CALIFORNIA PARTNERS IN NEUROSCIENCE WIN TRAVEL AWARD TO SOCIETY FOR NEUROSCIENCE 36th ANNUAL MEETING IN ATLANTA, GA

WASHINGTON, DC, October 11 - Two local educators -- a neuroscientist and a teacher -- are one of 10 pairs of international award recipients recognized for their commitment and innovative approach to bringing neuroscience into the classroom.

Elba Romo, an advanced placement teacher at Paramount High School who oversees 10th-12th graders, and Dr. Sonsoles de Lacalle of Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science received a Neuroscientist-Teacher Partner Travel Award to attend Neuroscience 2006, the 36th annual meeting of the Society for Neuroscience, to be held in Atlanta, Ga., October 14-18.

"I once was her student and I took what I learned in her neuroanatomy and neurophysiology course to clarify and improve my own lectures to students," Romo says of de Lacalle's influence. "Her lectures peaked my interest in neuroscience, and I now use such examples to also incite curiosity in my students."

Romo and de Lacalle are also part of the Women Teachers in Science Group that holds monthly meetings to discuss various science topics presented by researchers. "We then find ways to take information from the group discussions and apply it to the school setting," Roma explains.

De Lacalle acknowledges that Romo "recognized the value of using neuroscience concepts in her teaching of biology to high school students. We therefore struck a collaboration and I contributed my expertise to her class preparation." Future plans for the two include an outreach program for Brain Awareness Week in 2007.

"I hope to increase my knowledge of the most recent insights into neuroscience," Romo says of her expectations for attending the annual meeting. With this knowledge she plans to "develop a post AP test unit on neuroscience" at her school.

Roughly 30,000 scientists from around the world will attend Neuroscience 2006 to present and discuss the latest advances in neuroscience research. The meeting will feature more than 14,000 presentations covering topics ranging from stem cell research to basic human behavior.
In addition to receiving unlimited access to the meeting’s thousands of sessions and forums, the awardees have been invited to attend a number of special events. Romo, de Lacalle, and the other award recipients will also be honored at a gathering of the Society's Public Education and Communication Committee, which represents educational advocates from among the Society's membership.

The goal of the award program is to further partnerships between research and educational communities by bringing them together at a premier scientific meeting. "The travel award program is an example of the Society's commitment to explaining basic scientific processes -- how research leads to discovery and how discovery leads to treatments, cures and healthy choices at all stages in life," says Society for Neuroscience Public Education Director Colleen McNerney. "This program provides encouragement and visibility to the Society's members to embrace and contribute to this work, demonstrating the value of scientist and teachers working in partnership."

The Society for Neuroscience, with more than 37,500 members, is the largest organization of researchers and clinicians studying the brain and nervous system.