



14th Annual CU-CSU SUMMIT

Advancing Neurosciences: From Molecules to Mind



Thursday, August 13, 2026
Donald M. Elliman Conference Center
Aurora, CO 80045

8:00 a.m.

Breakfast

8:15 – 8:30 a.m.

Welcome and Opening Remarks

Thomas Flaig, MD, Vice Chancellor for Research, CU Anschutz

Matthew Hickey, PhD, Interim Dean, College of Health and Human Sciences,
Colorado State University

Ron Sokol, MD, FAASLD, CCTSI Director, CU Anschutz

8:30 – 9:40 a.m.

Session 1: Neuroimmunology and Neuroinfectious Disease

Moderator: Kevin Messacar, MD, PhD

8:30 – 8:50 a.m.

Keynote: Amanda Piquet, MD, Professor of Neurology, CU Anschutz

Stiff Person Syndrome: From the Spotlight to the Science—A New Therapeutic Era

8:50 – 9:00 a.m.

Amanda Woerman, PhD, Associate Professor, Microbiology, Immunology, and
Pathology, Colorado State University

*Using cryo-EM to evaluate the clinical translatability of mouse models of
neurodegeneration*

9:00 – 9:10 a.m.

Greg Owens, PhD, Research Professor of Neurology, CU Anschutz

*Antibody Responses Targeting Proteolipid Protein 1 Anchored Membrane
Domains in Multiple Sclerosis: Pathogenicity, Antigen Complexity and Prevalence*

9:10 – 9:20 a.m.

Matt Frank, PhD, Senior Research Associate, Integrative Physiology, CU Boulder

*An Exploration of Neuro-Inflammatory Mechanisms in Long COVID: the Role of
SARS-CoV-2 Antigens*

9:20 – 9:40 a.m. Session 1 Panel Q&A

9:40 – 10:10 a.m. **Coffee Break with Networking**

10:10 – 11:20 a.m. **Session 2: Brain Effects of Chronic Disease**
Moderator: Natalie Serkova, MSc, PhD

10:10 – 10:30 a.m. Keynote: Tom LaRocca, PhD, Associate Professor, Health and Exercise
Science, Colorado State University
Mechanisms Linking Brain Aging and Neurodegeneration

10:30 – 10:40 a.m. Allison Shapiro, PhD, MPH, Assistant Professor, Pediatrics, Endocrinology,
CU Anschutz
Cognitive Health in Obesity and Diabetes

10:40 – 10:50 a.m. Jeff Hebert, PhD, PT, Associate Professor, Physical Medicine &
Rehabilitation, CU Anschutz
Chronic TBI: The Clinic-Bench-Clinic Paradigm

10:50 – 11:00 a.m. Josh Gowin, PhD, Associate Professor of Radiology, CU Anschutz
Effects of Alcohol and Cannabis on Brain Function

11:00 – 11:20 a.m. Session 2 Panel Q&A

11:20 – 11:25 a.m. ***Brief Remarks from CU Anschutz Chancellor Donald Elliman***

11:25 – 12:20 ***Poster Viewing and Networking***
p.m.

12:20 – 1:05 p.m. ***Lunch and Networking***

1:05 – 1:35 p.m. **Lightning Talks**
Moderator: Chris DeSouza, PhD

1:05 – 1:10 p.m. Lightning Talk 1 – Alexander Baumgartner, MD, CU Anschutz
 1:10 – 1:15 p.m. Lightning Talk 2 – Aidan Flanagan, BS, Colorado State University
 1:15 – 1:20 p.m. Lightning Talk 3 – Samuel Ruzzene, BS, CU Boulder
 1:20 – 1:25 p.m. Lightning Talk 4 – Claire Vrooman, MS, CU Anschutz
 1:25 – 1:35 p.m. Lightning Talk Panel Q&A

1:35 – 2:05 p.m. Ice Cream Break with Networking

2:05 – 3:15 p.m. Session 3: Brain Health
Moderator: Janine Higgins, PhD

2:05 – 2:25 p.m. Keynote: Monika R. Fleshner, PhD, Professor, Integrative Physiology, CU Boulder
A Fresh Perspective on Exercise Immunology: It's All in the Brain

2:25 – 2:35 p.m. Josiane Broussard, PhD, Associate Professor, Health and Exercise Science, Colorado State University
Sleep Disruption and the Brain: Implications for Cognition and Brain Health

2:35 – 2:45 p.m. Andy Hoisington, PhD, Assistant Professor, Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, CU Anschutz
Small Microbes, Big Minds: The Gut's Connection to Brain Health

2:45 – 2:55 p.m. Julie Moreno, PhD, Associate Professor, Health and Radiological Sciences, Colorado State University
Integrating Translational Models to Study Neurodegeneration in Geriatric Dogs with Cognitive Dysfunction

2:55 – 3:15 p.m. Session 3 Panel Q&A

3:15 – 3:20 p.m. Closing Remarks: Ron Sokol, MD, FAASLD
