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- New England Patriots
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AFC West

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- Atlanta Falcons
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- Detroit Pistons
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 Milwaukee Bucks

Eastern - Southeast

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- Charlotte Hornets
- Miami Heat
- Orlando Magic
- Washington Wizards

Western - Southwest

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- Houston Rockets
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UCLA Campus Report: A Brain Prosthesis That Helps Recover Memory, More

By <u>Achilles</u> on Jul 13 2014, 8:00a <u>2</u>



Carnesale Commons - Achilles

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This week's post includes the development of a 'brain prosthesis' to help injured patients recover memory, news from a concussion summit aimed at helping football players and a report that says young smokers are not aware of the dangers of hookah smoking.

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An occasional report from around campus that recognizes that UCLA is a school with a world-class reputation for research and innovation and whose people make real impact on the real world:

This week's post includes the development of a 'brain prosthesis' to help injured patients recover memory, news from a concussion summit aimed at helping football players and a report that says young smokers are not aware of the dangers of hookah smoking.

UCLA to develop 'brain prosthesis' to help brain-injured patients recover memory

As part of a major federal initiative, UCLA has been awarded \$15M to create a wireless, implantable device that could restore memory to millions

<u>UCLA has been tapped by the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency to spearhead an innovative project</u> aimed at developing a wireless, implantable brain device that could help restore lost memory function in individuals who have suffered debilitating brain injuries and other disorders.

The four-year effort, to be led by UCLA's Program in Memory Restoration and funded by up to \$15 million from DARPA, will involve a team of experts in neurosurgery, engineering, neurobiology, psychology and physics who will collaborate to create, surgically implant and test the new "neuroprosthesis" in patients.

Memory is the process by which neurons in certain brain regions encode information, store it and retrieve it. Various illnesses and injuries can disrupt this process, causing memory loss. Tramautic brain injury, which has affected more than 270,000 military members since 2000, as well as millions of civilians, is often associated with such memory deficits. Currently, no effective therapies exist to address the long-term affects of these injuries on memory.

"Losing our ability to remember past events and form new memories is one of the most dreaded afflictions of the human condition," said UCLA's lead investigator, Dr. Itzhak Fried, a professor of neurosurgery at the David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA and a professor of psychiatry and biobehavioral sciences at the Semel Institute for Neuroscience and Human Behavior at UCLA.

Developing models of the brain's 'memory works'

The ambitious, first-if-its-kind project at UCLA builds on Fried's 2012 research — published in the New England Journal of Medicine with UCLA's Nanthia Suthana and colleagues — demonstrating that human memory can be strengthened by stimulating the brain's entorhinal cortex, a region involved in learning, memory and Alzheimer's disease. Considered the entrance to the hippocampus, which helps form and store memories, the entorhinal cortex plays a crucial role in transforming daily experience into lasting memories.

"The entorhinal cortex is the 'golden gate' to the brain's memory mainframe," Fried said. "Every visual and sensory experience that we eventually commit to memory funnels through that doorway to the hippocampus. Our brain cells send signals through this hub in order to form memories that we can later consciously recall."

In a key part of the project, the research team will stimulate and record the activity of single neurons and of small neuronal populations in patients who already have brain electrodes implanted as part of epilepsy treatment. UCLA's Mayank Mehta, a professor of physics and neurobiology, and Harvard Medical School's Gabriel Kreiman will then work with Fried's group, using this information to develop computational models of the hippocampal–entorhinal system and determine how to intervene with electrical stimulation to help restore memory function.

Turning the models into a workable 'neuroprosthesis'

The models will be transformed into therapeutics using technology developed by researchers from UCLA's Henry Samueli School of Engineering and Applied Science. This group, led by associate professor of electrical engineering Dejan Markovic, will work with engineers from Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory and Stanford University to develop electronics for the implantable neuromodulation device. As part of the UCLA-led project, Lawrence Livermore will be awarded a separate \$2.5 million grant from DARPA to build the device, which will have the ability to record and stimulate neurons to help restore memory.

Parents, coaches and doctors learn ways to prevent concussion among young football players

Former Bruin, NFL players talk about their head injuries at UCLA-hosted event

"Welcome to the future of high school football," Terry O'Neil said as he greeted nearly <u>90 coaches, physicians, sports advocates and parents who</u> <u>came to Carnesale Commons July 8 to learn about what they can do to help players reduce the risk of concussion</u>.

The diverse group gathered to learn about football techniques that would be legal under a <u>bill</u>authored by <u>Assemblyman Ken Cooley</u> aimed at preventing concussions in high school football players by reducing high-impact contact during field practice.

The event was cosponsored by the <u>UCLA Steve Tisch BrainSPORT Program</u>, Cooley and O'Neil's organization, <u>Practice Like Pros</u>, a nonprofit that's educating college and high school coaches about the benefits of adopting professional teams' approaches to reserving full-contact for game day.

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UCLA Campus Report: A Brain Prosthesis That Helps Recover Memory, More - Bruins Nation

"Two-thirds to three-quarters of all concussions happen during practice with a player's own team mates, not during games," explained speaker Dr. Christopher Giza, director of the BrainSPORT program and a professor of neurosurgery and pediatric neurology at the David Geffen School of Medicine at UCLA and Mattel Children's Hospital UCLA. "We need to teach new techniques that don't use the head as a weapon and customize helmets for smaller athletes to help kids safely play the sports they enjoy."

Patrick Larimore understands the issue intimately. UCLA's former football team captain and defensive MVP in 2011, he suffered six concussions during his career, along with depression, disrupted sleep and painful headaches, before making the agonizing decision to shelve his National Football League dreams and leave football in 2012.

"Playing linebacker, I got hit every day," recalled Larimore. "Every time you suffer a concussion, it increases the risk of suffering another. I'm an example of that. I owe it to the young kids playing now to spread the word about the dangers of traumatic brain injury."

Former NFL Hall of Fame quarterback Warren Moon agrees. During his 33-year career, he also suffered six concussions, starting at age 11 during Pop Warner football in Baldwin Hills before going on to play for Hamilton High, the NFL's Houston Oilers, Minnesota Vikings, Seattle Seahawks and Kansas City Chiefs.

According to Moon, athletes' glory days shouldn't end in high school. "We want kids to move onto the next level of football, be it college or pro. We want them to live healthy lives with productive futures."

"I've seen colleagues suffer from Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, dementia and short-term memory loss," Moon added. "I never know when these symptoms might creep into my life. I'm watching myself for those signs all the time."

Harmful hookahs: Many young smokers aren't aware of the danger

Despite warnings from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention that hookah smoking can be just as dangerous as cigarettes, many young adults believe that using the water pipes is not harmful to their health, according to a UCLA School of Nursing study.

Researchers visited three Southern California hookah lounges and asked patrons between the ages of 18 and 30, "Do you believe smoking hookah is harmful to your health?" Fifty-seven percent said they thought that it was not. When asked why they thought hookahs were not harmful, 47 percent of the participants said they believed that the smoke gets filtered through water, and 35 percent said they thought that fruit used to flavor the tobacco detoxify tobacco's harmful chemicals. Still others, 16 percent, said they assumed hookahs are not harmful because the tobacco is not addictive and does not contain nicotine.

Unfortunately, none of those beliefs are true.

"With hookah smoking on the rise, particularly among young adults, our goal was to identify factors influencing perceptions, attitudes and preferences toward hookah smoking," said Mary Rezk-Hanna, a UCLA nursing doctoral student and lead researcher for the study, which was <u>published in the July–August issue</u> of the journal Nursing Research.

Other <u>recent studies</u> have shown that even as cigarette use continues to decline, hookah smoking is increasing, especially among college students. It is the only form of tobacco use that is not regulated in the United States, and its exemption from clean indoor air legislation, such as the California Clean Air Act, is contributing to its rapidly growing popularity. In California alone, there are more than 2,000 shops that sell hookah tobacco and related products, in addition to 175 hookah lounges and cafes, and a disproportionate number of them are in Los Angeles, near universities and colleges.

When asked why hookah smoking is more attractive than cigarette smoking, 60 percent of the participants in the UCLA study said it is a trendy way of socializing. And although 43 percent of hookah smokers said they believe the practice is indeed harmful, "socializing with friends appeared to outweigh health concerns," Rezk-Hanna said.

In the U.S., hookah smoking is heavily marketed to young adults of all ethnic backgrounds as an attractive social phenomenon and a non-addictive, healthier alternative to cigarette smoking.

"This study underscores the urgent importance of more research and campaigns to increase public knowledge on the dangers of hookah smoking, especially among young adults," Rezk-Hanna said. "Understanding the basis of these perceptions and beliefs is of particular relevance for helping healthcare professionals design effective prevention and intervention strategies that target young-adult hookah smokers."



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• Patrick Larimore (LB-UCLA)

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I know that no one has commented, but that's kind of awesome science. Plus...on the silly side...it's kinda cool having a dude with the last name "Fried" working on brains. As in, "My brain is Fried." LOL Maybe in the future, it will mean that you've gotten your memory back. Good work.

Lawrence Ross

by alpha1906 on Jul 14, 2014 | 1:22 PM

□ What is the general view of Carnesale's legacy?

I considered him to be pretty mediocre chancellor, but that was in relation to Charles Young. I definitely hold him jointly responsible with Doughnut for the Karl Dorrell fiasco.

The reason I ask is that I noticed that the picture in this article is for "Carnesale Commons". I had assumed that Block's name would not appear on any building, unless a drain pipe was added somewhere. Could we actually wind up with "Block Quad" or something equally disturbing after he leaves?

by islandbruin2 on Jul 15, 2014 | 10:47 AM

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