

## **CONGRATS TO WINTER BRAIN'S 2026 PIONEER AWARDEES!**

Each year, Winter Brain solicits nominations for the annual Pioneer Awards. This tradition serves to recognize and honor pioneering scientists who demonstrate excellence in the field of neuroscience and have made invaluable contributions to Winter Brain over the years. Many worthy candidates were nominated this year and the Winter Brain Board of Directors and Executive Committee had the difficult task to select two candidates for recognition.



**KRISTEN M. HARRIS, PH.D.**

**2026 Winter Brain Pioneer Awardee**

Kristen Harris has been an active participant in Winter Brain since 2002. Her professional career began at Harvard Medical school from 1984-1999 when she was recruited to Boston University, where she worked to establish their graduate program in experimental and computational neuroscience.

From BU she was recruited as a Georgia Research Alliance Eminent scholar to the Medical College of Georgia. Since 2006 she is Professor of Neuroscience in the Center for Learning and Memory and Department of Neuroscience at the University of Texas at Austin. She is renowned for her work on synapse structure and function pioneering three-dimensional reconstruction from serial section electron microscopy to advance understanding of the synaptic mechanisms of learning and memory. Her lab had developed novel tools sharing them together with data that are widely used resources ([synapseweb.clm.utexas.edu](http://synapseweb.clm.utexas.edu)). She is the recipient of Sloan Research Fellowship, Javits Merit Award, Brain Research Foundation Fellowship, Mika Salpeter Lifetime achievement and many other awards. She is known for innovative teaching, service on many prestigious scientific advisory boards, and presentations worldwide. She is a member of the National Academy of Sciences.



## AMY HAUCK NEWMAN, PH.D.

### 2026 Winter Brain Pioneer Awardee

Dr. Amy Hauck Newman received her doctorate in Medicinal Chemistry from the Medical College of Virginia, Virginia Commonwealth University, under the mentorship of Dr. Richard Glennon. She joined the laboratory of Dr. Kenner Rice at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) for her postdoctoral studies where she conducted total opiate synthesis, as a National Research Service Award fellow.

After starting her first independent lab at Walter Reed Army Institute of Research, she joined the National Institute on Drug Abuse-Intramural Research Program (NIDA-IRP), NIH, in 1991, where she was tenured and became the Medicinal Chemistry Section Chief. She currently serves as the Scientific Director, Chief of the Molecular Targets and Medications Discovery Branch and Director of the NIDA-IRP Medications Development Program. She has coauthored more than 340 original articles and reviews on the design, synthesis, and evaluation of centrally active agents, with an emphasis on selective ligands for the dopaminergic system, as potential treatment medications for substance use disorders. In particular, she has pioneered the development of highly selective and bitopic dopamine D3 receptor antagonists and partial agonists for treatment of Opioid Use Disorders (OUD). More recently, she has turned her attention to developing medications for the treatment of psychostimulant use disorders that are comorbid with bipolar disorder and/or schizophrenia. In addition, she has developed research tools that include small molecule fluorescent ligands, radioligands and irreversible ligands directed toward the dopamine, serotonin or norepinephrine transporters. She is an inventor on >25 NIH patents and patent applications.

Dr. Newman has received numerous awards from both the NIH and NIDA Directors including the NIH Ruth L. Kirschstein Mentoring Award, in 2019. She was the first woman to receive the Philip Portoghese Lectureship Award, awarded by the Division of Medicinal Chemistry (MEDI) and the Journal of Medicinal Chemistry, American Chemical Society (ACS) in 2016. Dr. Newman was honored as a "Remarkable Woman in Medicinal Chemistry" by the ACS, in 2018 and was inducted into the ACS MEDI Hall of Fame in 2023.