

## **News Release**

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**For jpgs of J. Daniel Ragland and J. Faye Dixon contact kadams@explorit.org**

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### **Inaugural ‘Science Café’ to focus on brain disorders**

Explorit Science Center’s first Science Café on Tuesday offers the public a chance to talk with two experts about cutting-edge research of brain disorders. The free program, featuring complimentary coffee and dessert, will be held at 7:30 p.m. at Explorit’s main site, 2801 Second St. in Davis.

The topics of discussion will be schizophrenia and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, which have often been misunderstood and poorly managed. This failure prevented many people from maintaining fully functional lives in the past, but that’s changing with new treatment options, according to Drs. J. Daniel Ragland and J. Faye Dixon.

Ragland is associate professor of psychiatry and behavioral sciences at the UC Davis Imaging Research Center, and Dixon is a child clinical psychologist at the UC Davis M.I.N.D. Institute.

Each expert will make a brief presentation at the start of the program. Ragland will talk about his investigation of the effects of schizophrenia on brain function. Using state-of-the-art technology, he examines the role that the brain’s organizational abilities play in new learning and memory retrieval, how schizophrenia disrupts those processes, and how deficits might be remediated.

One of the most exciting aspects of his work is an early intervention research program, Ragland says. It will provide early diagnosis, counseling and medical treatment for young people in the Sacramento area who show early signs of psychosis.

Ragland holds a Ph.D. in clinical psychology from American University. He did post-graduate work in neuropsychiatry at the University of Pennsylvania and held a faculty appointment there before moving to Davis in 2006.

Dr. Dixon will discuss the latest findings about ADHD. She recently joined the M.I.N.D. Institute to help develop a comprehensive ADHD research and treatment program. Part of her mission is to reach out to primary-care physicians and schools to raise awareness about symptoms and treatments.

“ADHD presents itself during early childhood and adolescence, often causing a major disruption to schooling and the learning process,” she says. “Undiagnosed and untreated ADHD is a major cause of undereducation and underemployment in adulthood, a serious consequence that can be addressed with early and thoughtful intervention.”

Dixon also holds a Ph.D. in clinical psychology from American University and has extensive clinical and research experience in child psychopathology and neurodevelopmental issues. Her work has covered a wide range of areas including child sexual abuse, depression and anxiety. More recently, her work has focused on ADHD and learning differences. Prior to her move to Davis, she was assistant professor of psychiatry at the Medical College of Pennsylvania (now known as Drexel University College of Medicine).

The café is the first installment in a series that will also include lectures at the public library in Davis. Future dates in the series are Feb. 19 (a lecture on the “dark side” of the universe), March 18 (a café featuring Davis inventor Paul Moller and his Skycars) and April 15 (a lecture about comparing human and chimpanzee genomes).

The series is sponsored by Intel; refreshments will be provided by Stone’s Café and Catering. For more information, visit [www.explorit.org](http://www.explorit.org) or call Explorit at (530) 756-0191.

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