

“Everyone Should Love Neuroscience!”

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It is not hard to tell that Professor Tristan Hedrick loves what she does. In fact, when speaking to her she specifically said, “everyone should love neuroscience!” Her enthusiasm and great knowledge in neurobiology and neuroscience is sure to expand the biology and neuroscience department at Lake Forest College.

Professor Tristan Hedrick was born and raised in California near the San Francisco Bay area. Throughout high school, she had a passion for sciences over humanities and preferred subjects that had one correct answer, specifically those in biology and physics. She attended undergraduate school at a small liberal arts school in Massachusetts called Amherst College. After graduating, she conducted behavioral research on mice in Pisa, Italy. This research followed the visual cortex development in neonatal and newborn mice. After spending a few years on this research, Professor Hedrick enrolled at Northwestern for her PhD. She is currently a postdoctoral fellow at Northwestern.

Professor Hedrick is currently working in a research lab as well. Her current research is on epilepsy. She is researching the single synapse changes that occur that could lead to seizures or epilepsy. This can be categorized as electrophysiology, and her research focuses on how neurons work. Professor Hedrick noted that she loves bench research and being a part of the research.

So one might ask, what brought Professor Hedrick to our small liberal arts school? The answer is that not only does Professor Hedrick have a passion for biology, she also has a passion for teaching others about her passion as well. Currently she is teaching the night class The Malleable Brain and loves every minute of it. Professor Hedrick notes that she wants to encourage others to have the same love and passion for neuroscience that she has. She wishes to encourage others to enjoy science and not shy away or be scared of it. Through her teaching, Hedrick hopes she can build students that enjoy science and have a huge passion for it. She can't wait for her Molecular Neuroscience class in the spring and encourages those who are not in the neuroscience major to take the class as well.

Finally, Professor Hedrick was inquired about her thoughts on this year's Eukaryon theme. Her response was that epilepsy would be a perfect example of this as it is a lot of balance and imbalance of the brain. In fact, she notes that epilepsy is a balance that has gone wrong and thus exemplifies this year's theme.

Overall, Professor Hedrick loves what she does. She's excited for the future and for what Lake Forest has to offer.

But, most importantly, today, September 19th, 2017, Professor Hedrick shared some very exciting news. Her manuscript was submitted for review! We at Lake Forest are so lucky to have Professor Hedrick and can't wait to see how her positive attitude and enthusiasm will benefit the neuroscience and biology departments.

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