

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **THIRD ANNUAL BRAIN WEEK RHODE ISLAND JOINS GLOBAL CAMPAIGN TO INCREASE AWARENESS OF BRAIN RESEARCH Public Events for All Ages Celebrate Brain Health and Brain Science**

**Providence, RI (February 20, 2018)** -- The third annual **Brain Week Rhode Island** ([brainweekri](http://brainweekri.com)), takes place from March 10-18, 2018 in multiple locations around Rhode Island. Events scheduled include panels and presentations on the most current brain research to fun brain-themed activities for all ages. This is the only one of its kind in America. Most events are free of charge.

Brain Week coincides with International Brain Awareness Week ([dana.org/baw](http://dana.org/baw)), during which thousands of organizations and institutions worldwide organize creative learning activities in their communities to spread awareness of our extraordinary brains and the promise of brain research. Organized by Providence-based national research advocacy organization, Cure Alliance for Mental Illness ([CureAlliance.org](http://CureAlliance.org)) with major sponsorship from the Brown Institute for Brain Science ([browninstituteforbrainscience](http://browninstituteforbrainscience.com)) and the University of Rhode Island's George & Anne Ryan Institute for Neuroscience ([ryaninstitute](http://ryaninstitute.com)).

Victoria Heimer-McGinn, Chair of Brain Week Rhode Island 2018 said, "There is rapidly growing interest in the brain, how it works normally, what happens in disease and how to sort myth from fact." She added, "During Brain Week, we try to address some of these questions; questions such as "Am I right-brained if I'm creative;" "How are my memories formed?" "Why do I sleep?" "What do drugs do to your brain?"

Activities during Brain Week Rhode Island include creative learning opportunities, expert panels, workshops, film screenings, dance for the aging and movement challenged, three story telling events, an art exhibit, visual and performing arts by people with autism, and two brain fairs with interactive science exhibits. Topics range from the basic science of just how the most complex object in the known universe works, to how it can be damaged or malfunction, with special events focused on obsessive compulsive disorder, migraine headaches, and Alzheimer's disease, among others.

Brain Week offers an inventive and inspiring educational outreach program. Spearheaded by Heimer-McGinn and John Stein Brown neuroscientists will spend two weeks visiting dozens of Rhode Island PK-12 classrooms to inspire the next generation of brain scientists. The demos feature real human brains and other interactive learning activities, often in Spanish as well as English. Classroom visits also take place throughout the school year and can be booked online.

Heimer-McGinn said of this program, "At our school visits, I love getting questions that don't have an answer. My response is always, 'that's a great question. You should become a scientist and figure it out.' I hope some of them do."

Paula Grammas, Executive Director of the George & Anne Ryan Institute for Neuroscience at URI, a sponsor, said, "Neuroscience is booming in Rhode Island, and our state's reputation is growing as a center for brain research and treatment of neurological disease. Brain Week RI is a great opportunity for people to see and learn from scientists, clinicians, advocates, and students as they work to make key discoveries and develop innovative treatments related to the brain." She added, "At URI, we're especially looking forward to our second annual Brain Fair. We'll have about 25 different programs and activities for people of all ages—crafts, interactive demos, and 3-D virtual brain tours, as well as information about brain health and wellness."

Diane Lipscombe, Thomas J. Watson Sr. Professor of Science and Director, Brown Institute for Brain Science, Brown University, said, "We're looking forward to another incredible Brain Week RI. This week-long celebration gives members of the community the chance to explore the wonders of the brain and also to understand and talk about brain illness through music, art, storytelling, and dance. The Brown Institute for Brain Science is thrilled to be a sponsor of the week's activities."

Brain Week RI continues with daily events for the whole family and culminates with two brain fairs: on Saturday, March 17 at Brown University, Engineering Research Center, 345 Brook Street, Providence; and on Sunday, March 18 at the University of Rhode Island, Avedesian Hall, URI School of Pharmacy, 7 Greenhouse Road, Kingston. The fairs will feature fun, interactive exhibits for the entire family that showcase the work of local neuroscience laboratories and other organizations. Microscopes, virtual reality, real human brains, robots, face painting, crafts will captivate even the youngest visitors. At both fairs there will be a free performance of *Brain Circus!* by Marvelous Marvin.

Most Brain Week RI events are free and open to the public. Advance reservations are strongly advised where available. For a full schedule of Brain Week events (in progress) and to reserve event tickets, visit: [brainweekri.org](http://brainweekri.org).

Support for Brain Week RI comes from the [Brown Institute for Brain Science](http://Brown Institute for Brain Science) and the University of Rhode Island's [Ryan Institute for Neuroscience](http://Ryan Institute for Neuroscience), with additional support from the Center for Neurorestoration and Neurotechnology at the Providence VA Medical Center, the Association for Migraine Disorders, Butler Hospital, and the Brain Injury Association of Rhode Island.

**About Cure Alliance for Mental Illness:** Cure Alliance for Mental Illness is a social activist network for mental illness research. Our mission is to unite the energies of patients, families, clinicians, scientists, and mental illness organizations to:

- Educate the public and policymakers about mental illnesses as brain disorders
- Advocate for scientific research to understand mental illnesses
- Work toward safe, effective treatments for those suffering from mental illnesses

**[curealliance.org](http://curealliance.org)**

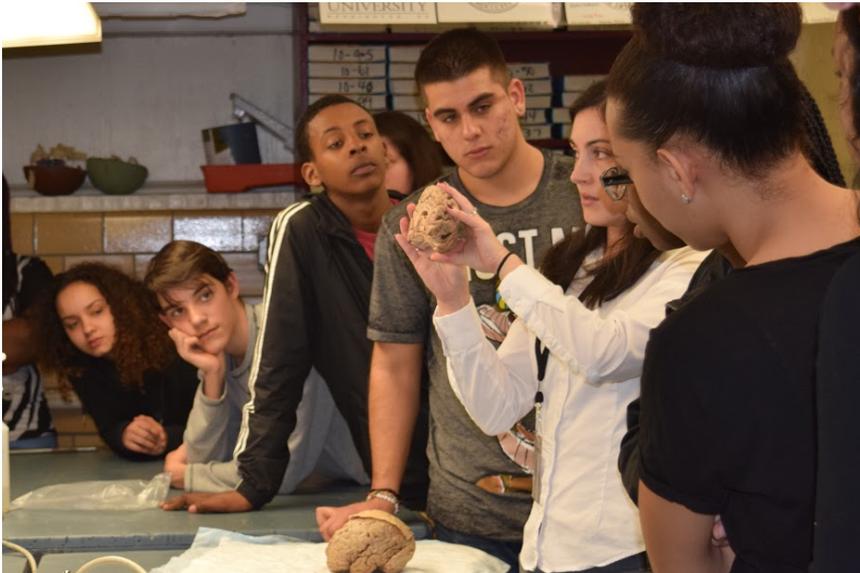
**About Brown Institute for Brain Research:** The Brown Institute for Brain Science (BIBS) advances multidisciplinary research, technology development, and training in the brain sciences and works to establish Brown University as an internationally recognized leader in brain research. BIBS unites more than 100 faculty from a diverse group of departments at Brown, spanning basic and clinical departments, and physical and biological sciences.

**[brown.edu/academics/brain-science](http://brown.edu/academics/brain-science)**

**About the Ryan Institute for Neuroscience:** The George & Anne Ryan Institute for Neuroscience is a multidisciplinary research center focused on discovering and developing disease-modifying therapies for neurodegenerative disorders such as Alzheimer's disease and Parkinson's disease. The Ryan Institute's approach includes research into what triggers the atrophy and death of neural cells and systems in neurodegenerative disorders, converting scientific discoveries into therapies, and shepherding promising new therapies into clinical trials.

**[ryaninstitute.uri.edu](http://ryaninstitute.uri.edu)**

PHOTOS BELOW: (High-resolution photos are available by request)



BrainWeek classroom session 2017



BRAINWEEK BRAIN FAIR 2017



BRAINWEEK ART FAIR



BRAINWEEK STUDENTS 2017



BRAINWEEK NERD NIGHT 2017