



**Boston
Children's
Hospital**

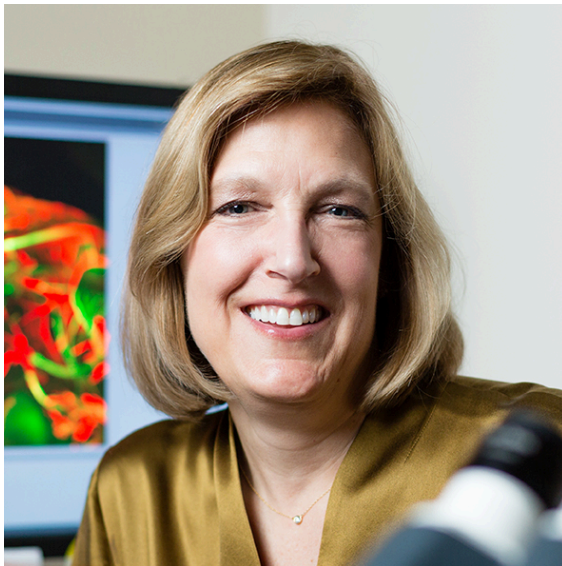
**F.M. Kirby
Neurobiology
Center**

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Quarterly Newsletter

Quarter One - 2026

KIRBY CENTER HIGHLIGHTS



**Elizabeth Engle, MD, appointed
Director of the Neurobiology
Program and the FM Kirby
Neurobiology Center**

We are thrilled to share that Dr. Elizabeth Engle has been appointed Director of the Neurobiology Program and the FM Kirby Neurobiology Center. Dr. Engle brings deep institutional knowledge, thoughtful leadership, and an unmatched commitment to advancing the Center's mission. Her collaborative approach and steady guidance have already made a meaningful impact, and we are thrilled for her to lead the Kirby Center into its next

chapter.

As Elizabeth steps into this role, we extend our sincere gratitude to Clifford Woolf, MB, BCh, PhD for his many years of extraordinary service to the Kirby Center. Through his vision, leadership, and unwavering dedication, Dr. Woolf helped shape the Center into a world-class hub for neuroscience research. His leadership fostered not only scientific excellence, but also a strong, collaborative community that will continue to thrive.

Mustafa Sahin, MD, PhD, named recipient of the Bernard Sachs Award

Please join us in congratulating Dr. Mustafa Sahin on being named the 2026 recipient of the Bernard Sachs Award from the Child Neurology Society!

The Bernard Sachs Award is one of the society's highest honors, recognizing individuals who have made lasting and meaningful contributions to the field of child neurology through research, clinical care, and leadership. Dr. Sahin's groundbreaking work has advanced our understanding of neurodevelopmental disorders and continues to inspire progress across pediatric neuroscience.

He will be formally recognized and presented with the award at the Child Neurology Society Annual Meeting this October, a moment well worth celebrating.



Annapurna Poduri, MD, MPH, named Associate Chief for Academic Affairs for the Department of Neurology

Dr. Poduri will work closely with the Neurologist-in-Chief, the Associate Chiefs, Section/Division Chiefs, training program directors, and faculty liaisons to BCH and HMS offices and committees focused on trainee and faculty development. Her primary responsibilities will be to support the Department's mission to foster excellence in research and scholarship, clinical care, and education; to advance our commitment to inclusion across all activities related to academic

development; and to cultivate a culture that values mentorship across all levels of training and faculty ranks. Ann brings valuable experience, a strong commitment to excellence, and a dedication to advancing our mission.

Amy Weinberg, MHP, named a finalist for Outstanding Leadership Award

In honor of Women's History Month, the BCH Women's Alliance ELG held its annual HERstory awards. These are meant to shine a spotlight on the achievements, resilience, strength, and compassion of women who have made significant contributions to our Boston Children's community.

Amy is the Senior Administrative Director, Research Programs at the Kirby Center. She was recognized as a finalist for the Outstanding Leadership Award after being nominated by many people throughout the Kirby Center. Thank you, Amy, for continuing to be a driving force behind the success of the Kirby Center!



IN THE MEDIA

New Issue of BCH Magazine features Kirby Faculty

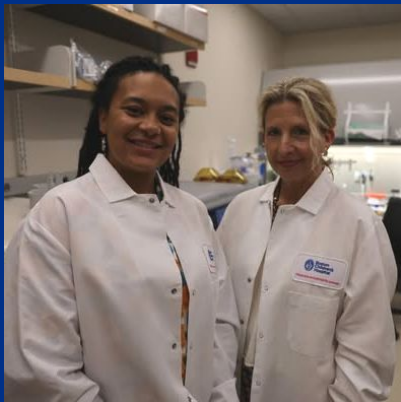
In the latest issue of Boston Children's Hospital Magazine, there were familiar faces from the Kirby Center. [Check out the virtual version of the magazine](#) and read articles featuring Drs. Tang, Lipton, and Sahin.



Stevens Lab featured on SciShow

As a part of the "Field Trip" series, the team from SciShow spent time with Dr. Beth Stevens and her team. The episode focuses on her lab's research on glia and how Dr. Stevens became interested in this cell subset.

[Watch "Glia Are Your Brain's Most Mysterious Cells" here!](#)



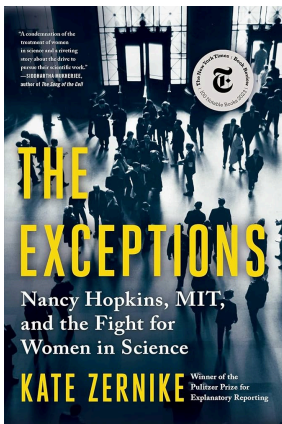
Steen Lab Publication featured in News

The Steen Lab's recent publication in *Cell* titled, "Molecular features of human pathological tau distinguish tauopathy-associated dementias," was featured in multiple online forums and news releases. Congrats to all those involved!

EVENTS

Valentine's Day Party

On February 14th, we hosted an early afternoon celebration of Valentine's Day with cupcakes, candy, and neuro-inspired valentines for all our Kirby members!



Brainy Book Club Update

On April 2nd, the Brainy Book Club met to discuss Kate Zernicke's *The Exceptions*. Conversations focused on Women in STEM and equity in the workplace.

TRAINEE & LAB NEWS

2026 WORK MILESTONES

5 Years of Service

Charlotte Auth	Sarah Ferraro	Viet Nguyen Minh
Omer Barkay	Zoe Frazier	Taryn Polanco
Helena Barr	Charles Hua	Lauren Powell
Raymond Belanger Deloge	Jed Hubbs	Evan Ratzan
Timothy Burbridge	Ismael Izquierdo Villalba	Jason Saturno
Peter Casey-Caplan	Anh Phuong Le	Sneham Tiwari
Cheng-Hao Chien	Jiyoon Lee	Dosh Whye
Ryan Donahue	Kathryn Mansour	Shuguang Yu
	Papa Ndiaye	

10 Years of Service

Kuchuan Chen
Sylvia Lewinstein
Alec Walker
Yu Zhang
Guoli Zhao

15 Years of Service

Gwen Geleoc
Jeff Holt
Michele Jackson
Ceren Uncu

20 Years of Service

Michela
Fagiolini

25 Years of Service

Chinfei
Chen

30 Years of Service

Amy
Weinberg

35 Years of Service

Edward
Cosgrove

THANK YOU FOR ALL YOU DO!

Stem Cell COREdinates Receives 2026 ISSCR Public Service Award

Stem Cell COREdinates has received the 2026 ISSCR Public Service Award that will be presented at the 2026 ISSCR Annual Meeting in Montreal, Canada in July 2026. Human Neuron Core members **Dosh Whye, MS**, Assistant Director, Differentiation Services and **Grazia Iannello, PhD**, Senior Staff Scientist and Assistant Director, have played active roles in the COREdinates group, leading discussions on best practices with stem cell core facilities around the world. **Cidi Chen, PhD**, Assistant Director, CRISPR Services, has also played a major role by contributing to the gene editing activities of the COREdinates group.

Participating in Stem Cell COREdinates allows the Human Neuron Core to contribute to best practices while learning from others about new directions in the field, including recent advances to implement mRNA methods for reprogramming to replace Sendai virus.

Anh Phuong Le, PhD (Koehler Lab) was selected for the best poster at the 12/8-11 Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory meeting on "Assembloids & Complex Cell-Cell Interactions across Tissues & Organs" for her work on modeling ventral skin and amnion development in organoids.

Congrats



DR. NICOLE GILLETTE
(LIPTON LAB)

FOR DEFENSE OF HER PHD THESIS:
**“BMAL1 REGULATION OF CAMKII α :
BIOCHEMICAL MECHANISMS FOR
SYNAPTIC TIMEKEEPING”**



**Multiple Projects Funded by Eagles
Autism Foundation**

Two projects submitted by Kirby and TNC investigators were among 54 projects funded through the Philadelphia Eagles Autism



Foundation's \$10.8 million investment in autism research.

Chinfei Chen, MD, PhD & Hisashi Umemori, MD, PhD - "The Role of ASD-Linked PCDH in Parallel Amygdala-Thalamo-PFC Circuits"

Emily Osterweil, PhD & Jordan Farrell, PhD - "A Novel Platform to Assess the Pathobiology of Autism in Human Cortex"

This support advances bold neuroscience and brings us closer to meaningful impact for individuals and families affected by autism.



The Kirby Center is now on LinkedIn

Be sure to follow our page to stay up-to-date on all the Kirby news!

Support for Fellows Entering the Job Market

If you are entering the market and would like assistance preparing to do so, please email [SJ Cunningham](#) and [Mike Do](#) well in advance of your first deadline. If you communicate your particular needs/research interests (e.g., "I am a biophysicist with neuroethological leanings for whom English is a second language"), we will convene a Practice Committee of Kirby faculty members who are appropriate for your research. This Committee will:

1. Review a draft of your application.
2. Provide coaching on preliminary interviews.
3. Offer feedback on your job talk.
4. Take you through a mock chalk talk.
5. Provide advice on closing the deal.

When reaching out to us, please copy your advisor and ask them to give the green light for this process. We are most effective when your application, talk, and chalk talk are each at the fine-tuning stage.

Note that BCH offers a related service. Please choose one to avoid overburdening our faculty.

RECENT AWARDS

Zhigang He, PhD, BM, received an R01 from the NIH for his project, "Dissecting neural circuits for top-down control of sympathetic functions."

Zhigang He, PhD, BM, received funding from Dompe Farmaceutici for the project, "rhNGF Treatment in Optic Nerve Crush (ONC) - Mouse model."

Katerina Bernadini, PhD (Ebrahimi-Fakhari Lab) was awarded funding from the Dystonia Medical Research Foundation for her project, "Creating Clinical Trial Readiness for cAMP-Related Dystonias through Natural History Characterization and Therapeutic Discovery."

Kwangjun Lee, PhD (Arbab Lab), received a Heart Fellowship from Harvard Medical School for their project, "Base editing as a therapeutic strategy for neuromotor disabilities: A focus on restoring motor neuron function in spinal muscular atrophy."

Shoko Mai, MD, PhD (Koehler Lab) received a Japan Society for the Promotion of Science Postdoctoral Fellowship.

Beatriz Maio, PhD (Osterweil Lab), received a Lefler Fellowship from Harvard Medical School.

Xuan Song, PhD (Zhigang He Lab), received a Hearst Fellowship from Harvard Medical School for her project, "T3 surge as a driver of regenerative ability loss?"

Sophia Wienbar, PhD (Do Lab), received a Hearst Fellowship from Harvard Medical School for her project, "Molecular and biophysical development of melanopsin photoreception."

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