

ADVANCE FACULTY SUMMIT

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AUGUST 28TH-AUGUST 31ST

Karen Muller Smith



Dr. Smith obtained a B.S. in Cytogenetics from the School of Allied Health at the University of Connecticut in 1996. She was a Day of Pride Scholar and University Scholar, for which she participated in mentored undergraduate research at Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston, MA. Her Ph.D. studies centered on the genetics of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), where she focused on Dopaminergic and Noradrenergic Genes in ADHD. She graduated in 2003 and began post doctoral studies at the Yale Child Study Center under the mentorship of Dr. Flora M. Vaccarino. She was selected for a highly competitive NIMH Postdoctoral Training Program (T32) in Childhood Neuropsychiatric Disorders. Her postdoctoral studies focused on a transgenic animal model of ADHD, as well as the developmental roles of Fibroblast Growth Factor Receptor genes using transgenic mouse models. She was a recipient of the James Hudson Brown-Alexander Brown Coxe Fellowship. In 2009, she received the NARSAD Young Investigator award and a K01 Mentored Research Career Development Award from the NIMH. In 2012, she became an Assistant Professor in the Department of Biology at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. In 2019, she was promoted to Associate Professor and she is currently serving a three-year term as an Associate Dean in the College of Sciences. Dr. Smith has continued her studies on Fibroblast Growth Factor Signaling in Astrocytes combining tissue culture, cell physiology, immunohistochemistry, gene expression profiling, and behavioral models in transgenic mice to study gene function. She has also expanded her studies to investigating animal models of mood disorders including the neurobiology of self-injurious behaviors. Dr. Smith has mentored over 30 undergraduate students including three McNaire Scholars, 3 Ph.D. graduates, 5 MS Thesis graduates, and currently mentors 3 PhD students, 2 MS students, and 6 undergraduate students. Dr. Smith upper level/Graduate Level Biology courses in Neurobiology and Neurodevelopment and Neuropathology. In addition, she teaches a Genetics course for non-majors, Genetics Choices and Society. Dr. Smith serves on the Pre-Professional Committee, the IACUC Committee, The Graduate Council IDEA Committee, The BIO ID Committee (also Chair), LS-LAMP advisory Committee, as well as the strategic planning oversight committee.

