christina R. Merritt, Ph.D.**

Director of Molecular and Translational Therapeutics Center for Addiction Research University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston

Dr. Christina Merritt recently graduated with her Ph.D. in as a Presidential Scholar in the Pharmacology and Toxicology program. She is currently a postdoctoral scholar serving as the Director of Molecular and Translational Therapeutics in the Center for Addiction Research at the University of Texas Medical Branch. She is a translational neuropsychopharmacologist with more than nine years of experience in drug discovery, medications development and data sciences. Dr. Merritt is committed to developing innovative strategies to maximize brain health, and her career goal is to improve therapeutics for neuropsychiatric disorders. Hence, she has strategically pursued interdisciplinary skills in preclinical and clinical research focused on pharmacotherapy and behavior interventions across academic institutions. Her many accomplishments and publications are a testament to the rigor she brings to science. Innovation is a key in this arena, and as a woman in science, she recognizes that diversity and inclusion beget innovation, and has demonstrated her passion to enhancing diversity throughout her career. Dr. Merritt’s career interests include developing “spin-off” companies and intellectual property around drug discovery efforts that arise from academic-industry collaborations.





**Robert O. Messing, M.D.**

M. June and J. Virgil Waggoner Chair in Molecular Biology; Professor of Neurology and Neuroscience; Chair, Department of Neuroscience; Director, Waggoner Center for Alcohol & Addiction Research, UT Austin

Dr. Messing received an MD in 1979 from Stanford University. He trained in Internal Medicine from 1979-1981 at the University of Virginia, and then in Neurology at UCSF from 1981-1984, followed by a postdoctoral fellowship in neuroscience at UCSF from 1984-86. He became a faculty member in Neurology at UCSF in 1986, and was a member of the UCSF Neuroscience Graduate Program. He was also a Principal Investigator at the Ernest Gallo Clinic and Research Center from 186-2013, where he became Vice President for Internal Affairs and the founding Director of the NIAAA-funded Alcohol Center for Translational Genetics at UCSF. In 2013 he was recruited to the University of Texas at Austin and served from 2013-15 as the Vice Provost for Biomedical Sciences to help launch the Dell Medical School. From 2015-17 he served as Associate Dean for Research Development for the Dell Medical School. In September 2017 he became director of the Waggoner Center for Alcohol and Addiction Research at UT Austin and Chair of Neuroscience in September 2020.



**José del R. Millán, Ph.D.**

Professor, Department of Neurology; Carol Cockrell Curran Chair in Engineering, Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering, UT Austin

Dr. José del R. Millán is a professor and holds the Carol Cockrell Curran Chair in the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering at The University of Texas at Austin. He is also a professor in the Department of Neurology at Dell Medical School and faculty of the Mulva Clinic for the Neurosciences. He is co-director of the UT CARE Initiative and associate director of Texas Robotics.

Most recently, he was Defitech Foundation Chair in Brain-Machine Interface at the École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne in Switzerland (EPFL), where he helped establish the Center for Neuroprosthetics

He has received several recognitions for his work on brain-machine interfaces (BMI), notably the IEEE-SMC Nobert Wiener Award in 2011. In addition to his work on the fundamentals of BMI and design of neuroprosthetics, Dr. Millán is prioritizing the translation of BMI to people who live with motor and cognitive disabilities. In parallel, he is designing BMI technology to offer new interaction modalities for able-bodied people that augment their abilities. Dr. Millán received a PhD in computer science from the Technical University of Catalonia, Barcelona, in 1992.



**Juliet Mwirigi, Ph.D. Student**

Center for Advanced Pain Studies, UT Dallas

Juliet Mwirigi is a PhD student in the lab of Dr. Theodore Price at the University of Texas at Dallas. Her research work utilizes transcriptomic and proteomic approaches to better understand how pain-promoting factors modulate translational control signaling and rewire cell-cell interactions in the human dorsal root ganglia. Juliet is a scholar of the University of Texas System Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation Program (UTLSAMP) since being an undergraduate and now PhD student.



**Luis A. Natividad, Ph.D.**

Assistant Professor, College of Pharmacy, Division of Pharmacology and Toxicology, and affiliate of the Waggoner Center for Alcohol and Addiction Research, UT Austin

Dr. Natividad received his Ph.D. from the University of Texas at El Paso under the guidance of Dr. Laura O'Dell. He went on to his postdoctoral training at the Scripps Research Institute with Dr. Larry Parsons where he began to implement mass spectrometry analysis with in vivo methods for assaying a wide-range of small-molecule transmitters and lipids. He then worked with Drs. Marisa Roberto and John Yates at Scripps to integrate large-scale analyses of the brain proteome with models of alcohol dependence.

The Natividad lab implements advanced platforms in mass spectrometry analysis to broadly capture neurobiological changes in extracellular transmission and protein signaling in the brain following chronic alcohol exposure. Towards this goal, we employ targeted (quantitative MS) methods for estimating changes in small-molecule transmitters and neuropeptides in flux. We also employ untargeted (discovery-based MS) methods for broadly surveying the brain proteome in search of novel molecular targets. Of current interest to the lab is the role of cognitive systems in the brain that are modulated by excitatory glutamate signaling in the medial prefrontal cortex and its role in guiding decision-making processes during protracted alcohol withdrawal.



**Dr. Leslie Neely, BCBA-D,  
LBA, Ph.D.**

Associate Professor of Educational Psychology, UT San Antonio

Dr. Leslie Neely, BCBA-D, LBA is an Associate Professor in the Department of Educational Psychology at the University of Texas at San Antonio. Dr. Neely earned a Bachelor's degree in Civil Engineering from UT-Austin. She earned her Master's degree and Ph.D. in Educational Psychology from Texas A&M University, where she trained in the use of applied behavior analysis (ABA) for the treatment of severe and self-injurious behavior in individuals with autism, intellectual, and developmental disabilities.

Since 2015, she has secured over \$6 million in competitive research funds, and has authored 52 peer-reviewed publications with over 65 international collaborators. She holds several leadership positions including Director of the UTSA Behavior Analysis program, Director of the Child and Adolescent Policy and Research Institute, and Director of the San Antonio Applied Behavior Analysis Research Consortium and Program. She also is the recipient of multiple awards and recognitions including the UTSA Presidential Research Award and Cloud Technology Endowed Professorship. She is also on the editorial board for the Journal of Developmental and Physical Disabilities.



**Charles B. Nemeroff, M.D.,  
Ph.D.**

Matthew P. Nemeroff Professor and Chair, Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, Dell Medical School, UT Austin

Charles B. Nemeroff, MD, PhD is Professor and Chair of the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at the Dell Medical School, University of Texas at Austin. He also directs the Institute for Early Life Adversity Research within the department as part of the Mulva Clinic for the Neurosciences, and co-directs the Center for Psychedelic Research and Therapy.

His research is focused on the pathophysiology of mood and anxiety disorders with a focus on the role of child abuse and neglect as a major risk factor. He has also conducted research on the role of mood disorders as a risk factor for major medical disorders including heart disease, diabetes and cancer. He has published more than 1,100 research reports and reviews, and his research is currently supported by grants from the National Institutes of Health.

Dr. Nemeroff has also served on the Mental Health Advisory Council of National Institute of Mental Health and the Biomedical Research Council for NASA; is co-editor in chief (with Alan F. Schatzberg, MD) of the Textbook of Psychopharmacology, published by the American Psychiatric Association Press and now in its Fifth Edition; and is the co-editor in chief of a new journal published by Elsevier, Personalized Medicine in Psychiatry. He is President of the Anxiety and Depression Association of America (ADAA).



**Linda J. Noble-Haeusslein,  
Ph.D.**

Professor, Departments of  
Psychology, College of Liberal Arts  
and Neurology, Dell Medical School,  
UT Austin

Linda J. Noble-Haeusslein obtained her doctoral degree in Anatomy from the UCLA and completed her postdoctoral experience at Georgetown, under the mentorship of Jean Wrathall, PhD. After as a tenured professor at UCSF, she was recruited in 2017 to the University of Texas at Austin in the Departments of Psychology, College of Liberal Arts and Neurology and the Dell Medical School and the University of Texas at Austin.

The Noble-Haeusslein laboratory studies key determinants of injury and repair in models of traumatic injury to the developing brain and the adult spinal cord. The focus has been on the intersection between the innate immune response, matrix metalloproteinases, and activated leukocytes in directing pathogenesis and wound healing. Most recently, her studies have targeted matrix metalloproteinases as initiators of abnormal remodeling of the bladder wall after spinal cord injury that give rise to reduced compliance.

Dr. Noble-Haeusslein has served on three Institute of Medicine Committees; Gulf War and Health Committee, Committee on Nutrition, Trauma, and the Brain, and Committee on the Gulf War and Health, Long-term effects of blast exposures. She has served on NINDS study sections, including chairing NINDS/NSDA study sections for 6 years. Her studies on traumatic CNS injuries have been funded by the Charles A Dana Foundation, Department of Defense, NIH/NINDS, Craig H. Neilsen Foundation, the Runnels Foundation, and the California Institute for Regenerative Medicine.



**Laura E. O'Dell, Ph.D.**

Professor and Associate Vice  
President for Research, UT El Paso

Dr. O'Dell is a Professor and Associate Vice President for Research at The University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP). She received her Ph.D. in Behavioral Neuroscience from Arizona State University. She then conducted post-doctoral training at The Scripps Research Institute where she also served as a Staff Scientist. Dr. O'Dell has published over 75+ reports that have combined neurochemistry, molecular biology, and behavioral approaches to better understand the underlying neurobiology of substance abuse. Her most recent work has been focused on the mechanisms that promote nicotine use in vulnerable populations, including females, adolescents, and persons with diabetes. She has led over 75+ published reports and her research program has been continuously funded for the past 20 years by the National Institute on Drug Abuse and organizations, such as the American Diabetes Association. Dr. O'Dell has a deep dedication to promoting young faculty and trainees who want to pursue a career in neuroscience, particularly those from minoritized backgrounds.



**Jennifer Sharpe Potter,  
Ph.D., M.P.H.**

Vice President for Research  
and Professor of Psychiatry and  
Behavioral Sciences, UT Health  
Science Center - San Antonio

Dr. Potter leads the research enterprise at UTHSA. Dr. Potter is a national expert in substance use disorders with particular emphasis on increasing access to evidence-based treatment for substance use disorders. Dr. Potter's research is supported by National Institutes of Health (NIH) funding. Her research focuses on developing pharmacological treatments for substance use disorders with a recent emphasis on technology-based treatments for opioids and stimulants. Dr. Potter is a Principal Investigator with the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) Clinical Trials Network (CTN). Dr. Potter is supported by Texas Health and Human Services (HHS) to oversee statewide public health initiatives to increase access to substance use disorder treatment for Texans including people affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Other behavior recovery and state-funded programs include a statewide outpatient opioid use disorder provider treatment network, a statewide peer recovery support network, establish a statewide virtual clinic to provide care in underserved areas, implementing hospital-based addiction treatment initiation, and Texas' first statewide virtual addiction clinic for both insured and uninsured Texans available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.





**Nader Pouratian, M.D., Ph.D.**

Professor and Chair, Department  
of Neurological Surgery, UT  
Southwestern Medical Center

Nader Pouratian, MD PhD is Professor and Chair of Neurological Surgery at UT Southwestern Medical Center. In his clinical practice, he uses advanced neurotechnologies to improve brain and spine function for neurological and psychiatric disease, including Parkinson's, tremor, pain, depression, obsessive compulsive disorder, and blindness. His research aims to understand brain diseases and to develop targeted therapies. He takes advantage of unparalleled opportunities presented by neurosurgery to study human brain function and design novel neurotechnologies. His work is supported by several NIH grants. Finally, he is passionate about training future leading clinician scientists and neuroscientists, having mentored numerous residents in neurology, neurosurgery, neuroscience, and bioengineering.



**Theodore J. Price, Ph.D.**

Ashbel Smith Professor, Department  
of Neuroscience, UT Dallas

Theodore (Ted) Price is Ashbel Smith Professor in the Department of Neuroscience at University of Texas at Dallas where he is the Director of the Center for Advanced Pain Studies. Ted's lab's goal is to identify molecular mechanisms causing chronic pain with emphasis on developing new drugs to treat pain. His lab's focus is on human molecular neuroscience with specialization on dorsal root ganglion and spinal dorsal horn. Ted has published more than 175 peer reviewed studies, and has been continuously funded by NIH for more than 10 years. He is co-founder of many companies, including 4E Therapeutics and Doloromics.



**Jim Ray, Ph.D.**

Director, The Neurodegeneration  
Consortium, UT MD Anderson  
Cancer Center

Jim Ray is the Director of The Neurodegeneration Consortium (NDC), a multi-institutional collaboration whose mission is to slow, stop, or reverse AD and related neurodegenerative diseases. The NDC is a collaboration between investigators from several leading institutions and the drug discovery center based at MD Anderson Cancer Center. The NDC has prosecuted more than 30 drug discovery projects in the last 5 years, founded the biotech company Magnolia Neurosciences, and entered into a strategic collaboration with Denali Therapeutics. Prior to joining the NDC in April 2015, Dr. Ray was Director, CNS Research at Takeda Pharmaceuticals, and led several drug discovery projects from basic research into development for CNS disorders, including CNV424, which is progressing into Phase III for Parkinson's disease, and TAK-041, which is in Phase II for schizophrenia. He joined Takeda in 2013 as part of their acquisition of the biotech start-up Envoy Therapeutics, where he was Senior Director and responsible for developing both a pipeline of CNS therapeutics as well as a platform technology. Prior to Envoy Therapeutics, Dr. Ray spent 11 years at Merck, where he led multiple research projects in Alzheimer's disease, including MK-7622, Merck's Phase II M1 muscarinic receptor potentiator. He earned his PhD from Washington University Medical School in Neuroscience.



**Michael Rugg, Ph.D.**

Distinguished Professor, Center for Vital Longevity and School of Behavioral and Brain Sciences, UT Dallas

Michael Rugg obtained a BSc and PhD in psychology from the University of Leicester, UK. He worked in the UK until 2003, when he moved to the University of California, Irvine as a Professor of Neurobiology and director of The Center for the Neurobiology of Learning and Memory. He moved to the University of Texas, Dallas, in January 2011 as Distinguished Chair in Behavioral and Brain Sciences and director of the Center for Vital Longevity.

Professional recognition includes Fellowship of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, and the Association for Psychological Science. He is past-chair of the Cognition and Perception and Neurobiology of Learning and Memory study sections of the Center for Scientific Review, National Institutes of Health.

Michael Rugg’s research interests are in the cognitive neuroscience of human memory, and how and why memory is affected as we age and as a result of disease, especially diseases of old age. He uses functional neuroimaging, electroencephalography and transcranial magnetic stimulation to identify the neural regions and the patterns of their activity that allow memories to be acquired and retrieved. His research addresses fundamental questions about how we learn and remember, and translational issue such as identifying people most at risk of developing disorders of memory in later life. Currently funded research projects focus of the neural mechanisms of memory encoding and retrieval, and on the brain basis of individual differences in memory function across the lifespan.



**Joy Schmitz, Ph.D.**

Professor and Faillace Chair, Faillace Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Science; Director, Center for Neurobehavioral Research on Addiction (CNRA), McGovern Medical School, UT Health Science Center - Houston

Dr. Schmitz is the Louis A. Faillace Professor of Psychiatry and Director of the Center for Neurobehavioral Research on Addiction (CNRA) at UTHealth. As Director, she oversees all administrative responsibilities and provides leadership in research and training activities.

Dr. Schmitz has a long-standing research program focusing on the development and evaluation of behavioral and pharmacological treatments for substance use disorders. Her work seeks to improve patient outcomes by identifying moderators and mediators of treatment effects. She collaborates with leaders in neuroscience and genetics to develop targeted treatments aimed at biological factors underlying drug addiction. Dr. Schmitz has a long track record of continuous NIH funding and has completed studies with the NIDA Clinical Trials Network. She is author on more than 160 peer-reviewed publications and numerous book chapters.

Throughout her career she has maintained strong involvement in the career development of new investigators, serving as primary mentor of numerous graduate students, postdoctoral fellows and junior faculty, including NIH career-development (K) awardees. She has been recognized with mentoring awards, including the UTHealth President’s Award for Mentoring Women, the Women Faculty Forum Clinical Excellence Award, and invited mentor for the NIDA Diversity Scholars Network meeting. She was recipient of the UTHealth President’s Scholar Award for Excellence in Research in 2020.



**Jair C. Soares, MD, Ph.D.**

Professor and Chairman, Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, McGovern Medical School, UT Health Science Center - Houston

Jair C. Soares, MD, PhD, is professor and chair of the Louis A. Faillace, MD, Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at McGovern Medical School at UTHealth Houston and executive director of the UTHealth Houston Behavioral Sciences Campus. A board-certified psychiatrist, he also serves as chief of Psychiatry Services at Memorial Hermann-Texas Medical Center and Harris Health Lyndon B. Johnson Hospital. Soares, the Pat R. Rutherford, Jr. Chair in Psychiatry at McGovern Medical School, directs the Center of Excellence on Mood Disorders, which focuses on the search for the causes of and the development of new treatments for mood disorders. The center specializes in clinical neurosciences (neuroimaging, neurophysiology, cognitive neurosciences, and genetics), as well as clinical psychopharmacology and interventions research. He received his medical degree from the University of São Paulo in Brazil in 1990 and a PhD in medical sciences at the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul in Brazil. Soares received the National Plaque of Honor from the Republic of Panama, the Devereux Clinic Emmy Award, and the Harris Health Presidential Award among others. He currently serves as president for the International Society for Affective Disorders, president for the American Association of Chairs of Departments of Psychiatry, and vice president for the National Network of Depression Centers.



**Stephen M. Strakowski, M.D.**

Professor and Associate Vice President, Regional Mental Health, Dell Medical School, UT Austin

Stephen M. Strakowski, MD, is the Executive Director of the Mary O’Daniel Stone & Bill Stone Center for Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and Professor and Vice Chair of Research, Department of Psychiatry at the Indiana University School of Medicine. He also serves as Associate Vice President, Regional Mental Health at Dell Medical School, University of Texas, where he has served for the prior 6 years before returning to IU. Before coming to Texas, he spent 24 years at the University of Cincinnati, last serving as Senior Vice President of Strategy in the health system. He is an internationally recognized expert in the management of bipolar disorders, as a Best Doctor® and by US News and World Report® as a Top 1% Psychiatrist. His research focuses on the brain changes that occur at the onset of bipolar disorder as well as improving mental health care delivery for young people.



**Carol Tamminga, M.D.**

Professor and Chair, Department of Psychiatry, UT Southwestern Medical Center

Dr. Tamminga holds the Lou and Ellen McGinley Distinguished Chair and the McKenzie Chair in Psychiatry at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical School; she is the Chairman of the Department of Psychiatry and the Chief of the Translational Neuroscience Division in Schizophrenia at UTSW. She received her M.D. degree from Vanderbilt University and completed residency training in psychiatry at the University of Chicago. Dr Tamminga was elected to the National Academy of Medicine of the National Academies of Sciences in 1998 and has served on several NAM committees in that capacity. The goal of Dr. Tamminga’s research is to examine and understand the mechanisms underlying schizophrenia, especially its most prominent symptoms, psychosis and memory dysfunction, in order to build rational treatments for the illness.



**Nitin Tandon, M.D.**

Professor and Chairman ad interim, Department of Neurosurgery, UT Health Science Center - Houston

Nitin Tandon is Professor and Chairman Ad Interim of the Vivian L. Smith Department of Neurosurgery at the McGovern Medical School at the University of Texas Health Science Center in Houston Texas. He is also co-director of TIRN, the Texas Institute of Restorative Neurotechnologies, Chief of the Neurosurgery at Memorial Hermann Hospital in the Texas Medical Center and also directs Epilepsy Surgery at the Texas Comprehensive Epilepsy Program. He also holds a joint appointment as a Professor in the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering at Rice University.

Dr. Tandon has performed more than 4000 brain operations, with more than 1500 for brain tumors and more than a 1000 for epilepsy. He has pioneered innovative technologies robotic stereo-electroencephalography, laser interstitial ablation and other minimally invasive approaches to brain tumors and epilepsy. His research work yields fundamental insight into the processes of cognition and epilepsy via intracranial recordings and multi-modal comparisons linking non-invasive imaging data with intracranial recordings and cortical stimulation. These studies will pave the way for novel rehabilitative and neuro-prosthetic approaches to the remediation of language disorders and of intractable epilepsy. He has been the recipient of multiple NIH and NSF grants and was awarded a STARS award by the State of Texas in 2019. He has authored over a 125 peer reviewed publications in journals such as Nature Neuroscience, Nature Communications, Nature Human Behavior, Brain, JAMA Neurology, Cerebral Cortex, Journal of Neuroscience, Current Biology, Journal of Neurosurgery, Neurosurgery and Neurology.





**Madhukar Trivedi, M.D.**

Professor and Founding Director, Center for Depression Research and Clinical Care; Betty Jo Hay Distinguished Chair of Mental Health; Julie K. Hersh Chair for Depression Research and Clinical Care; Chief, Division of Mood Disorders, UT Southwestern

Madhukar Trivedi, M.D., is a Professor of Psychiatry, Chief of the Division of Mood Disorders, and founding Director of the Center for Depression Research and Clinical Care at UT Southwestern Medical Center, where he holds the Betty Ho Hay Distinguished Chair in Mental Health and the Julie K. Hersh Chair for Depression Research and Clinical Care. Certified by the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology, Dr. Trivedi focuses on developing and validating biosignatures of depression. He also conducts research on pharmacological, psychosocial, and nonpharmacological treatments for depression. He has been a principal investigator on numerous translational research projects and clinical trials. He serves on the editorial board of CNS Spectrums, Clinical Medicine: Psychiatry, Journal of Clinical Psychiatry, Journal of Affective Disorders, Psychiatric Annals and Asian Journal of Psychiatry. He has received the Gerald L. Klerman Award from the National Depressive and Manic-Depressive Association Scientific Advisory Board, the American Psychiatric Association Award for Research, and the Mood Disorders Research Award from the American College of Psychiatrists among others. Dr. Trivedi was listed by Thomson Reuters' World's Most Influential Scientific Minds as one of the nation's most highly cited researchers in psychiatry six years in a row.



**Alex Valadka, M.D.**

Professor, Department of Neurological Surgery, UT Southwestern Medical Center

Alex Valadka serves as Professor of Neurological Surgery at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center in Dallas, where he is also Chief of Neurological Surgery at Parkland Memorial Hospital. He has had a career-long clinical and research interest in neurotrauma and neurocritical care, including numerous papers, presentations, research grants, courses, seminars, and visiting professorships. He has served in numerous leadership roles in neurosurgery and neurotrauma, including President of the American Association of Neurological Surgeons, Director of the American Board of Neurological Surgery, Chair of the Neurosurgical Specialty Group of the American College of Surgeons Committee on Trauma, and membership on numerous study sections, data and safety monitoring boards, and similar activities for the NIH and other organizations.

Dr. Valadka graduated from the University of Dallas and went on to medical school at the University of Chicago. His interest in neurotrauma and neurocritical care led him to pursue his neurosurgical residency at the Medical College of Virginia. He then joined the faculty of the Department of Neurosurgery at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston. He held positions at several other institutions in Texas before chairing the Department of Neurosurgery at Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond. He returned to Texas in 2022.



**Dawn I. Velligan, Ph.D.**

Professor and Henry B. Dielmann Chair, Department of Psychiatry, UT Health Science Center - San Antonio

Dr. Dawn Velligan is a Professor in the Department of Psychiatry, Chief of the Division of Community Recovery, Research and Training, and Henry B. Dielmann Chair at the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio. Dr. Velligan's internationally recognized research program focuses on the development and testing of psychosocial treatments to improve medication interest and follow through and outcomes in schizophrenia. She developed Cognitive Adaptation Training (CAT) a unique treatment system designed to bypass the cognitive problems observed in serious mental illness and improve functional outcomes. Dr. Velligan has dedicated her career to developing, and delivering state-of-the-art psychosocial treatments to make lives better for those with serious mental illness. Dr. Velligan's latest work has included the development of a multi-level program targeting administrators, providers and individuals in treatment to facilitate shared decision making and increase the use of long-acting formulations of antipsychotic medication at the systems level. Dr. Velligan is author of numerous publications in high impact journals and she has received grant funding from the National Institute of Health, The Brain and Behavior Research Foundation, industry and private foundations. She frequently serves as a consultant to industry and scientific investigators in the areas of symptom assessment, medication adherence and follow through, cognition and outcomes.



**Karen Wagner, M.D., Ph. D.**

Harry K Davis Professor and Titus Harris Chair, Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, UT Medical Branch - Galveston

Dr. Wagner received her medical degree from the State University of New York at Stony Brook and her doctorate in clinical psychology from Temple University in Philadelphia. She completed her residency in psychiatry with Harvard Medical School at Beth Israel Hospital and completed a fellowship in child and adolescent psychiatry with Harvard Medical School at McLean Hospital.

Dr. Wagner is an internationally recognized expert in the pharmacological treatment of childhood mood disorders. Her work has led to the development of evidence-based treatments for children and adolescents with major depression and bipolar disorder. Dr. Wagner is the recipient of numerous honors, including receipt of an Honorary Doctorate from State University of New York; Distinguished Alumnus, State University of New York School of Medicine at Stony Brook; Psychiatric Excellence Award from Texas Society of Psychiatric Physicians; the Blanche F. Ittleson Award for Research in Child and Adolescent Psychiatry from the American Psychiatric Association; the Colvin Award for Outstanding Achievement in Mood Disorders from the Brain and Behavior Research Foundation; and the Mood Disorders Research Award from the American College of Psychiatrists.

Dr. Wagner has served in leadership positions in professional organizations and has been a member of the National Advisory Mental Health Council of the National Institutes of Health. She is Deputy Editor of the Journal of Clinical Psychiatry.



**Consuelo Walss-Bass, Ph.D.**

Professor and John S. Dunn Foundation Distinguished Chair, Fainlance Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, UT Health Science Center - Houston

Dr. Walss-Bass received a Bachelor of Science degree in chemical engineering from the Instituto Tecnológico de la Laguna, Torreon, Mexico. She received a Master's of Science degree in chemistry from the University of Texas at San Antonio and then a Doctor of Philosophy degree in biochemistry from the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio. She trained in psychiatric genetics as a postdoctoral fellow at the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio. She is currently Professor with tenure and the Director of the Psychiatric Genetics Program and the UTHealth Brain Collection in the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at the University of Texas Health Science Center in Houston.

The central focus of Dr. Walss-Bass' work is to identify the molecular causes of severe psychiatric disorders such as schizophrenia, bipolar disorder and substance use disorders. Her laboratory utilizes a model of collaboration and dialogue between investigators working in the laboratory and investigators working directly with patients, to correlate behavioral outcomes with genetic/epigenetic underpinnings and biological mechanisms. Dr. Walss-Bass established the UTHealth Brain Collection resource to help study brain disorders. In addition, she focuses on development of human induced-pluripotent stem cells and subsequent differentiation into brain cells and organoids to obtain virtual brain biopsies of individuals with mental health disorders.