

Neusletter #2

Hello everyone!

I hope you had a great start to the semester, settled in, and developed effective routines to keep yourself in check!

Before we delve into the content of this week's Neusletter, I want to reemphasize the importance of reading and engaging with our weekly Neusletters. Our Neusletters will always contain all of the relevant information for the upcoming week - information about our guest speakers, hyperlinks to important Google Forms, information about neuroscience-related opportunities, and much more! I should also mention that I may hide "easter eggs" within future Neusletters. Finding these "easter eggs" may result in some type of reward, so definitely take a few minutes to read through them!

Here are some highlights from this past week!

- Some of our newest members exchanging contacts at the Info Session! (I totally didn't make them pose or anything)
- Our fearless president taking on Party on the Plaza tabling!
- Meet the Officers Social 0.5 Selfie!



General Meeting #1

Time: September 9th from 5:30-7:00 pm

Location: BUR 108

Our guest for the evening is Dr. George Bittner. Dr. Bittner received his Ph.D. in Neuroscience from Stanford University in 1967, and he has served as a faculty member at UT Austin since 1969. He is a very accomplished scientist with a plethora of achievements to his name. If you'd like to learn more about Dr. Bittner, feel free to visit his lab's website ([linked here](#)). Dr. Bittner's research focuses on the mechanisms and pathways of plasmalemma repair, and PEG-induced axonal repair. Of course, the content of much of Dr. Bittner's research lies far-beyond the scope of any Neuroscience course that you'll take here at UT, yet Dr. Bittner is always able to discuss his research in a way that is engaging, informative, and easy to understand. We hope that you'll join us tomorrow for this incredible talk!

If you'd like to go above and beyond, and read up on some of Dr. Bittner's work, here are some sources that you might enjoy:

- [Repair of traumatic plasmalemmal damage to neurons and other eukaryotic cells](#)
- [Typical and atypical properties of peripheral nerve allografts enable novel strategies to repair segmental-loss injuries](#)

Before Dr. Bittner's talk, the Synapse Officer Board will be giving a short presentation about the new opportunities and systems that Synapse is implementing this semester. We will specifically be discussing our new membership system, the Synapse Shadowing Program, Lifelong Learning with Friends, and much more! This presentation will go into more depth than our Information Sessions, so it is important that everyone attends! See you tomorrow!

Synapse Membership

Fall 2024 Synapse Membership Form

As discussed in Newsletter #1, we greatly expanded the number of opportunities that Synapse offers. In particular, we created the Synapse Shadowing Program to expand the number of healthcare-related opportunities that Synapse offers, and we partnered with Lifelong Learning with Friends, an organization that provides comprehensive support to adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDDs), to provide y'all with a meaningful, long-term volunteer opportunity. To ensure that these opportunities are utilized by individuals who are passionate about Synapse and willing to engage with our organization as a whole, we created a new

membership system, and this system is associated with certain expectations and certain benefits. Synapse members will be expected to:

- Attend a total of 15 hours of Synapse events prior to Thanksgiving Break, 3 of which must consist of time spent at General Meetings. Time spent shadowing and/or volunteering for Lifelong Learning with Friends will count towards this total.
- Fundraise a total of \$50 for Lifelong Learning with Friends prior to Thanksgiving Break (instead of paying dues). Tips and tricks about fundraising will be discussed at future meetings.

Don't worry, the Synapse Officer Board has ensured that the expectations associated with Synapse membership are attainable. We neither want nor expect Synapse to be your primary time commitment. Instead, we hope that Synapse serves as an outlet through which you can meet like minded individuals, gain professional experience, and learn about the amazing field of neuroscience! **With that being said, as a Synapse member, you'll be eligible to apply for the Synapse Shadowing Program, volunteer with Lifelong Learning with Friends, and much more!** To "opt-in" to our new membership system, please fill out this Google Form: [Fall 2024 Synapse Membership Form](#).

Opportunities for Members

Synapse Shadowing Program

Link to application: [Synapse Shadowing Program: Member Application](#).

Application deadline: September 15th at 11:59 pm

As a reminder, the primary objective of the Synapse Shadowing Program is to give you the opportunity to shadow healthcare providers whose specialty relates directly to the field of neuroscience (psychiatry, neurosurgery, etc.). Through the Synapse Shadowing Program, you will gain an entry-level understanding of a certain medical specialty, including an introduction to some of the concepts and anatomical structures associated with that specialty. Additionally, we hope that you will be able to learn about treatment options, observe meaningful interactions between healthcare providers and patients, and, ultimately, develop a deeper appreciation for the field of medicine as a whole.

We will notify you about the status of your application by September 20th at the latest. After that, for those of you who are accepted, we will introduce you to the physician to

whom you've been matched via email. From there, you can talk about shadowing times, expectations, etc. with them directly.

Volunteering with Lifelong Learning with Friends

Link to registration: [Lifelong Learning with Friends: Member Sign-Up Form](#)

Registration deadline: September 15th at 11:59 pm

As a reminder, Lifelong Learning with Friends (LLwF) focuses on providing comprehensive educational and social support to adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDDs). As a Lifelong Learning with Friends volunteer, you'll have the opportunity to attend FUN classes - "Dance Your Heart Out: The Power of Music and Movement," "Fun with Science: Exploring the UT Turtle Pond," and others - and learn alongside adults with IDDs. According to Lifelong Learning with Friends' website, linked here, "our volunteers pave the way for inclusion, acceptance, and belonging in higher education institutions and society." In other words, this is an opportunity for you to have a real-world impact!

Once you begin volunteering, before or after each of your shifts, you will be responsible for filling out the [Lifelong Learning with Friends: Member Attendance Form](#). This Form asks you to submit a selfie with one or more of the students. Your selfie will serve as proof of attendance for a given shift, and it will allow us to give you two points. The link to the "Lifelong Learning with Friends: Member Attendance Form" will be included at the bottom of every future Newsletter for your reference.

Walk to End Alzheimer's Team

Link to join our team: [Team page of UT Synapse and Texas BEI](#)

This semester, we will be fundraising for the Walk to End Alzheimer's, the world's largest fundraiser for Alzheimer's care, support, and research. As the above link suggests, we are partnering with Texas BEI (another neuroscience org on-campus) to fundraise for this event! Please join our team and feel free to begin fundraising! We will be sending out relevant information about fundraising, profit shares, and other events soon!

Intramural Sand Volleyball

Link to interest form: [Synapse IM Sand Volleyball Interest Form](#)

Deadline: September 15th at 11:59 pm

Synapse is making an Intramural Sand Volleyball Team! If you are interested in participating, please fill out the above form! It will help us gauge (1) how many people are interested and (2) the availability of those who are interested. We'll be sure to send out more information to those who are interested soon!

Upcoming Events

- **General Meeting #1: Monday, September 9th from 5:30 - 7:00 PM in BUR 108**

Even though Dr. Bittner's presentation will not begin until 6:00 pm (or shortly thereafter), please try your best to be there early! Because we have a large amount of logistical information to cover (in addition to a presentation from the executive director of LLwF, Kaelin Rubenzer), we will be getting started by 5:45 pm at the latest! Therefore, getting there around 5:30 would be ideal. This will give you time to grab some pizza, sit down, and meet the people around you!

- **Synapse Shadowing Program Workshop: Wednesday, September 11th from 5:00 - 6:00 PM in NHB 5.202**

On Wednesday, Sidney will be hosting a workshop to discuss the Synapse Shadowing Program in greater detail. Specifically, he will outline the various components of the "Ascension Texas Observer Program" application, discuss his shadowing experiences, and answer any questions that y'all might have! If you plan on applying for the Synapse Shadowing Program, attending this workshop is highly encouraged!

- **Pizza with Professors #1: Friday, September 13th from 12:00 - 1:30 PM in the NHB third floor atrium**

We host Pizza with Professors once a month as a way for club members to interact with professors in a much more casual setting. You are all free to drop in during the event for however long you wish to. As the name suggests, we will have pizza for you to help yourself to!

- **Mad Libs Social: Saturday, September 13th from 1:30 - 2:30 PM in NHB**

Come out after Pizza with Professors to our first social of the year! In this lighthearted game, we'll be collaborating to fill in the blanks of hilarious stories, resulting in unpredictable outcomes. It's the perfect way to break the ice, get to know each other, and share some laughs!

That's all I got for the next week! I hope to see you at most (or maybe even ALL???) of our events.
Have a great evening everyone and we'll see you tomorrow at GM#1.

Cheers,

-Rishi Swaminathan and the rest of the Synapse Officer Board.

P.S. Neuroscience joke of the week:

What did the hippocampus say during its retirement speech?

Thank you for the memories!