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**National Institutes of Health's Baby Connectome Project  
Advances with Support from Wyeth Nutrition**

*Collaboration Aims to Unlock the Mysteries of How the Brain Develops in Young Children*

**Florham Park, N.J.** (July 6, 2016) – Mike Russomano, CEO Wyeth Nutrition, addressed an audience comprised of connectomics researchers and members of the scientific community about the company's commitment to unlock the secrets of human brain development recently at the Connectome Celebration. The event, which celebrated the achievements of the Human Connectome Project to-date, was held on June 20 at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Campus in Bethesda, Md.

Russomano spoke to the world's most prominent pioneers of brain mapping and imaging, sparking enthusiasm for the Baby Connectome Project (BCP), a NIH research initiative. The BCP, a four-year study sponsored by the NIH, with support from Wyeth Nutrition, aims to provide scientists with breakthrough information of how the human brain develops from birth through early childhood and will uncover factors contributing to healthy brain development.

"As a global leader in infant nutrition, Wyeth Nutrition is proud to be a part of the Connectome celebration highlighting advancements in the study of the human brain," CEO Wyeth Nutrition Mike Russomano said. "Wyeth Nutrition is committed to its support of the Baby Connectome project to help underwrite this first-time research. We believe that providing the right nutrition to infants and children is crucial for brain development and overall health."

The BCP will be awarding grants to research institutions that are at the forefront of studying brain development in children from birth to age five. The advent of advanced brain-mapping technologies capable of showing how the structures and functions of the brain develop over time offers scientists the answers to critical questions like how children acquire the capacity for motor skills, cognitive thinking and speech, and learn if the development of these skills can be influenced in positive ways.

Russomano added, "The research we will gain on infant and child brain development is of the utmost importance. The data uncovered will be unwrapping secrets in brain development and help us look at ways to ensure proper development even before a child is born, and continue through early development, where crucial skills are learned."

The BCP will map human brain connectivity with genomic, environmental and behavioral data. The robust data mined, including genetic and other environmental factors that shape the brain, will be aggregated and published, sharing unprecedented findings. The data will provide a better understanding about the mental, emotional, and behavioral development of healthy children and those with learning disabilities and disorders to improve diagnosis and treatment, provide parents guidance for enhancing healthy interaction with their child, and support policymakers in shaping positive health services and intervention programs. From this research, the BCP is hoping to garner additional insights about how early interventions may shape the brain throughout one's lifespan.

“The Foundation for the National Institutes of Health is pleased to work with Wyeth Nutrition to support the Baby Connectome Project, which will help us better understand the intricacies of early brain development,” said FNIH President and Executive Director Maria C. Freire, Ph.D. “Following the review of applications from research institutions nationwide, we look forward to the announcement of the grant award by NIH later this year.”

The NIH Human Connectome Project is an ambitious effort to map the neural pathways that underlie human brain function. The overarching purpose of the project is to acquire and share data about the structural and functional connectivity of the human brain.

### **About the Baby Connectome Project**

The Baby Connectome Project is a four-year research initiative of the National Institutes of Health, supported by Wyeth Nutrition through a gift to the Foundation for the National Institutes of Health. Applications submitted in response to the NIH funding opportunity announcement have been evaluated for scientific and technical merit through the NIH peer review system; an award is expected later this year. The study will map the quantitative datasets of human brain connectivity in children 0-5 years old and identify factors that could contribute to healthy development. Findings from the study will be made public for the advancement of scientific research. For more information, visit <http://www.neuroscienceblueprint.nih.gov/connectome/>.

### **About Wyeth Nutrition**

For the past 100 years, Wyeth Nutrition has pioneered innovative nutrition science with premium-quality products that meet the needs of infants, young children and adults. Through innovative discovery research, high-quality clinical trials, world-class manufacturing and product safety standards, we deliver scientifically sound solutions that offer parents confidence, help nourish children and support healthy futures. By partnering with mothers, doctors and scientists, we continue to discover and learn what is needed to ensure the best advancement for the health and well-being of future generations. To learn more about Wyeth Nutrition, part of [Nestlé S.A.](#), the leading nutrition, health, and wellness company in the world, visit [www.wyethnutrition.com](http://www.wyethnutrition.com).

### **About the Foundation for the National Institutes of Health**

The Foundation for the National Institutes of Health creates and manages alliances with public and private institutions in support of the mission of the NIH, the world’s premier medical research agency. The Foundation, also known as the FNIH, works with its partners to accelerate biomedical research and strategies against diseases and health concerns in the United States and across the globe. The FNIH organizes and administers research projects; supports education and training of new researchers; organizes educational events and symposia; and administers a series of funds supporting a wide range of health issues. Established by Congress in 1990, the FNIH is a not-for-profit 501(c) (3) charitable organization. For additional information about the FNIH, please visit [fnih.org](http://fnih.org).

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