Public Programs at the Zuckerman Institute

Science and community come together at Columbia’s Mortimer B. Zuckerman Mind Brain Behavior Institute

The Zuckerman Institute is delighted to call Manhattanville home and eager to share with our neighbors the challenge and excitement of learning how our minds and brains work. Our Education Lab, located near the 129th Street entrance of the Jerome L. Greene Science Center, is open year round and hosts a variety of hands-on brain science programs. Designed with feedback from the community, these programs harness the groundbreaking research of the institute in creative ways for school children, families, after-school groups, teachers and adults. Contact us to learn more about our programs; we have only just begun!

Community Brain Expo

What does a human brain feel like? Come find out at the Zuckerman Institute’s Community Brain Expo. We invite our neighbors to join us for this free public event, held every spring, which features head-scratching demonstrations and mind-boggling activities for every age. Visitors put their minds to the test as they learn about how we see the world around us, how our memories work and other fundamental aspects of the mind and brain. Led by actual scientists, the event is organized by Columbia University Neuroscience Outreach, a group of Columbia graduate students devoted to sharing brain science with the public. The event is held in celebration of Brain Awareness Week.
BRAINYAC: Brain Research Apprenticeships in New York at Columbia

Hands-on experience in a laboratory is essential for preparing today's youth to become tomorrow's scientists. With this in mind, the Zuckerman Institute's Brain Research Apprenticeships in New York at Columbia (BRAINYAC) program provides an immersive science research experience in which high school students train and work in neuroscience laboratories at Columbia University. The BRAINYAC program is open to students from select partner programs and schools that serve students in Upper Manhattan and the Bronx. Each student is matched with a Columbia neuroscientist, a mentor who guides the student through a research project. Students come away from the experience with an enhanced understanding of how laboratory research leads to transformative discovery, exposure to a professional academic environment and a stronger connection to science as a career. BRAINYAC receives generous support from the Pinkerton Foundation and the Stavros Niarchos Foundation.

Brain Insight Lectures and Teacher–Scholar Program

At the Brain Insight Lectures, free and open to the public, eminent Columbia scientists and scholars examine how brain science intersects with everyday life. Speakers have included Olajide Williams, MD, who spoke about how to prevent strokes in communities of color and Frances Champagne, PhD, discussed how our early experiences shape our behavior. Upcoming lecture by Thomas M. Jessell, PhD, will share his groundbreaking work on the neuroscience of movement. These lectures are the scientific cornerstone of our Teacher-Scholar Program, which introduces middle and high school science teachers in New York City to cutting-edge brain science for the duration of the school year. Using the lectures as case studies, the teachers participate in workshops and create a lesson plan each semester that brings neuroscience back to their classrooms. Teachers who complete the program emerge with greater knowledge of neuroscience, a deeper understanding of the scientific process and a toolbox of concrete ways to implement their knowledge in the classroom. These programs are made possible with generous support from the Stavros Niarchos Foundation.

For more information about the public programs at Columbia’s Zuckerman Institute, please contact:

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