American College of Neuropsychopharmacology
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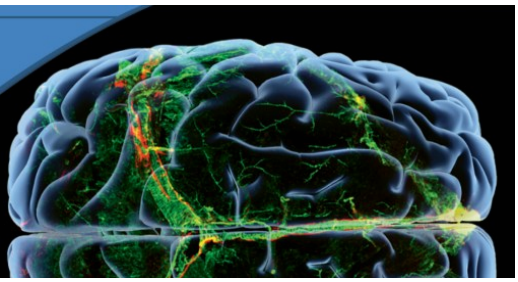

What the SfN Hill Day Events Meant to Them!



Nadja Ging-Jehli, Ph.D.
University of Arizona

One aspect I especially appreciated during SfN Capitol Hill Day was the opportunity to contribute to the broader conversation around the role of public investment in foundational neuroscience research. Having worked in both industry and academia, I've come to appreciate how valuable both ecosystems are, but also why they are not interchangeable. Industry is often structured around scalability, rapid implementation, and near-term outcomes. Science, however, especially neuroscience and mental health research, often requires space for uncertainty, exploration, and long-term mechanistic understanding before meaningful translation becomes possible.

Some of the most important scientific advances would likely never emerge under purely short-term incentive structures alone. At the same time, translational partnerships and engineering ecosystems are essential for eventually bringing discoveries into real-world settings. My own work increasingly sits at this intersection: building bridges between neuroscience, engineering, and practical applications while still protecting the fundamental scientific questions that require time, rigor, and sustained federal support.

The SfN Capitol Hill Day reinforced for me how essential public investment in basic neuroscience research truly is. Not only for scientific discovery, but for the long-term resilience, adaptability, and well-being of society.

As an early-career scientist working at the intersection of neuroscience, engineering, and translation, I was also grateful for the opportunity to speak about the challenges interdisciplinary researchers often face during transitional career stages. Especially when pursuing questions that do not fit neatly within traditional academic or industry structures.



Karim Ibrahim, PsyD
Yale University School of Medicine
Yale Child Study Center

I was pleased to represent the American College of Neuropsychopharmacology (ACNP) at the 2026 Society for Neuroscience (SfN) Capitol Hill Day during Brain Awareness Week. As part of this experience, I met with staffers from the offices of Senator Blumenthal, Senator Murphy, and Congresswoman DeLauro to advocate for NIH funding and to discuss research at the Yale Child Study Center focused on youth mental health, developmental neuroscience, and the impact of social media on child development. As a follow-up to those conversations, I was very pleased to host Congresswoman DeLauro for a lab visit at the Yale Child Study Center on May 4, 2026—a meaningful opportunity to continue our discussion about supporting NIH-funded research and its impact on children's health. This visit was facilitated by Dr. Linda Mayes and the Yale Office of Federal and State Relations. Now more than ever, it is essential for scientists to engage directly with policymakers, and I am deeply thankful to ACNP, SfN, and the Yale Child Study Center for creating the infrastructure and opportunity to do so effectively.



Daniel McCalley, Ph.D.
Stanford University School of Medicine

Participating in the ACNP and SfN Hill Day was an absolutely fantastic experience I would strongly recommend to anyone. The training provided an understanding and working with local and national government was invaluable and building a relationship with other researchers motivated to enact change will leave a lasting impression. I feel hope for the future of science and funding in the state of California and optimistic that science will be supported by my local representative.



Antonio Pagán, Ph.D.
The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston

I am incredibly grateful to ACNP for the opportunity to serve as an Advocacy Ambassador during the 20th Annual SfN Capitol Hill Day. This experience truly highlighted how deeply invested ACNP is in advancing the field of neuroscience and empowering its members to be vocal advocates. During meetings with the offices of Texas Senators Ted Cruz and John Cornyn, I had the privilege of leading discussions on the critical need to protect and increase NIH funding for biomedical research. It was especially rewarding to share how eager the NIH is to

see targeted efforts—like neuroimaging research in autism populations—flourish, and I was deeply encouraged by the genuine enthusiasm the congressional staff showed for this work. I also had the opportunity to invite the representatives for a lab tour to see our research firsthand, reinforcing how local scientific discoveries depend on robust national support. This experience underscored the power of scientist-advocates, and I am thankful for the chance to speak up for the future of our field.