

*From left, Ralph Adolphs, PhD, cognitive neuroscientist at California Institute of Technology; Ian Ross, MD, surgical director, epilepsy and brain-mapping program at Huntington Memorial Hospital; and William Sutherling, MD, medical director, epilepsy and brain-mapping program, have partnered to conduct leading-edge brain research.*

## DONOR SPOTLIGHT

Huntington Memorial Hospital is most grateful for Blue Shield of California's support toward Huntington Health e-Connect and toward our Patient Partners Program — support which brings Huntington Hospital closer to becoming one of just 20 accountable care organizations in California. (An accountable care organization is a network of hospitals, physicians and other care providers that shares responsibility for providing high-quality, coordinated care for patients.) Blue Shield's recent gift of nearly \$1 million will improve health outcomes for our community by strengthening information technology and supporting seamless caregiver coordination.

## Partnering to pioneer brain research

Neurosurgeons at Huntington Memorial Hospital have partnered with a team of cognitive neuroscientists from California Institute of Technology to uncover some of the secrets of the brain. According to Ian Ross, MD, surgical director, epilepsy and brain-mapping program, the resulting research promises to yield important clues about aspects of brain function that have mystified generations of scientists.

"Most recently, our team has been examining individual neurons in the brain's amygdala region, to determine their relevance to social and emotional functioning," explains Dr. Ross. The team has also focused on formation of memories in the hippocampus region.

"This is a sophisticated research program that requires buy-in and hard work from a broad cadre of individuals," says William Sutherling, MD, medical director, epilepsy and brain-mapping program. He explains that Huntington Hospital is one of a select few hospitals with an environment conducive to such important research. "You must have a critical mass of patients, clinical staff and scientists to conduct research like this, and hospital leadership and staff must be receptive and supportive," he says.

"And, importantly, Caltech is right in our backyard," Dr. Sutherling adds, recognizing Ralph Adolphs, PhD, and his team of scientists from Caltech's Emotion and Social Cognition Laboratory for their design of impressive research projects that are producing significant results in a tricky clinical setting.

The research team taps into electrodes to monitor neural activity in the brains of patients who have provided consent to participate in their study. While the electrodes help Huntington Hospital surgeons to plan procedures to relieve epileptic seizures, they are monitored by Caltech scientists to better understand how the brain works.

