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University of Lethbridge to celebrate Brain Awareness Week

The University of Lethbridge is inviting the public to learn more about the brain and the world-renowned research being done at the Canadian Centre for Behavioural Neuroscience (CCBN) in advance of Brain Awareness Week from March 13 to 19.

“The CCBN is a world-class research facility and we encourage members of the public to visit us and learn about the incredible activities taking place right here in southern Alberta,” says Dr. Artur Luczak, a neuroscience professor, and a Brain Awareness Week speaker.

On Saturday, March 11, the CCBN is hosting an open house from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Everyone is welcome to attend this free event which includes activities for children. Parking is free and the CCBN is located on Level 8 of Science Commons.

“We have an exciting lineup of activities for folks, including a guided tour of the dry labs, various fun activities in the kids’ room and an opportunity to see a real human brain,” says Jade Oldfield, a neuroscience student and co-organizer of Brain Awareness Week along with fellow student Cameron Beazer and professor Dr. Masami Tatsuno. “Brain Awareness Week happens only once a year and it gives us the perfect opportunity to welcome the community to the CCBN.”

From 2 to 3 p.m. on Saturday, Luczak will give a free talk titled *Predictive Neurons: Consciousness and Artificial Intelligence* in the Science Commons Atrium on Level 7.

Talk summary — Correctly predicting the future can be very helpful for survival. In fact, the main reason why animals have brains could be to improve predictions of where the food is and how to best get it. Consciousness, the most mysterious feature of the brain, also seems to be related to predicting the future and detecting surprise. In this talk, Luczak will discuss how the ability of neurons to predict their future activity may be the key to understanding the brain, how it may help to explain consciousness and how it may allow us to build super-intelligent computers.

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Our University's Blackfoot name is Iniskim, meaning Sacred Buffalo Stone. The University is located in traditional Blackfoot Confederacy territory. We honour the Blackfoot people and their traditional ways of knowing in caring for this land, as well as all Indigenous Peoples who have helped shape and continue to strengthen our University community.