LGSA Mission Statement

The Lerner Graduate Student Association is dedicated to providing a link between graduate students, LRI faculty and staff, and the surrounding Cleveland area. Our main goal is to represent all LRI graduate students and advocate for their unique needs and concerns in order to maximize academic and professional development.

Message from the LGSA President – Alyson Wolk

Hello, LRI graduate students! I’m so pleased to be serving as the President of the Lerner Graduate Student Association this year. I’d first like to thank the previous board for all they did for the Lerner community last year. Under the leadership of Olivia Stephens, many goals were accomplished such as the development and promotion of events from the Student Affairs and Professional Development Committees. These successes set a strong precedent for the new board to keep achieving great things.

My goals for the new board are to better understand and represent the needs of graduate students at the Cleveland Clinic. We hope to keep improving the training environment of graduate students at this high caliber institution and meet the needs of our many trainees. The LGSA plans to continue incorporating professional development, networking, and communication opportunities with social events such as Graduate Student Appreciation Week. Please keep an eye out for the recognition of our students from our partnership universities here at Lerner: Case Western, Cleveland State, University of Akron, and Kent State. I am very excited to be representing the community of grad students as a whole. Please reach out to me at wolka@ccf.org with any questions, suggestions, or concerns.

Message from the editor

In this Spring/Summer Edition of the LGSA newsletter, I am very excited to share the events that LGSA has planned, to recognize the awards and honors from our very own Lerner Graduate Students, and to introduce our new 2018 - 2019 LGSA Executive Members and their committees. Read on to see what the LGSA has been up to! Please welcome my predecessor, the new Chair of Public Relations, Sam Wightman - keep reading to see more about her goals for the year.
Thank You!

We are very excited to announce the new LGSA Leadership Team and Committee Members for 2018 - 2019 below! Read on to learn a little more about each member:

**President: Alyson Wolk | wolka@ccf.org**

I loved growing up in Cleveland and it’s been a lot of fun to experience the city as a graduate student! I’m excited to be given this opportunity to be involved in LGSA and to help our graduate student community here at the Clinic flourish and grow. I did my undergrad at John Carroll University where I studied Spanish and Molecular Biology. I worked in several labs at the Clinic throughout that time and then worked at CWRU after graduating. I’m now beginning my third year in the Molecular Medicine program where I’ve been doing my dissertation research in Ophthalmology. My hobbies include spending time by the lake, cooking, reading, Netflix, and exploring my hometown. I look forward to getting to know more of the grad students in Lerner. Please reach out to me with any questions or suggestions!

**Student Affairs Chair: Emma Keller | kellere2@ccf.org**

My name is Emma Keller and I will be the new Vice President for Student Affairs for LGSA. I am currently a rising third year Ph.D. student in Jorgensen Lab in Inflammation and Immunity. I’m very excited to be taking over this position. My goal for the position is to incorporate successful events from the previous years, while also creating new events and opportunities. I would also like to facilitate opportunities to make connections with graduate students from all our programs here at the LRI.

**Student Affairs Committee Member: Gabrielle Mey | meyg@ccf.org**

I am originally from Northeast Ohio and earned my undergraduate degree in Biology/Pre-Medicine at Walsh University in North Canton. After performing a clinical research study for my senior thesis, I realized that I wanted to apply what I had learned at the molecular level. This led me to pursue a PhD, and the Molecular Medicine Program ended up being the perfect fit for me! I am now entering my second year in the program and will be researching multiple sclerosis in the DeSilva Lab. This year I am excited to join the LGSA as well! In my short time here I have seen so many great changes taking place within the graduate student community, and the LGSA has been a critical part of that process. I hope that by serving on the student affairs committee I will help maintain those improvements and foster continuous communication that will lead to further progress in the future.
**Professional Development Chair:** Megan Zangara  |  zangarm@ccf.org

I am a PhD candidate in the Molecular Medicine program and am a member of the McDonald Lab in the Department of Inflammation and Immunity. I am originally from Northeast Ohio, and graduated from Case Western Reserve in 2016 with a B.S. in Biochemistry prior to joining the MolMed program. I have been very involved in the MolMed program and am excited to begin working with all graduate programs at the LRI as the incoming Vice President of Professional Development for LGSA. My goal for the year is to provide graduate students with the tools to make meaningful professional connections with their peers and members of both academia and industry.

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**Community Outreach Chair:** Caroline Schuerger  |  schuerc@ccf.org

I am a fourth year PhD Candidate in the lab of Dr. Yogen Saunthararajah studying bladder cancer. I am from North Carolina and received a Biology and a Chemistry from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. I have enjoyed getting to know the Cleveland community and being involved in the LGSA for my second year. I look forward to giving back to Cleveland through our participation in community outreach.

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**Community Outreach Committee Member:** Abigail Dooley  |  dooleya2@ccf.org

I’m from New Jersey and attended Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute for my undergraduate education where I received a BS in Biochemistry and Biophysics. After graduation I moved to Cleveland and joined the Molecular Medicine PhD program where I am currently a second year student. I have joined Christine O’Connor’s Lab in the Genomic Medicine Institute. This is my first year joining the Lerner Graduate Student Association and I am on the Community Outreach Committee. I am looking forward to getting to know other graduate students at the Lerner Research Institute as well as working with them to give back to our community.
Community Outreach Committee Member: **Jasmine Gajeton** | gajetoj@ccf.org

I’m currently a fifth year in the Molecular Medicine PhD program and am originally from the Bay Area. I am excited to be on the LGSA Community Outreach committee to get back to some of the volunteering aspects that I’ve been missing out on. I am looking forward to helping plan and execute a few of these events throughout the year to foster a sense community within the LRI as well as have our presence felt throughout the greater Cleveland area.

Community Outreach Committee Member: **Katie Troike** | troikek@ccf.org

I am currently a second year Molecular Medicine PhD student working in the lab of Dr. Justin Lathia. I grew up in Akron, Ohio and obtained my Bachelor’s degree in Biology and my Master’s degree in Nutrition from Ohio University (go Bobcats!). This is my first year in LGSA and I am so excited for the opportunity to serve the community and give back through outreach events. I believe that investing in the communities where we live and work allows us to foster new relationships, growth, and understanding. I look forward to being part of that kind of change.

Public Relations Chair: **Samantha Wightman** | wightms@ccf.org

I am currently a 4th year student in the Molecular Medicine PhD program completing my thesis work in the Laboratory of George Stark in the Cancer Biology Department. I am from Michigan and I completed both a Bachelor’s and Master’s of Science in Biology at Northern Michigan University. The previous Vice President of Public Relations did a wonderful job establishing a newsletter and improving the content and accessibility of our website. My goals for this year is to continue on the ground work set with the newsletter and to continue to increase awareness of the Lerner Graduate Student Association and all of the great opportunities it provides for students here at the Cleveland Clinic.
Judging/Set-up at the Northeastern Ohio Science and Engineering Fair
March 12-13

This year, Cleveland State University hosted the Northeastern Ohio Science and Engineering Fair. Our very own Dr. Moravec was the Judging Chair for NEOSEF and coordinated with our VP of Community Outreach, Shawna Battle, to have LGSA presence as judges.
Every April, the Lerner Research Institute hosts 50 middle school students from the nearby Citizen’s Leadership Academy for the LRI Science Day. This event is a wonderful opportunity for these young students about how this event has “opened their eyes to research and encouraged them to learn more about science and medicine”. LGSA members coordinated two stations this year! DNA Extraction of Strawberries (led by Community Outreach Chair, Shawna Battle) and the popular Liquid Nitrogen Ice Cream Station (Public Relations Chair, Jasmine Gajeton). **Students at the DNA Extraction station learned about the process of DNA extraction, fun DNA facts, and were able to see the DNA clumps that were isolated from the strawberries.** Students visiting the Liquid Nitrogen Ice Cream Station learned about the different properties of liquid nitrogen and dry ice with two different demonstrations - groups were surprised at how quickly liquid nitrogen was able to freeze flower petals. They were able to get their hands dirty by making their own “Crystal Ball Bubbles” from the CO2 gas emitted from dry ice and water. Both students and their group leaders were rewarded with some delicious homemade vanilla liquid nitrogen ice cream (think Picadillys in Uptown), complete with sprinkles and chocolate sauce!

“opened their eyes to research and encouraged them to learn more about science and medicine”
LRI Science Day
Finding and Applying For Jobs
April 10

In April, our Professional Development Chair, Tyler Alban, led his committee to host Dr. Suguna Rachakonda for a career development talk on the future job search. She gave valuable insights about envisioning how your future career will intersect with your changing values and skill set.
LRI Graduate Student Appreciation Week
May 7 – 11

MONDAY

LEADERS Seminar Series
How to Get the Most Out of Your Mentor
Donna Driscoll, PhD
LRI Graduate Student Appreciation Week
May 7 – 11

TUESDAY

Lerner Graduate Student Association
Academic Development Seminar

F Grants:
Why you want one and how to get it

Tuesday, May 8th
2:00 PM – 3:00 PM
NC1-202

Coffee and refreshments will be provided. No “show” will be asked!

Chris Hubert, PhD
Research Associate
Department of Biomedical Engineering

WEDNESDAY

Wellness Wednesday

Grad life can be stressful. Learn how to incorporate yoga and meditation into your daily life to maintain a healthy body and mind. Plus, what doesn’t have an excuse to wear comfy clothes to work?

All graduate students are invited to attend.

Wednesday, May 9th
11:00 AM – 1:00 PM
NAB Arenas & Conference Rooms

Healthy snacks will be provided following workshops.

NUTRITION
Alex Reynolds, MHS
Celiac Disease Care Coordinator

MINDFULNESS
Lisa Winston, MHD
Department of Medicine

YOGA
Jenna Allen, RYS
Center for Physical Therapy Yoga Teacher (YTC)

CIRCUIT TRAINING
Rahul Sinha
Department of Surgery

Wednesday's events will be coordinated with Fitbit, check out our Fitbit challenge to win a FREE Flex 2!
LRI Graduate Student Appreciation Week
May 7 – 11

THURSDAY

Party like a PhD!
Graduate Student Appreciation Celebration
Put down thepipeline and join us for a festive beer hosted by the LRGSA RETC to celebrate your accomplishments and show our gratitude for all your hard work.
Thursday, May 10th
4:00 PM – 6:00 PM
The Kelcy Room
InterContinental Hotel, First Floor
Heavy appetizers, beverages, and party favors will be provided for all our wonderful grad students.

FRIDAY

Graduate Student Coffee Hour
Let us Espresso our appreciation for all that you do!
Friday, May 11th
11:00 AM
NAS Atrium and Patio
Join us for an opportunity to learn more about leadership opportunities with the LRSA and how to get involved!
Recent Graduates

Gaëlle Müller-Greven  
Cancer Biology Department  
Kent State University

Lamis Yehia  
Genomic Medicine  
Case Western Reserve University

Damien Bellos  
Pathobiology  
CCLCM

Jessica Sacks  
Pathobiology  
CCLCM

Megan Gragg  
Ophthalmology  
CCLCM

Christy Gliniak  
Cellular and Molecular Medicine  
Case Western Reserve University

Jeffery Atkinson  
Neuroscience  
Kent State University

Yufan Zheng  
Biomedical Engineering  
Cleveland State University

Sheronica James  
Biomedical Engineering  
Cleveland State University

Emma Lessieur  
Ophthalmic Research  
CCLCM

Johathan Fox  
Biomedical Engineering  
Cleveland State University

Stephan Nieuwoudt  
Pathobiology  
Case Western Reserve University

Anthony Gromovsky  
Cellular and Molecular Medicine  
CCLCM

Rita Tohme  
Case Comprehensive Cancer Center  
CCLCM

Hassan Alamri  
Cellular and Molecular Medicine  
Cleveland State University

Edward Kwee  
Biomedical Engineering  
Case Western Reserve University

Grace Weber  
Center for Global Health and Disease  
CCLCM

Liang Zhu  
Molecular Cardiology  
Case Western Reserve University

Yeojung Kim  
Pathobiology  
CCLCM

Hao Wang  
Molecular Cardiology  
Cleveland State University

Brian Ritchey  
Cellular and Molecular Medicine  
Cleveland State University

Dhruv Seshadri  
Biomedical Engineering  
Case Western Reserve University

Andrew Camardo  
Biomedical Engineering  
Cleveland State University
First Author Publications

Elise Baron
Altered Kinematics of arm swing in Parkinson’s disease patients indicates declines in gait under dual-task conditions
*Parkinsonism and Related Disorders*

Gaëlle Müller-Greven
Macropinocytosis of Bevacizumab by Glioblastoma Cells in the Perivascular Niche Affects their Survival
*Clinical Cancer Research*

Stephan Nieuwoudt
In vitro contraction protects against palmitate-induced insulin resistance in C2C12 myotubes
*American Journal of Physiology - Cell Physiology*
Functional high-intensity training improved pancreatic β-cell function in adults with type 2 diabetes
*American Journal of Physiology - Endocrinology and Metabolism*

Jessica Sacks
Effects of Roux-en-Y gastric bypass on liver mitochondrial dynamics in a rat model of obesity
*Physiological Reports*

Emma Lessieur
The Ciliopathy Gene abi1 is Required for Zebrafish Cone Photoreceptor Outer Segment Morphogenesis and Survival
*Retinal Cell Biology*

Ashraf Duzan (co-author)
Development of a gut microbe-targeted non-lethal therapeutic to 1 inhibit thrombosis potential without enhanced bleeding
*Physiological Reports*

Jeffery Atkinson
Protective Humoral Immunity in the Central Nervous System Requires Peripheral CD19-Dependent Germinal Center Formation following Coronavirus Encephalomyelitis
*American Society for Microbiology - Journal of Virology*
A W A R D S  A N D  H O N O R S

Grants and Fellowships

Olivia Stephens
American Heart Association Predoctoral Fellowship

Jasmine Gajeton
American Heart Association Predoctoral Fellowship

Shawna Battle
HHMI Predoctoral Fellowship

Presentation Awards

Nicholas Sarn
Merlin Bumpus Junior Investigator Award Finalist

Soumya Turaga
Young Investigator Award

Hala Osman
Research Day Clinical Science Poster Award

Other Awards

Ashraf Duzan
1st place in American chemistry society ACS-NE at Oberlin college: the best presenter & project
2nd place the best ART of science at LRI-CCF
LGSA Website
For additional information about LGSA or other resources for graduate students, please visit our newly renovated website! Please pardon our dust as we update it throughout the year!
http://intranet.lerner.ccf.org/education/lgsa/

Awards and Honors Submission Form
The Lerner Graduate Student Association wants to recognize all of the hard work that our graduate students accomplish and recognize any of the awards and honors that you receive. Please use this form to submit whether you have had any accomplishments that LGSA should be aware of! This can be anything from a travel award or grant to a manuscript publication! We will publish these in our quarterly newsletters to celebrate your accomplishments!
https://goo.gl/forms/CS8xoNinwBbldyTF3

LGSA Google Calendar of Events
Cleveland, Ohio | Add our calendar to stay up to date on any upcoming events and workshops with the Lerner Graduate Student Association!
https://calendar.google.com/calendar/embed?src=rcqvlb78arvtroa43kog7ivj2o%40group.calendar.google.com&ctz=America/Chicago

LinkedIn & Facebook
Connect with other Lerner Graduate Students, Post Docs, and Alumni on our LinkedIn Page!
Use the following QR Code or find us here: https://www.linkedin.com/groups/13534210
We also have our Facebook Group here: https://www.facebook.com/groups/LR1gradstudents/