February Newsletter

We have made it halfway through the winter! For the month of February, we have you covered with a recap on recent events and information about upcoming events.

Don’t forget to attend the LEADERS seminar on February 25th, hosted by RETC, to hear about resources available to Lerner trainees. This month we feature Lerner alumna Dr. Olga "Niki" Kokiko-Cochran, our fellow postdoc Dr. Sarah Skye and the second half of the LPDA Communication Subcommittee members.

We have included photos from our successful New Year’s kickoff event. We hope you were able to attend and enjoyed playing Bingo with your fellow trainees! We are planning many more events for you throughout the year.

Don’t forget to submit your accomplishments so they can be featured in our newsletter and, as always, stay active on our LinkedIn group.

~ LPDA Communication Team

Join our LinkedIn group

The Lerner Postdoctoral Association and Alumni Network is a group of current and former postdoctoral fellows, research associates and graduate students at Cleveland Clinic Lerner Research Institute. Our goals are to provide opportunities for career development, networking, and highlighting our scientific achievements. We also post reminders about upcoming events, so make sure to turn on notifications.

Request to join today and tell all of your fellow trainees!
Subcommittees

**Career Development and Resources**
Chair: Elizabeth Sweeny
Members: Christina Cajigas-Du Ross, Vishal Nanavaty, Nneha Sakre, Madhav Sankunny, Xiaoqin Wu, and Nara Yoon
- Career development seminars
- Professional development workshops
- Teaching opportunities at local schools and universities
- Career/training opportunities in collaboration with RETC and Lerner Graduate Studies Association (LGSA)

**Mentorship/Advocacy**
Chair: Iris Smith
Members: Elise Bara, Defne Bayik, Sudipta Biswas, Christina Cajigas-Du Ross, Emily Esakov, Vivek Narayan, and Jie "Jane" Yang
- Research mentorship network in collaboration with LGSA
- Mentorship seminars and workshops
- Mentor graduate students
- Address concerns and complaints to appropriate channels
- Interact with RETC and the Lerner Central Office

**Communication**
Chair: Chinthasagar Bastian
Members: Suhail Andrabi, Kelsey Bohn, Xiaoguang Fang, Mihyun Hwang, Isha Kapoor, Benjamin Krishna, and Ashley Nemes
- Advertise postdoc-related events
- Social media (LinkedIn)
- Monthly postdoctoral fellow newsletter

**Social/Outreach**
Chair: Aimalie Hardaway
Members: Tim Mead, Vijay Nagampalli, Vivek Narayan, Nneha Sakre, Carrie Smallcombe, and Lingjun Zhang
- Social events
- Promote networking opportunities
- Community outreach
In which lab were you a postdoc? How long ago?
I started my postdoc position as Manager of the Rodent Behavioral Core in 2008, which was under the scientific direction of Dr. Bruce Lamb in the Department of Neurosciences. I officially managed the core until 2012, at which time I transitioned into a research-based postdoc position in the Lamb laboratory until January 2016.

What did you work on at Lerner?
My research focused on characterizing the relationship between traumatic brain injury (TBI) and development of Alzheimer’s disease-like pathology in rodent models.

Where are you now, and what do you work on?
Right now I am a Research Assistant Professor in the Department of Neuroscience at The Ohio State University. I continue to examine the chronic effects of TBI in rodent models. Right now my laboratory is defining the effects of post-injury sleep disruption.

How did your time at LRI prepare you for your current role?
While at LRI I gained an appreciation for group science and realized the true benefits of working together. I learned that it is okay to ask questions and approach others about collaborations. Much like raising children, it takes a village to raise a good scientist.

Is there something you particularly miss from your time at LRI?
Yes- the people! I developed many great friendships while I was at LRI and miss those daily interactions.

I also miss the close proximity of colleagues and core services. That is a luxury I didn’t realize I had until moving to Ohio State where our department is spread out.

How was the transition to your current role?
Mostly it was exciting! It took a winding path for me to find my way into a faculty position, and I really appreciated the opportunity to start my own laboratory. Developing independent research projects and establishing a new laboratory takes time and support. It’s also much different than being a postdoc. Now I have to worry about everything: budget, protocols, recruiting students, training students, performing experiments, writing papers and grants, etc. I felt extra pressure to secure grant funding so that I could transition to a tenure track position. Fortunately, my R01 application scored very well, and I am expecting a transition to tenure track this year! This promotion will provide additional independent laboratory space and startup funds.

What is your favorite part of your current job?
My favorite part is pursuing research questions that are truly interesting to me. I am fortunate to have a strong support system at Ohio State through collaboration and access to novel techniques. Also, I work with many students and enjoy seeing them get excited about neuroscience research.

In one sentence, what advice would you give current Lerner postdocs?
Part of being successful is knowing your value.

“Part of being successful is knowing your value and advocating for yourself.”

Dr. Niki Kokiko-Cochran
MEET YOUR FELLOW

Dr. Sarah Skye, who recently published a paper in *Circulation Research*, is from Wisconsin, where she earned her B.S. degree in medical microbiology and immunology at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She then earned her PhD in microbiology and bioinformatics from the University of Iowa, focusing on understanding the impact of the human microbiome on human disease processes. This led her to further her studies of the human microbiome in relation to cardiovascular diseases as a postdoctoral fellow in the Hazen lab at Cleveland Clinic Lerner Research Institute. In the Hazen lab, Sarah has focused on manipulating the gut microbiome through various mechanisms, such as microbial-targeted small molecule inhibitors and genetically engineered community transplantations, to study how inhibition of specific microbial metabolites can reduce the risk of heart disease. Outside of the laboratory, Sarah loves to cook and spend time with her family. She is passionate about health and fitness and enjoys sharing her knowledge as a weightlifting coach. Sarah loves outdoor adventures and enjoys wilderness backpacking in national parks and kayaking in the Great Lakes of the Midwest.

“My work focuses on manipulating the gut microbiome through various mechanisms to reduce risk for heart disease”

-Dr. Skye
MEET OUR COMMUNICATION COMMITTEE (PART II)

Dr. Ashley Nemes grew up in the west side of Cleveland and recently bought a house in North Royalton with her fiancé. She received her Bachelor of Science degree from Baldwin-Wallace University, majoring in neuroscience and psychology, and her PhD from Kent State University, concentrating on cellular neuroscience. She works in the laboratory of Dr. Tara DeSilva, focusing on underlying mechanisms in neurodevelopmental and neurodegenerative diseases. She has spent time at Cleveland Clinic since she was very young, volunteering in clinical and basic research. Her mom is a graphic designer in the art department and has provided her with many opportunities. She has conducted research in pediatric and adult neurology and completed her PhD with Dr. Imad Najm of the Epilepsy Center. Dr. Nemes continues to work at Cleveland Clinic because it provides unique opportunities for scientists. In her free time she enjoys cooking, exercising and spending time with her family and her cat, Mittens.

"Cleveland Clinic allows scientists to conduct impactful research within a world class clinical setting"
-Dr. Nemes

Dr. Chinthasagar Bastian is originally from Kerala, India. After completing his medical school degree (M.B.B.S) from Medical College Trivandrum, India, he earned his PhD in neuroscience from Ohio University, Athens, Ohio. He started his postdoctoral fellowship in Dr. Sanjay Pimplikar’s lab at Cleveland Clinic where he characterized synaptic deficits in a mouse model of Alzheimer’s disease. He currently works in Dr. Selva Baltan’s lab studying white matter injury mechanisms during stroke, with a focus on aging. He believes that Cleveland Clinic provides a fantastic opportunity for researchers. Dr. Bastian chose to work at LRI because the vibrant scientific community ensures collaborations across fields of research and are well supported by departmental resources and core research facilities. He enjoys working with the amazing communication subcommittee team members who are responsible for the monthly LPDA newsletter. During his downtime Dr. Bastian likes to hike and explore Cleveland Metroparks trails and paint using oil or acrylic as a medium.

"Cleveland Clinic provides a fantastic opportunity for researchers"
-Dr. Bastian

Dr. Mihyun Hwang is from South Korea. She earned her Doctor of Veterinary Medicine from Kyungpook National University, Korea, and received both her MS and PhD in veterinary pharmacology from the same university. When she joined LRI, she expanded on her knowledge of neuroimmunology. She is working in Dr. Bergmann’s lab in the Department of Neurosciences. Her work primarily focuses on understanding the innate immune responses in the central nervous system (CNS), especially the role of type I interferons on different CNS resident cells upon virus infection. She is also working on the adaptive immune response, including IL10 in the CNS. She says that Cleveland Clinic has a great environment with cultural diversity, collaborations, and resources for researchers and it offers an atmosphere for researchers to enjoy their roles. When she is not working, she spends time with her family and cats, doing crafts with kids, and cooking.

"Cleveland Clinic has a great environment with cultural diversity, collaborations, and resources"
-Dr. Hwang
UPCOMING EVENTS

Lerner Experience in Advanced Development of Educational and Research Skills (LEADERS)

Setting Your Career Goals

- Provides Lerner trainees with career development tools that will accelerate their professional development.
- Sessions open to all postdoctoral fellows and graduate students.
- 26 sessions in 2019
- Receive a certificate of completion if 75% of sessions are attended.

WHO: Christine Moravec, PhD
Director, Research Education and Training Center

WHEN: February 11, 2019
3:00 - 4:00 pm

WHERE: NE1-205

Resources Available to Lerner Trainees

- Provides Lerner trainees with career development tools that will accelerate their professional development.
- Sessions open to all postdoctoral fellows and graduate students.
- 26 sessions in 2019
- Receive a certificate of completion if 75% of sessions are attended.

WHO: Kelsey Bohn, PhD
Postdoctoral Program Manager

Sarah Kostiha Smith, M.Ed., MBA
Predoctoral Program Manager

WHEN: February 25, 2019
3:00 - 4:00 pm

WHERE: NE1-205

State of the Clinic

February 27th 7:00 - 8:00 AM

CEO and President Tom Mihaljevic, MD, delivers the annual State of the Clinic address, which will be broadcast live on the intranet and at various locations across the enterprise.
The LPDA hosted a New Year’s Kick Off social event for all Lerner trainees. Postdoctoral fellows and graduate students mingled and enjoyed food, music, and Bingo.
Since 1924, Toastmasters International has helped people of all backgrounds become more confident speaking in front of an audience. Toastmasters International is a non-profit educational organization that teaches public speaking, communication and leadership skills through a worldwide network of meeting locations.

If you get tongue-tied expressing ideas to other people...
If your stomach starts gurgling with nervousness when you’re asked to “speak before a group”...
If you need a dose of confidence handling difficult questions at meetings...

...then consider attending our Toastmasters Club on Cleveland Clinic Main Campus!

Whether you are a professional, student, stay-at-home parent, or retiree, our Toastmasters Club is one of the most efficient, enjoyable, and affordable ways to build and develop your communication skills.

Toastmasters is one of the greatest investments you can make in yourself.

Membership Benefits

❖ Increase your self-confidence
❖ Communicate more effectively
❖ Certification(s)
❖ Become a better speaker
❖ Become a better leader
❖ Competitions (local, state, and international)

Cleveland Clinic Toastmasters

When: Wednesdays, 12:05 – 12:55pm
Where: Room TT1-100 (across from Bunts Auditorium)
2045 East 90th Street, Cleveland, OH 44195
Why did you join TM?
I wanted to be confident and enjoy communicating with other people and to learn how to overcome the fear of standing in front of groups of people.

What has been your favorite part about the pathways program so far?
I loved the program’s emphasis on leadership styles and I personally improved my leadership skills.

What are your goals as a member of TM?
I would like to commit to TM by staying an active member.

What advice would you give to someone who is new to TM?
The amazing part of being a member of TM is that it doesn't matter where you come from or whether you speak English or not. We grow together through TM. It helps those who struggle with public speaking.

Surveys about our fears commonly show that the fear of public speaking is at the top of the list. That is also true for me. Moreover, having to give a talk in English always used to make me anxious because I had to plan more time to organize my thoughts in a non-native language. Nothing crushes fear more than confronting it. One of the main reasons of joining the Toastmasters Club is that it allowed me to practice speaking English and reduce my anxiety. This was accomplished by giving a series of presentations.

The Toastmaster Club appeals to me because it offers a very supportive environment and a variety of education programs to ensure each member’s improvement. The program that I have been taking is the Innovative Planning Path. This program is designed to help members build their skills as public speakers. In addition to delivering speeches, participants are required to evaluate other members’ speeches by providing feedback. These are good opportunities to develop listening and communication skills.

My goal as a member is to become more confident as a public speaker and develop a strong connection with my audience. I would like to encourage everyone to join the club meetings as a member or a guest. Sometimes the hardest thing is just showing up.
Research Molecular Biologist/ Microbiologist (Research Associate) - Agricultural Research Service
Agricultural Research Service, the U.S. department of Agriculture’s chief scientific research agency is currently recruiting postdoctoral research associates to supplement a lead scientist’s research on agricultural problems of high national priority affecting American agriculture. This position requires a recent PhD (within the last 4 years) in molecular biology, microbiology, or a related field of study; U.S. Citizens and Permanent Residents who meet certain eligibility requirements may apply. For more details click here

Research Scientist-Bioassay Development-Lilly, Indiana
Lilly is seeking a highly motivated Research Scientist to use their skills and knowledge in assay development and cell biology to plan, organize and conduct assays on biopharmaceuticals and vaccines. PhD degree in a relevant scientific discipline (molecular biology, microbiology, analytical chemistry, cellular biology, or biochemistry) with 2 years’ experience or MS degree with 10 years of experience in assay development (diagnostic, clinical, analytical, etc.) is required. For more details click here

Assistant Professor Position-Department of Molecular Microbiology and Immunology, Oregon Health & Science University
The Department of Molecular Microbiology and Immunology, in collaboration with the Department of Behavioral Neuroscience, invite applications at the Assistant Professor level to work on the basic or translational aspects of neuroimmunology. Areas of interest include but are not limited to microbial pathogenesis in the nervous system, neural-immune signaling, gut-brain axis, and overall neuroinflammation. For more details click here

Faculty Position-Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center
Applications are invited for several faculty positions within the Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology at the Assistant and Associate Professor levels. Seeking individuals with a record of scientific accomplishment studying the biochemical mechanisms of neurodegeneration, aging, metabolic regulation or structural biology. Minimum qualifications are a PhD, MD, or equivalent degree and several years of productive postdoctoral research. For more details click here

Assistant Professor Biomedical Research-Michigan State University
The Institute for Quantitative Health Science and Engineering (IQ) and the College of Human Medicine at Michigan State University invites applications for tenure-system faculty positions in the area of biomedical research. Candidates must have earned a PhD. in Biomedical Engineering, Chemistry, Biology, Biomedicine or related fields, with expertise in developmental and stem cell biology. The position will be filled at Assistant, Associate, or Full Professor level depending on the qualifications and record of the successful candidate. For more details click here

Scientist-Immune Tolerance, Pfizer, Cambridge
The Immune Tolerance group within the Pfizer Inflammation and Immunology Research Unit is seeking a Scientist level candidate to assist in developing the next generation of curative treatments for autoimmune indications such as rheumatoid arthritis and inflammatory bowel disease. Experience with regulatory T cells assays or experience with differentiation of human monocyte derived antigen presenting cells (macrophages and dendritic cells) is highly desirable. For more details click here
Congratulations to Dr. Benjamin Krishna from the O’Connor lab in the Genomic Medicine Institute!


Congratulations to Dr. Dhanachandra Khuraijam From the Karnik lab in the Department of Cardiovascular and Metabolic Sciences!

Dr. Khuraijam published an original article titled “Mechanism of hormone peptide activation of a GPCR: Angiotensin II activated state of AT1R initiated by van der Waals attraction” in Journal of Chemical Information and Modeling January 2019. For more details, click here.

Congratulations to Dr. Quang Tam Nguyen from the Min lab in the Department of Inflammation and Immunity!

Dr. Nguyen was selected to give a talk at the 2018 meeting of the American Association of Immunologists in Austin, Texas. He won the AAI trainee abstract award. His talk was titled “IL-27 controls allergic airway inflammation via Foxp3+ regulatory T cells.”

Also, Dr. Nguyen published an original article titled “IL-27 targets Foxp3+ Tregs to mediate anti-inflammatory functions during experimental allergic airway inflammation” in Journal of Clinical Investigation Insight January 2019. For more details, click here.
Seeking talented writers

Interested in writing an article for the LPDA newsletter?

We invite our fellow postdocs and research associates to send us your non-scientific articles of interest to our readers to be featured in our monthly newsletter.

Topics could range from a travel article to a write-up on ‘Things to do in Cleveland’. Be creative! Please include photos (preferably taken by you).

*Please note that all articles and photos are moderated and submission does not implicate automatic publishing in the newsletter.

Thanks!
The LPDA Communications Team

Please submit your articles to the LPDA at lri-postdoc-assoc@ccf.org.
GET INVOLVED!

Did you publish a paper recently or receive a grant or award? We want to highlight your accomplishments in the next newsletter! As part of the LPDA, we strive to improve this organization to its maximum potential. To do so, we will need the participation and input of all postdoctoral fellows and research associates. If you would like to be involved with our events or have any suggestions or accomplishments we can highlight, please email lri-postdoc-assoc@ccf.org.