

IBANGS NEWS Autumn 2025: Issue 29



Warm wishes for a joyful holiday season and a successful year ahead.

Dispatches from the President



Dear IBANGS members,

For many of us the end of December is a very busy time when we are balancing a lot of responsibilities. Whether you're coming off a heavy teaching load or looking to pause your commitments at work for the end of the year, I hope you all get a chance to exhale and spend more time with your loved ones. I also want our colleagues, including those at Brown and in Sydney, who have been affected by recent violence to know that IBANGS stands with you. We are thinking of you and wishing you strength and healing as your communities recover.

I am proud of the things that IBANGS does for its members and am excited to report on what's been going on. What I'm most excited about is that the schedule for the 2026 Genes, Brain, and Behavior (GBB) meeting continues to come together. I want to thank Drs. Sean Farris, Gregg

Homanics, and the rest of the Program Committee for their efforts. They have assembled a great lineup of symposia on topics involving neurobehavioral phenotyping, systems neuroscience, and complex trait genetics. See below for a detailed description of these symposia. Sean and Gregg have also invited **Dr. Erich Jarvis** to give the Keynote Address, who has agreed to share his research at the meeting, which you can read about [here](#). I'm also excited by ideas for ice-breakers and networking opportunities that are being assembled by the Education & Training committee and the new Advocacy & Inclusion committee. Together with the Presidential Address speaker **Dr. Danielle Posthuma** and the yet-to-be-announced Early Career and Distinguished Investigator Awardees, we think the program will be one of our strongest meetings yet. The **call for abstracts** will be coming in January, and I encourage everybody, especially trainees, to submit your best work for presentation at the meeting. We will also be sending information regarding registration and housing in early February.

I was asked to keep my letter short but I can't sign off without thanking **Dr. Andrew Holmes** for his work as Editor-in-Chief at the Genes, Brain, and Behavior journal, which IBANGS has partnered with for 24 years. Not to worry though, he leaves the editorship in the extremely capable hands of the new Editor-in -Chief **Dr. Marissa Ehringer**, congrats to Marissa! I also want to thank outgoing Publications Committee member **Dr. David Wolfer**, who will be stepping down, **Dr. Helen Kamens** for her upcoming role as the Committee's chair, and **Dr. Igor Ponomarev** for stepping into her role as Awards Committee chair. As a result, we now have vacancies in both of these committees, please let me know if you'd like to be involved!

One last thing and then I'll promise I'll be done. Scroll down to the end of the newsletter to see the latest installment of the online seminar series on the use and misuse of behavioral genetics research, which we now host in partnership with the **Behavioral Genetics Association** and the **Psychiatric Genomics Consortium**. It is scheduled for Wednesday, January 14th at 11am Eastern Time. I hope that you can make it, and if you have recommendations for future topics or speakers, please let me know that too!

There are a lot of things I'm skipping over, so my apologies if I left someone out. If you have an event to promote or some news to share, please reach out to me and we'll be happy to share it as a supplemental announcement! In the meantime, I hope you have a relaxing holiday season and a smooth start to the new year.

With best wishes,

Paul

Genes, Brain and Behavior 2026 News



The planning of our Annual Meeting with Sean, Gregg and the Program Committee is well underway. Meeting registration, Abstract submission and Travel Award applications will open in January. Symposia have been selected and [Abstracts](#) are accessible for viewing - titles and speakers below. A draft of the itinerary is online [GBB26 Preliminary Itinerary](#).

Encoding and Decoding Behavior: Computer Vision for Genetic and Neural Analysis

Chairs: Jacob Beierle, Gregory Corder

Speakers: Jacob Beierle, Jackson Laboratory, Gregory Corder, University of Pennsylvania, Ugne Klibaite, Harvard University, Katie Schretter, Janalia.

Dissecting the Development of Opioid Use Disorder Using Cross-Species Systems Genetics Approaches

Chair: Marissa Ehringer, University of Colorado Boulder

Speakers: Hao Chen, University of Tennessee Health Science Center, Tolulope (Johnson) Ajanaku, University of Colorado Boulder, Brittany Kuhn, Baylor University, Marianne Seney, University of Pittsburgh

Bridging the rodent to human translational gap: Marmosets as model systems for the study of Alzheimer's disease

Chairs: Stacey Rizzo, Lauren Bailey, University of Pittsburgh

Speakers: Gregg Homanics, University of Pittsburgh, Lauren Bailey, University of Pittsburgh, Amantha Thatthiah, University of Pittsburgh, Greg Carter, Jackson Laboratory

From Sequence to Structure: Decoding the Gene Regulatory Grammar of Addiction

Chair: Francesca Telese, University of California San Diego

Speakers: Brad Balderson, Salk Institute for Biological Studies, Peter Hamilton, Virginia

Commonwealth University, School of Medicine, Ana Pombo, Johns Hopkins University, Makoto Taniguchi, Medical University of South Carolina

Functional Implications of co-transmission in regulating neuroplasticity and behavior

Chair: Lewis Sherer, Brown University

Speakers: Lewis Sherer, Brown University, Andrea Cuentas-Condori, Yale University, Zachary Freyberg, University of Pittsburgh, David Root, University of Colorado, Boulder

Journal News



As many of you already have heard, Marissa Erhinger is the incoming Editor-in-Chief of the society's journal. If you plan on attending the Annual Meeting, you will have an opportunity to congratulate Marissa in person.



We would like to take this opportunity to thank Andrew Holmes for all his hard work on behalf of our society journal Genes, Brain and Behavior. Andrew was Editor-in-Chief for more than a decade. Under his able hands, the journal continued to consolidate its position as one of the premier journals in behavioral and neural genetics.



A special thank you to David Wolfer for his years as Associate Editor and service on the Publications Committee. In his role as Associate Editor, David served from the very first issue published in 2002 and continued for 15 years. His expert editing contributed significantly to the success of the journal. We wish David all of the best in his retirement.

Dave the Date: Virtual Seminar Series



This year IBANGS is collaborating with the Behavior Genetics Association and the Psychiatric Genetics Consortium to organize three virtual seminars. Each group will take a turn leading a seminar. The first webinar of the series is scheduled for Wed, January 14th. See flyer (left) for details and sharing. More information [here](#)

IBANGS SFN Breakfast



This year's breakfast meetup was well attended by IBANGS members and guests from all career stages. It was a good opportunity to catch up while enjoying the whirlwind of neuroscience events at SFN. Thank you to Karla Kaun and to all that participated.

Membership Renewal Info

The membership renewal period for 2026 is underway. Renewal forms and information are available here: <https://ibangs.memberclicks.net/why-join-ibangs>

Membership Rates

\$135 regular membership

\$45 trainee membership (undergraduate, graduate or postdoc)

\$45 Emeritus membership with online G2B access (Contact Anna for a code [administrator@ibangs.org].)

Scientists from developing countries are eligible for a membership reduction. The fee structure is online here:

<https://ibangs.memberclicks.net/assets/documents/IBANGS%20Fee%20Structure%20Developing%20Countries.pdf>. (Contact Anna for a code [administrator@ibangs.org].)

An IBANGS Membership is great for all career stages. Check out the membership benefits:<https://www.ibangs.org/why-join-ibangs>

Member Publications

From Karla Kaun's lab:



"[Investigating pharmacotherapies for alcohol use disorder using *Drosophila melanogaster*](#)" was published open access in the Research Society on Alcohol's flagship journal *Alcohol: Clinical & Experimental Research*.

- First author, Rebecca Oramas (left)
- This article tests a number of FDA-approved medications for alcohol use disorder (AUD) for their efficacy in fly alcohol consumption, preference and memory as proof of principle that flies are a great model to test AUD medications. Then, it also demonstrates that gamma-secretase inhibitors, which reduce Notch signaling, work well for reducing alcohol consumption and cue-induced alcohol seeking.
- This work was highlighted in Articles of Public Interest by the Research Society on Alcohol in a feature: [Can Fruit Flies Help Scientists Develop Treatments for Alcohol Use Disorder?](#)



"[Shaping of olfactory responses by taste in a new assay for operant learning in *Drosophila melanogaster*](#)" was published open access in the Company of Biologists journal *Journal of Experimental Biology*

- The first author, John Hernandez (left), was highlighted in an Early Career Spotlight at *J. Exp Biol*: [ECR Spotlight - John Hernandez](#)
- This article describes a new simple automated assay to test operant self-administration of appetitive or aversive odors and/or tastes in *Drosophila*. The data suggests that olfaction strongly guides volitional behavior, and provides a behavioral framework for examining how animals pursue positive and avoid negative stimuli

SAVE THE DATE

GENES, BRAIN AND BEHAVIOR



JUNE 8–11, 2026
UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH
PITTSBURGH, PA

Join us for an exciting week of research,
networking and discussion.

LOCAL ORGANIZERS:
Sean Farris & Gregg Homanics



<https://www.ibangs.org/genes-brain-and-behavior-2026>