ALLEN INSTITUTE for BRAIN SCIENCE
Fueling Discovery

FACT SHEET

THE ALLEN SPINAL CORD ATLAS

WHAT SCIENTISTS, RESEARCHERS & INDUSTRY LEADERS ARE SAYING…

"One of the key cells in the spinal cord that we're interested in learning more about is the motor neuron. It is a pool of cells that drive all our muscles—so in essence, it drives how we communicate, how we move, and how we write. Today, we have genetic information from approx. 100 genes in the motor neurons. This leaves several thousand left to be understood. Currently, we do not have a body of research big enough that looks at these genes individually. **The Allen Spinal Cord Atlas will fill the gap and provide this information. Ultimately, the atlas could drive questions related to how motor neurons can work better when they are damaged**."

- Jane Roskams, Ph.D., associate professor, Brain Research Center & iCord at the University of British Columbia and Vancouver Coastal Health Research Institute.

"The development of a comprehensive gene expression atlas for the spinal cord is a **huge step forward for both the neuroscience and neuromuscular disease research communities**. This resource provides an important extension to the current Allen Brain Atlas for defining normal patterns of gene expression that we can then use as a baseline for understanding how genes are altered in disease or injury. The ability to instantly search for cell-type specific patterns of expression in the intact spinal cord will allow us to identify rational candidate genes underlying our mouse genetic models of human motor neuron diseases."

-Gregory A. Cox, Ph.D., Associate Professor, The Jackson Laboratory

"We were incredibly impressed with the Allen Institute's demonstrated commitment to tackling far-reaching projects with such great potential impact as the Allen Brain Atlas. **It was exciting to know they could apply those same principals to a spinal cord atlas.**"

-Thomas Stripling, Director of Research and Education, Paralyzed Veterans of America.

"When the Allen Institute for Brain Science was first announced, we all knew this was going to be significant, innovative and exciting. But we never anticipated how rapidly the Institute would complete its initial project to map the mouse brain, make the findings readily available to anyone interested, and move to a second phase of scientific activity, focused on unprecedented partnerships such as the Spinal Cord Atlas. **We in Washington are very proud to be home to a resource that is already invaluable to leading edge science, pushing the frontiers of knowledge in places all over the world.**"

-Jack Faris, *President of the Washington Biotechnology and Biomedical Association*