

# CAN2022 - Advocacy Training

Be An Effective Advocate for Science:  
Be Involved & Tell Your Story



[can-acn.org/advocacy](https://can-acn.org/advocacy)

# Introductions



**Karun Singh**

Senior Scientist, Krembil  
Research Institute  
(Krembil)

Chair of the CAN  
Advocacy Committee



**Wai Haung (Ho) Yu**

Independent Scientist, Brain  
Health Imaging Centre, and  
the Adult Neurodevelopment  
and Geriatric Psychiatry  
division

CAMH

Member of the CAN advocacy  
committee



**Julie Poupart**

Chief Operating and  
Advocacy Officer,  
CAN-ACN

(moderator)

# Agenda

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- Why advocacy matters
- Overview of recent CAN Advocacy efforts
- How advocacy has had an impact in other countries
- Why it is important to advocate in Canada
- What *you* can do to make an impact
- Q&A



# Why Advocacy Matters



**CAN-ACN**

CANADIAN ASSOCIATION FOR NEUROSCIENCE  
ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE DES NEUROSCIENCES

- Communicating with elected officials helps your issues to stand out.
- Advocacy is critical to research funding and promoting science.
- The federal government is the largest funder of basic biomedical research.
- Each year the government makes decisions on federal funding for science.
- **CIHR, NSERC and SSHRC (Tri-council) budget for research grants depend on advocacy.**
- **CIHR Budget stagnant**

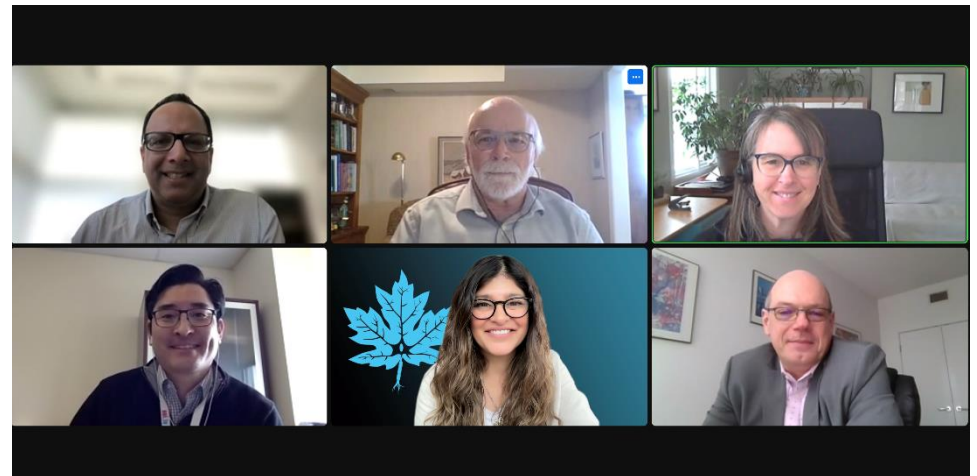


**Katalin Toth** and Melanie Woodin in Ottawa in 2018

#NeuroAdvocate

# You Should Advocate Because:

- Your expertise could help to influence science policy.
- Your MP wants to hear from his/her constituents about what matters to them
- You are the “face” of brain science and research.
- Policymakers want to see how their support advances discovery.



# CAN Advocacy efforts



CAN Hill week – March 21-25, 2022 – Virtual event: 25 meetings

MP Marilyn Gladu	Member of the Science & Research Committee	ON	CPC
Hon. Jean-Yves Duclos	Minister of Health (Meeting with Staff)	QC	LPC
MP Robert Morrissey	Chair of House Human Resources Committee	PEI	LPC
MP Heather McPherson		AB	NDP
MP Majid Jowhari	Member of the Health Committee	ON	LPC
MP Matt Jeneroux	Previous Shadow Minister for Science & Health; Current Shadow Minister for Diversity & Inclusion	AB	CPC
MP Elisabeth Briere	PS to the Min of Mental Health and Addictions	QC	LPC
MP Richard Cannings	Member of the Science & Research Committee		
MP Mike Lake	Member of Health Committee; Critic for Mental Health & Addictions	AB	CPC
MP Dr. Robert Kitchen		SK	CPC
Louise Mercier (DPOL to Senator Lankin)	Senator		
MP Bardish Chagger		ON	LPC
Bianca Hossain	Policy Advisor to Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry François-Philippe Champagne		
MP Maxime Blanchette-Joncas	Vice-Chair, Standing Committee on Science & Research	QC	BQ
MP Lena Metlege Diab	Member of Science & Research Committee	NS	LPC
MP Peter Fragiskatos	PS to the Minister of National Revenue	ON	LPC
MP Sonia Sidhu	Vice Chair - Standing Committee on Status of Women; Member of Health Committee	ON	LPC
MP Corey Tochor	Member - Standing Committee on Science and Research	SK	CPC
MP Michael Kram	Vice-Chair - Standing Committee on Industry & Technology	SK	CPC
MP Ryan Williams	Member of Science & Research Committee	ON	CPC
MP Iqwinder Gaheer	Member of the Industry & Technology Committee	ON	LPC
MP Kirsty Duncan	Chair - Standing Committee on Science & Research	ON	LPC
Dr. Michael Strong	President, CIHR		
Dr. Ted Hewitt	President, SSHRC		
MP Carol Hughes	Health Research Caucus member	ON	NDP



# CAN Advocacy efforts



CAN Hill week – March 21-25, 2022 – 48 neuroadvocates



# CAN Advocacy efforts

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CAN Hill week – March 21-25, 2022 – Results

Short term:

- Identification of multiple Science champions on the Hill
- Outreach by the office of Minister Champagne for post budget reaction
- Invitations to appear in front of HoC Standing committees:  
Health, Science and Research (soon)
- Neuroadvocate training

Long term:

Building relationships & Increased awareness of the importance of  
Science funding for Canada



# CAN Advocacy efforts

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## Budget consultations

- Permanent committee on finances (FINA) and Finance minister
- Response to budget

## Engagement with House of commons permanent committees, requests to appear at studies:

- Finances
- Science and Research (new)
- Health
- Industry and Technology

# Support for grass-roots advocacy initiatives – Advocacy Awards

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## **Who can become a scientist?**

University of Victoria

Education & workshops about equity diversity and inclusion issues in science

## **Montreal Neurological Institute Open Outreach Program**

Engage with youth in remote northern communities and expose them to neuroscience education and research, with the long-term goal of attracting Indigenous students from such communities to enter neuroscience-related programs at the university level.

## **Convergence: Art, Neuroscience and Society - a collaborative public exhibition and symposium**

Collaborative projects between neuroscientists in training and artists to engage the public in discussions on the convergence of art and science, and to promote neuroscience awareness and the importance of equity, diversity, and inclusion in science.

# Advocacy training

- Hill week training
- Joint training session with CSMB
  - Kirsty Duncan last year
  - Senator Stan Kutcher April 25, 2022
- CAN Meeting training



# Building support for tri-council

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Canadian researchers need to build support for CIHR, NSERC and SSHRC

CAN advocates for a 25% increase in the budgets of CIHR, NSERC and SSHRC

NIH support in the US is bi-partisan and strong – How advocacy has contributed to this

Ho Yu – Experience as neuroadvocate in the US, with SfN and braiNY

# #NeuroAdvocate story

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- 1) What advocacy means to me
- 2) Getting started and being active
- 3) Patience and success

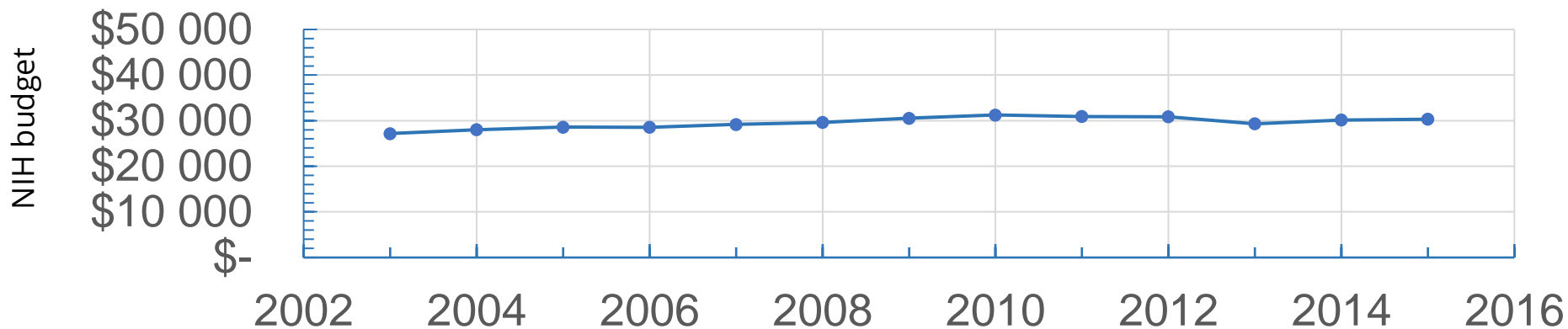
Intro – how I got started in advocacy

STEM outreach

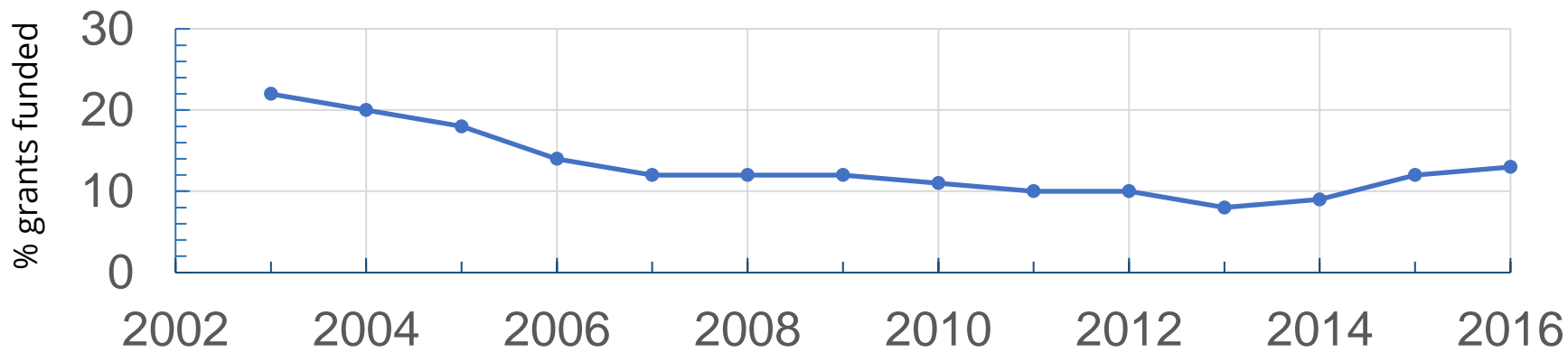
low funding opportunities

realization elected officials were remote from science and little understanding

## NIH Budget (\$M)



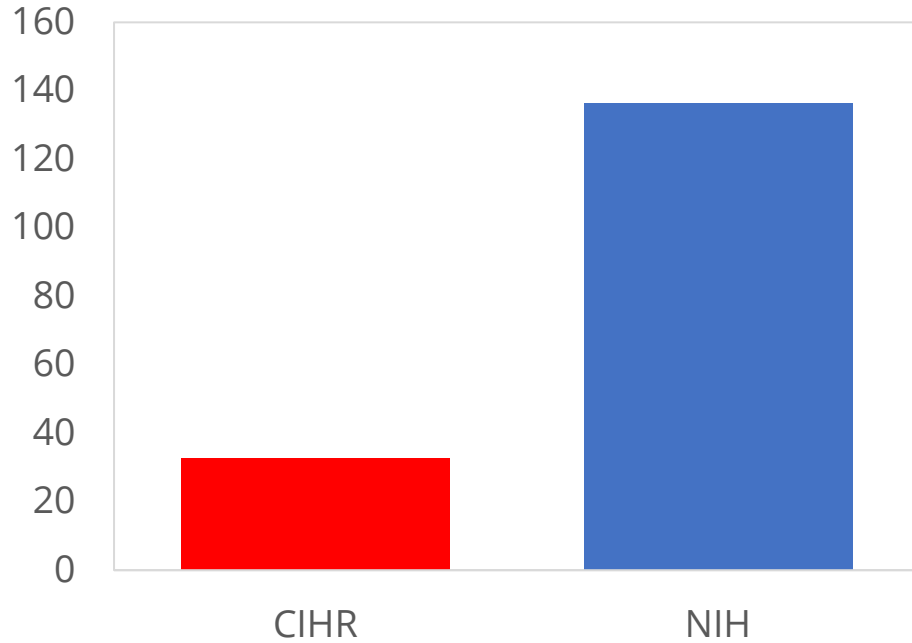
## R01 % Funded





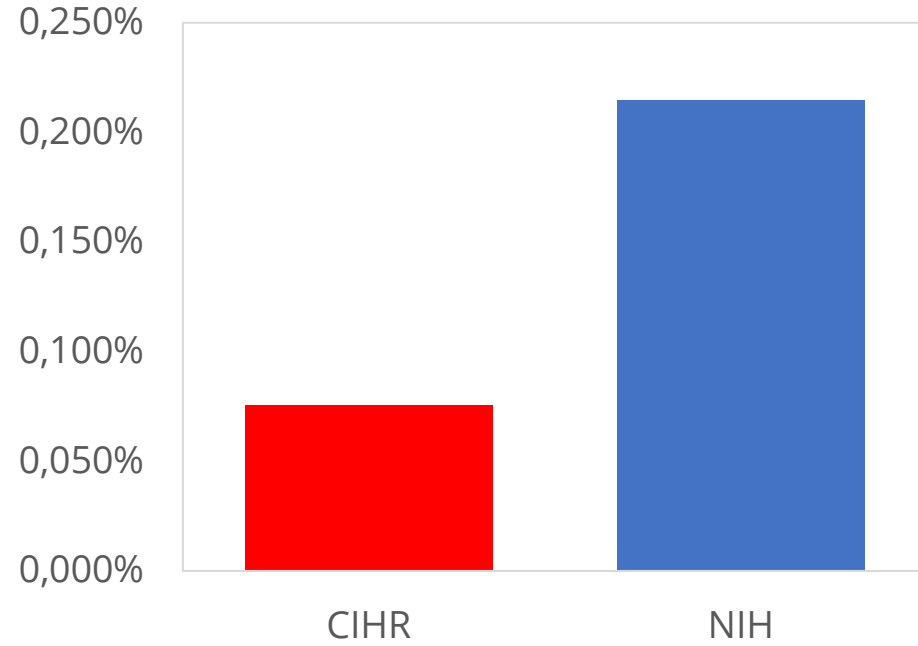
### Comparison of 2021-2 budgets per capita and % GDP

per person (\$ local currency)

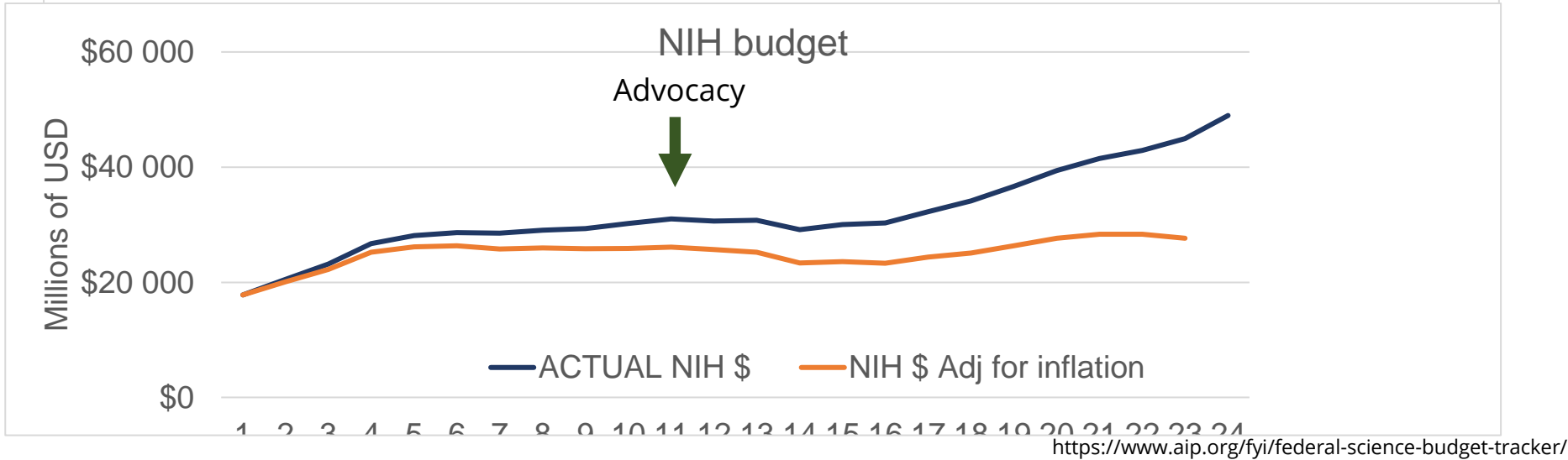
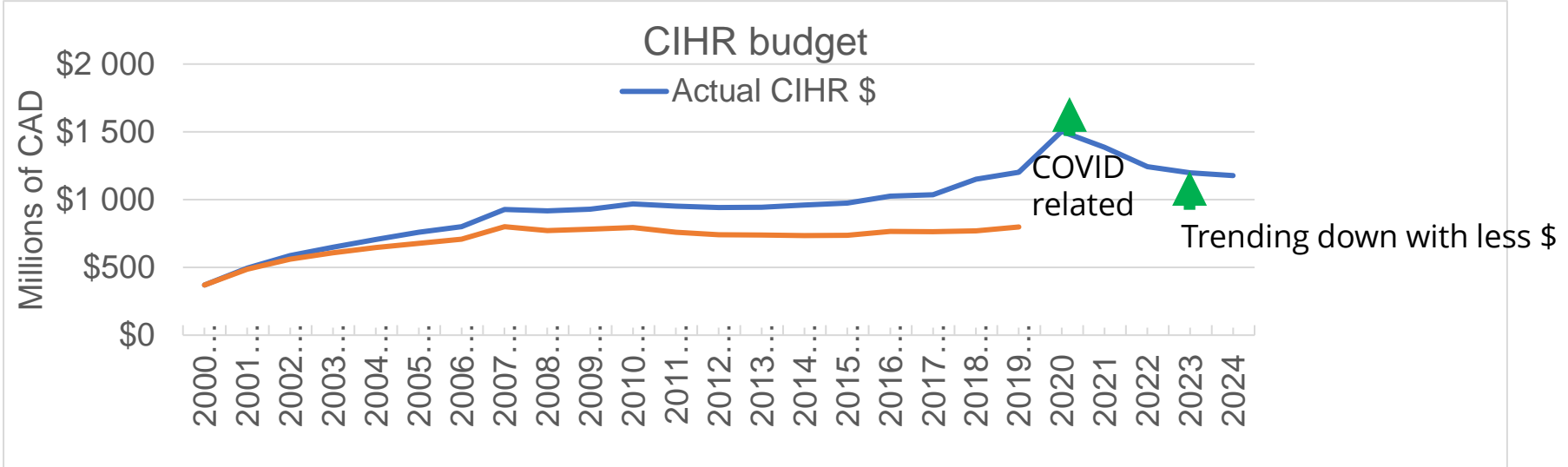


4.2X

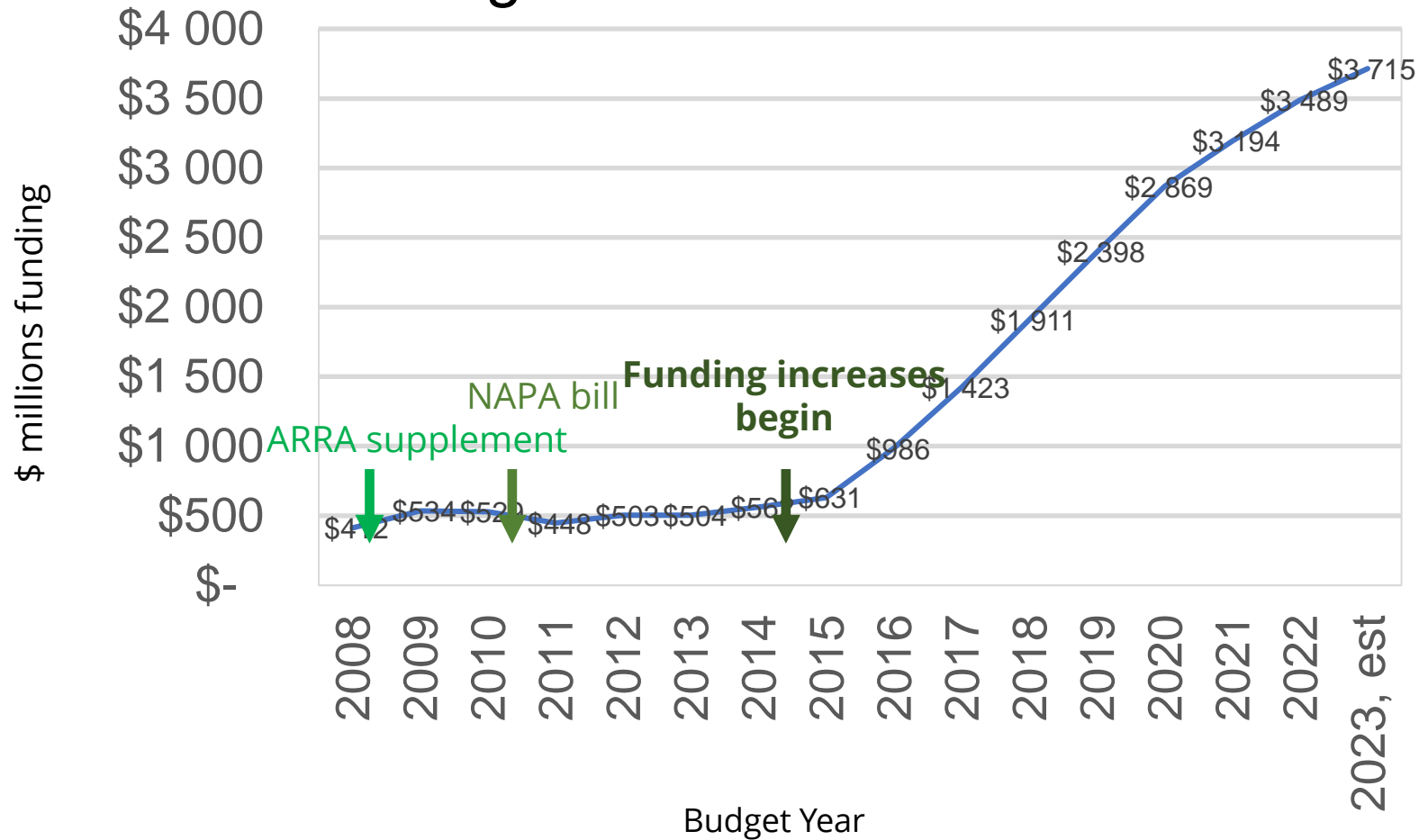
% GDP



2.8X



# Funding for Alzheimer's disease research



Data from NIH and HHS budget

# IDEAS

- DIY – invite to brain awareness and outreach events; offer to cohost and ask them to advertise thru their office i.e., City Healthy Aging Expo
- Invite for lab tours (ask permission of department and institute beforehand)
- Office visit – regional hill Day
- Develop infographics for offices as tools for promoting funding



# Why should we advocate for science



## Intrinsic Merits

- ▶ Funding for research
- ▶ Disease and Patient awareness
- ▶ Education and Training
- ▶ Public Support for Science
- ▶ Public Education / Information Source

## Extrinsic Merits

- ▶ Develop communication skills
- ▶ Public speaking
- ▶ Consider your research cosmos
- ▶ Appreciation of government operations



SOCIETY for  
NEUROSCIENCE



**CAN-ACN**

CANADIAN ASSOCIATION FOR NEUROSCIENCE  
ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE DES NEUROSCIENCES

**camh**  
mental health is health



UNIVERSITY OF  
TORONTO

# Engaging with Public office: What to do?

- Knowing your audience – applies to all speaking engagements
- What is interesting to an official
  - Community first
  - Measurable impact in community
  - Appealing to personal missions of official
  - Placing science as a priority
- Funding in community
  - links to economic impact
  - recent findings from research in community
  - Local events and outreach



Greater NYC Chapter  
Society for Neuroscience





### Funding summary prepared for Representative Carolyn Maloney

Congressional District 12  
Agency NIH

Organization Name	FY2012-FY2015	FY2016	Grand Total
NEW YORK UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF MEDICINE	\$833,308,929	\$214,439,776	\$1,047,748,705
SLOAN-KETTERING INSTITUTE FOR CANCER RES	\$583,630,290	\$165,802,145	\$749,432,435
WEILL MEDICAL COLLEGE OF CORNELL UNIVERSITY	\$528,696,994	\$142,223,281	\$670,920,275
ROCKEFELLER UNIVERSITY	\$291,983,205	\$73,552,829	\$365,536,034
NEW YORK UNIVERSITY	\$214,213,222	\$60,543,577	\$274,756,799
HUNTER COLLEGE	\$57,464,481	\$13,795,154	\$71,259,635
HOSPITAL FOR SPECIAL SURGERY	\$29,675,336	\$8,576,901	\$38,252,237
NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT & RES INSTITUTES	\$30,777,987	\$5,351,684	\$36,129,671
AARON DIAMOND AIDS RESEARCH CENTER	\$30,627,943	\$5,419,122	\$36,047,065
POPULATION COUNCIL	\$24,666,629	\$5,396,663	\$30,063,292
NEW YORK BLOOD CENTER	\$23,477,111	\$6,447,563	\$29,924,674
STATE COLLEGE OF OPTOMETRY	\$9,027,354	\$2,106,867	\$11,134,221
TRANSCENDENT INTERNATIONAL LLC	\$8,093,614	\$1,023,055	\$9,116,669
NANOMETICS LLC	\$5,546,036	\$974,918	\$6,520,954
NATIONAL CENTER ON ADDICTION/SUB ABUSE	\$3,839,652	\$1,620,577	\$5,460,229
CUNY GRADUATE SCH AND UNIV CTR	\$1,740,768	\$1,481,630	\$3,222,398
AI CURE TECHNOLOGIES LLC	\$3,146,734		\$3,146,734
BETH ISRAEL MEDICAL CENTER	\$2,954,228		\$2,954,228
SOCIAL SCIENCES INNOVATIONS CORPORATION	\$2,346,514	\$536,828	\$2,883,342
VISITING NURSE SERVICE OF NEW YORK	\$1,075,516	\$1,070,641	\$2,146,157
ION CHANNEL INNOVATIONS LLC	\$1,730,842		\$1,730,842
NEW YORK EYE AND EAR INFIRMARY	\$1,221,672		\$1,221,672
ENUMERAL BIOMEDICAL CORPORATION	\$1,199,800		\$1,199,800
EPIBONE INC	\$848,963	\$300,021	\$1,148,984
CYNVEC LLC		\$995,814	\$995,814
PANTHER TECHNOLOGY	\$984,392		\$984,392
HEALTHSIM INC	\$912,129		\$912,129
LA GUARDIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE	\$552,938	\$301,055	\$853,993
INSTITUTE FOR URBAN FAMILY HEALTH	\$767,091		\$767,091
INTRA-CELLULAR THERAPIES INC	\$349,610	\$348,094	\$697,704
BIOSCIENCE DEVELOPMENT INC	\$599,997		\$599,997
DETECT BIOSCIENCES LLC	\$519,397		\$519,397
ANGIOCRINE BIOSCIENCE, INC.	\$374,594		\$374,594
KOGNITO SOLUTIONS LLC	\$149,747	\$213,157	\$362,904
KADMON CORPORATION LLC	\$356,676		\$356,676
SPHERYX INC		\$318,318	\$318,318
ALZHEIMER'S DRUG DISCOVERY FOUNDATION	\$207,000	\$60,000	\$267,000
BERNARD M BARUCH COLLEGE	\$261,767		\$261,767
ADJUVANCE TECHNOLOGIES INC	\$225,000		\$225,000

### Funding summary prepared for Representative Carolyn Maloney

Congressional District 12  
Agency NSF

Organization Name	FY2012-FY2015	FY2016	Grand Total
ROCKEFELLER UNIVERSITY	\$5,475,889	\$136,362	\$5,612,251
HUNTER COLLEGE	\$2,675,428	\$1,352,127	\$4,027,555
NEW YORK UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF MEDICINE	\$2,491,704	\$1,040,606	\$3,532,310
RESEARCH FOUNDATION OF THE CITY UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK	\$2,017,821		\$2,017,821
CUNY GRADUATE SCH AND UNIV CTR	\$473,823	\$1,358,259	\$1,832,082
BERNARD M BARUCH COLLEGE	\$1,169,593	\$504,314	\$1,673,907
URBAN INTERACTIONS INC / GIGBINCOM	\$930,000		\$930,000
LUMIODE INC	\$894,473		\$894,473
SPHERYX INC		\$748,011	\$748,011
WEILL MEDICAL COLLEGE OF CORNELL UNIVERSITY	\$598,653		\$598,653
DATA & SOCIETY RESEARCH INSTITUTE	\$299,840	\$296,616	\$596,456
NEW KNOWLEDGE ORGANIZATION LTD		\$432,945	\$432,945
THE NEW YORK CITY FOUNDATION FOR COMPUTER SCIENCE EDUCATION		\$403,559	\$403,559
HOSPITAL FOR SPECIAL SURGERY	\$320,000		\$320,000
WEILL MEDICAL COLLEGE OF CORNELL UNIVERSITY		\$299,880	\$299,880
METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART		\$295,000	\$295,000
URBAN ELECTRIC POWER INC	\$224,901		\$224,901
SUBWAY LABS INC	\$175,000		\$175,000
ASSOCIATION FOR COMPUTING MACHINERY INC		\$163,856	\$163,856
COOPER UNION	\$45,643	\$109,699	\$155,342
LUCERNA INC	\$149,733		\$149,733
AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF BEIRUT	\$60,000	\$10,000	\$70,000
KENOTOMEO INC	\$49,500		\$49,500
NATURE AMERICA INC	\$25,000		\$25,000
VARLEY JACOB J	\$5,070		\$5,070
MARTIN, JENNIFER	\$1		\$1
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$18,082,072</b>	<b>\$7,151,234</b>	<b>\$25,233,306</b>

### Research highlights from Congressional District 12

• **Weill Cornell Medical College, June 2017:** Scientists used skin cells from patients with colorectal cancer to develop organ-like structures that can be used to test drug candidates. This process enables for the first time the development of patient-specific treatments, as well as providing a platform for modeling colon cancer, the second leading cause of cancer deaths in America and a disease that cannot be modeled in rodents (Crespo et al., 2017).

• **New York University, June 2017:** NYU researchers found that activating specific types of brain cells could reverse neuropathic pain in rodents. If applicable in humans, this could lead to the development of new treatments for neuropathic pain (Cichon et al., 2017).

# Effective Advocacy

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ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE DES NEUROSCIENCES

- Knowing your audience
- Impact on society– everyone generally accepts science is good, but what else
- Understanding your constituency
- Appreciating the complexity of politics and funding
- Impact of research for all Canadians

# Your Story is CRUCIAL!

- You are a constituent
- Make it personal. Be the “face” of brain science and research.
  - “I count on federal research funding to... and that will make a difference in the life of people by...”
- Be concise
  - Prepare a 1–2 minute version
  - Write it down and rehearse



Canadian Advocates at Hill Day 2019

# Now it's your turn!



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ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE DES NEUROSCIENCES

- In-person
  - Invite your MP to a lab tours, meetings, public events you organize
  - In Ottawa – apply to participate in Hill Day/week
  - Meetings with staff are just as impactful
- Individualized contact
  - Phone calls
  - Emails
  - Social Media
- MPs read hometown media
  - Letters to the Editor
  - Op-Eds
- Follow-up!



# Using Social Media to Communicate with MPs

Lawmakers pay attention to social media and constituent sentiment.

Tag CAN, share widely



The screenshot shows a Twitter thread. The top tweet is from Peter Fragiskatos (@pfragiskatos), a verified user, dated March 24, 2022, at 10:16 AM. The tweet text is: "Lisa, thank you very much. @WesternU and its research community will always be a priority. Thank you, again, for the incredible work that you and other members of @CAN\_ACN are carrying out. #Idnont". Below the tweet is a quote tweet from Lisa Saksida (@lisasaksida) on the same date, which says: "Another fabulous meeting on behalf of @CAN\_ACN during #CANHillWeek with my #Idnont MP @pfragiskatos. Thank you Peter! We really appreciate your strong and unrelenting support for science, and for @WesternU as an important part of our local community. @mRoussy23 @saarbuckle". The tweet has 4 retweets and 18 likes. Below the tweet are icons for reply, retweet, like, and share. A "Tweet your reply" button with the CAN logo is visible. Below that is a reply from Ravi Menon (@northernthrux) on the same date, replying to @pfragiskatos, @WesternU, and @CAN\_ACN. His text says: "Thank you Peter for your support of @WesternU, #Idnont and 🇨🇦science more generally. Funding basic research and supporting pathways to economic and social impact is critical for 🇨🇦. As the Mandalorians say, 'this is the way'.". This reply has 2 retweets and 6 likes.

**Peter Fragiskatos** ✓  
@pfragiskatos

Lisa, thank you very much. @WesternU and its research community will always be a priority. Thank you, again, for the incredible work that you and other members of @CAN\_ACN are carrying out. #Idnont

**Lisa Saksida** @lisasaksida · Mar 24  
Another fabulous meeting on behalf of @CAN\_ACN during #CANHillWeek with my #Idnont MP @pfragiskatos. Thank you Peter! We really appreciate your strong and unrelenting support for science, and for @WesternU as an important part of our local community. @mRoussy23 @saarbuckle

10:16 AM · Mar 24, 2022 · Twitter for iPhone

4 Retweets 18 Likes

 Tweet your reply Reply

**Ravi Menon, FCAHS, FRSC** @northernthrux · Mar 24  
Replying to @pfragiskatos @WesternU and @CAN\_ACN  
Thank you Peter for your support of @WesternU, #Idnont and 🇨🇦science more generally. Funding basic research and supporting pathways to economic and social impact is critical for 🇨🇦. As the Mandalorians say, "this is the way".

  2  6 

# Next Steps: Be an Active Advocate



Jaideep Bains, **Katalin Toth**, Charles Bourque, Freda Miller, Beverley Orser and Jason Tetro in the Parliament building to talk about neuroscience

- Learn about and engage your legislative offices
- Share advocacy ideas with CAN staff
- Tag us online with your advocacy activities — CAN will retweet and share
  - @can\_acn | #NeuroAdvocate
- Stay involved all year!



# Take home messages

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- Members of Parliament listen to their constituents!
- Your story is important
- Need to keep advocating.  
Every. Single. Year.



[can-acn.org/Advocacy](https://can-acn.org/Advocacy)



@can\_acn  
#NeuroAdvocate

# Questions?

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- Audience questions first
- Who has advocated in the past?
- Who participated in CAN Hill Week
- Do you have an elevator pitch – what is an elevator pitch?
- Would you be interested in a longer advocacy training session
- Would you consider running for office?
- Do you discuss advocacy at lab meetings?