



JULY 15, 2015 Albany, NY

# Governor Cuomo Announces National Neurotechnology Center Established at New York's Wadsworth Center

Governor Cuomo announced that the Wadsworth Center in Albany is now home to the new National Center for Adaptive Neurotechnologies. The Center, a first-in-the-nation facility focused entirely on adaptive neurotechnologies, is a rapidly growing research area that works toward improving the diagnoses and treatment of stroke, spinal cord injury, traumatic brain injury, cerebral palsy, multiple sclerosis, ALS, chronic pain, and many other devastating conditions. The move was made possible under a 5-year, \$6.5 million grant awarded by the National Institutes of Health.

"New York is proud to lead the way in technological and medical advancements, and the Wadsworth Center is continuing to prove it is at the forefront of emerging research," Governor Cuomo said. "I welcome the National Center for Adaptive Neurotechnologies to its new home in the Capital Region, and look forward to its successes, which will have a significant impact on New Yorkers and across the world."

As the hub of a multifaceted research and development program, the National Center for Adaptive Neurotechnologies works closely with collaborators at major biomedical research institutions throughout the United States and beyond. New technologies are already contributing to patient care in hospitals and clinics, such as a new non-invasive rehabilitation therapy that can improve walking in people with spinal cord injuries or other disorders, by restoring more normal spinal reflexes through an interactive computer-based training procedure.

Additionally, the Center and its partners have designed a non-invasive brain-computer interface system that is now enabling people who are paralyzed by ALS to use brain signals to communicate with others, made possible by translating brain waves into text through computer software. They have invented a new method for using recorded signals to map brain functions that reduces the duration and increases the safety of neurosurgical procedures. These important advances are also generating intellectual property in the form of patents and licensing agreements.

"The Wadsworth Center has a long history of being on the cutting edge of medical research, and this new national center will further enhance its reputation as a leaders in scientific innovation," said New York State Health Commissioner Dr. Howard Zucker. "People living with debilitating diseases and injuries are already benefitting from adaptive neurotechnologies being developed in our labs. With this new designation, we will be able to do even more in this emerging field of research."

This unique field of research has grown and flourished at Wadsworth for more than 30 years under Dr. Jonathan R. Wolpaw and Dr. Gerwin Schalk. They will serve as Center Director and Deputy Director, respectively. Both are internationally renowned figures in their respective areas of research, and Wadsworth labs already function as a national and international resource for scientists and engineers who travel to Albany for training and collaborative research. Recently, a rapidly growing Austrian biotechnology firm, g.tec Medical Engineering, established its American branch in Albany in order to work with Drs. Wolpaw and Schalk and their National Center for Adaptive

Neurotechnologies colleagues, and to take advantage of Governor Cuomo's Start-Up NY Program.

Congressman Paul Tonko said, "The National Center for Adaptive Neurotechnologies will allow the Capital Region to continue its proud tradition of innovation and cutting edge research, improving health care outcomes for millions of Americans suffering from neurological diseases nationwide. I applaud the Governor's steadfast commitment to maximizing and maintaining local opportunities to make our state and the nation a better place. As a Ranking Member of an Energy and Commerce subcommittee in Congress, I will continue to aggressively push for ambitious legislation, like the recently passed 21st Century CURES bill, that positions brilliant minds in the Empire State to gain support for the good work they do each and every day."

Dr. Jonathan R. Wolpaw, Center Director, said, "Our designation as a National Center gives us a formal venue for sharing our expertise and discoveries with other scientists, engineers, and clinicians from the US and elsewhere. Our findings are deepening understanding of brain function and leading directly to new methods for improving human health."

Dr. Gerwin Schalk, Deputy Director, said, "With our new Center and our collaborating institutions, the Albany area is poised to become the nucleus of academic, clinical, and commercial activities in the field of adaptive neurotechnologies."

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