

PAIR - Center for Neuroscience

Auburn University is developing a “critical mass” of expertise in the neurosciences. When Drs. Vishnu Suppiramaniam, Miranda Reed and Timothy Moore met to describe the efforts of the PAIR team working to establish a Center for Neuroscience, it was clear they and their colleagues are passionate about helping Alabamians in the fight against neurological disease.

The team is bringing together researchers with similar areas of focus, working on better understanding brain development, neurodegeneration, and drugs of abuse, Reed explained. In addition to training graduate students in neuroscience fields and building critical infrastructure needed for this work, the team brings together scientists who use medicinal chemistry to analyze new “designer drugs” of abuse, alongside researchers working in the field to reduce opioid addiction. Members of the team were able to showcase some of this work for then-U.S. Attorney General Jeff Sessions when he visited Auburn’s campus in September 2018.

Suppiramaniam noted the group will hold an annual gathering of neuroscientists, where the researchers and external collaborators learn from each other and offer a public seminar on advances in fighting neurological disease. The team also has members who focus on Alzheimer’s disease and brain cancer.

Moore added that Auburn’s Department of Drug Discovery and Development is heavily involved in the neuroscience PAIR team as well as four of the other teams. “We’re pretty busy,” he said, “but we like it.” As the team moves forward in its goal of establishing a permanent, externally-funded neuroscience research center at Auburn, it will also be reaching out to other medical institutions for collaborative opportunities. “A center structure like this,” Moore explained, gives researchers “an amalgamation point where they can come together” for the greater good of solving some of the state’s most pressing problems in the field of neurological disease treatment.



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