Happy Graduate Student Appreciation Week!

With the weather warming up, don't forget to take some time to enjoy the extra daylight. Some considerations on activities to do include hiking, trying new food, or even just pausing for some relaxation (like the red pandas in the photo!)

![Red Pandas at Cleveland Metroparks Zoo](Photo taken by an LTA member)

For the month of April, we feature alumnus Dr. Brian Yard, fellow postdoc Dr. Lucas Osborn from the J. Mark Brown and Jan Claesen Labs, graduate student Edward Carson from the George Muschler Lab, and members of the LTA Mentorship and Advocacy Committee. We also recap the previous LEADERS session titled "From LRI Trainee to Training University Students".

This month, don't miss out on the next LEADERS session on April 11th featuring panelists talking about their transition to high school educators or the Science Communications Track seminar on how to make an effective poster on April 26th. Finally, the LTA hopes that all of our PhD student colleagues had a Happy Graduate Student Appreciation Week!

Cheers.
Your LTA Communications Committee
Volunteer Opportunity: Together We Rise Modcast

The Lerner Trainee Association (LTA) has a partnership with the Cuyahoga County Division of Children and Family Services (CCDCFS). As an extension of our collaboration with CCDCFS, we recently partnered with the Pratt Center at Cleveland State University to launch the **Together We Rise Modcast**. This initiative focuses on enriching the scientific education of students from underrepresented backgrounds with lived foster care experience to inspire them to pursue STEM-related careers. A “modcast” is a short audio program and hybrid between a podcast and unscripted monologue.

Through the **Together We Rise Modcast** initiative we will provide a forum for foster youths to engage with CSU and LRI trainees monthly to discuss the experiences of their STEM-related careers. We aim to help young students to think about careers in science and to inspire them to pursue post-secondary options while increasing interest in STEM-related careers. The program will include a monthly mock discussion panel, sessions on skills such as financial literacy and time management, and mentoring. You do not have to be an expert in the topics that will be covered to be involved.

**Volunteer opportunities include speaking with foster youth as a panelist during the monthly Together We Rise Modcast sessions. If you are interested in participating as a panelist, please contact Iris Nira Smith at smithi4@ccf.org.**

Scholars in the CSU Pratt Center's [Sullivan-Deckard Scholarship Opportunity Program](#). The program provides an opportunity for youth who are aging out of foster care to pursue an undergraduate degree.
The Science Communications Track will consist of live seminars and asynchronous activities designed to introduce you to the various careers and related skills in the science communications field. Trainees (postdoctoral fellows, research scholars, predoctoral fellows and graduate students) can complete a combination of activities to earn a certificate that will be awarded at the end of the year. Additional optional resources have also been compiled to enrich your learning. The Science Communications Track Packet includes details about the certificate requirements, the full seminar schedule, and extra resources. The packet will be updated periodically with additional resources that our speakers share during sessions as well as with the links to the seminar recordings.
Meet our Alumni
Interview with Lerner Alumnus
Brian Yard, PhD
"Always make some time for yourself and your family; being productive with your time is just as important as working hard, enjoy life!"

Where did you obtain your PhD?
I did my PhD at the University of South Carolina in the College of Pharmacy.

When did you work in Lerner and in which lab?
What positions did you hold?
I joined Lerner in the summer of 2011 as a postdoc in what used to be the Department of Molecular Genetics in the lab of Dr. Kurt Runge. In 2013, I joined the Taussig Cancer Center and THOR department with Dr. Mohamed Abazeed, who has since moved to Northwestern University. I also spent time on the heart transplant research tissue procurement team under Dr. Christine Moravec.

What did you work on at Lerner?
I was focused on pioneering the field of precision radiotherapy, essentially trying to uncover and verify biomarkers that could predict how tumors would respond to radiation treatment. Ideally, some of these biomarkers would be actionable in a way that tumors could be sensitized to radiation treatments.

What successes did you have at Lerner?
I have some great publications and gave several talks at national meetings like AACR and ASTRO during my tenure, but I’m most proud of being the first member of Lerner to receive a CCF Caregiver Catalyst Award. It was the first grant I successfully applied for on my own and the supporting research was a total team effort.

What is your current position title and where are you now?
I recently started a new position with Frontage Laboratories in Concord, Ohio. I actually just moved back to Cleveland after spending a couple years working for an oncology R&D company out of state. I’m excited to be back home in Ohio, just not so excited that we moved back right before the Cleveland winter hit!

What does your role in your current position entail and what is your favorite part?
My favorite part about my current position is that I finally get to apply a lot of what I learned as a graduate student studying pharmacy to what I’m doing in the lab. Everything seems to have come full circle for me.

What about your time at the Lerner do you think prepared you for this position?
I was lucky enough to work with an interdisciplinary team of scientists, clinicians, chemists, and even bioinformaticians. I apply what I learned from my colleagues at Lerner on almost a daily basis.

Is there something you particularly miss from your time at Lerner?
I miss the people. Lerner is a wonderful place to network and meet new acquaintances. Years from now, you may need advice on a particular topic, and you’ll remember a colleague from down the hall that’s an expert in the field.

In one sentence, what advice would you give current Lerner postdocs and grad students?
Always make some time for yourself and your family; being productive with your time is just as important as working hard, enjoy life!
Meet your Fellow
Lucas Osborn, PhD

Dr. Lucas Osborn is a current postdoctoral fellow in the labs of Dr. J. Mark Brown and Dr. Jan Claesen, first joining their labs as a graduate student in 2018. He earned his Bachelor of Science in biomedical laboratory science from Lyman Briggs College of Michigan State University.

He received his PhD from the Molecular Medicine Program at Lerner College of Medicine and Case Western Reserve University. His graduate research investigated the interface between diet, gut microbes, and cardiometabolic disease.

He specifically sought to identify gut-microbe derived metabolites capable of modulating host physiology, both in beneficial and pathogenic contexts. Through this work, he identified a single microbial metabolite derived from dietary flavonoids that was capable of attenuating hepatic steatosis induced by a high-fat diet via the activation of AMP-activated protein kinase α signaling. This body of work is currently under review at the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.

After this graduate work, he has continued working with Dr. Brown and Dr. Claesen in a postdoctoral fellowship to further his training in nutrition, metabolism and molecular microbiology.

His current postdoctoral work focuses on extending his graduate research with the addition of a project utilizing his experience in microbial metabolites to probe for their potential role in glioblastoma. He is also working with the Gnotobiotic and Rodent Behavior Cores to conduct a series of key experiments in several grants and manuscripts that aim to push the boundaries of what is possible in gnotobiotic research.

This gnotobiotic work has recently led Dr. Osborn to co-first author an eLife publication titled “Gut microbe-targeted choline trimethylamine lysate inhibition improved obesity via rewiring of host circadian rhythms”.

Outside of his time in the laboratory, Dr. Osborn enjoys spending his time with his wife and their pets, which include two cats, two dogs and two chickens. On a sunny Cleveland day, you can also find him on two wheels either on the track or on the trails.

“The expertise of my co-mentors fosters an extremely rich training environment!”
-Dr. Osborn
Edward Carson is a third-year graduate student, pursuing his PhD in the George Muschler Lab. Originally from Oak Brook, Illinois, Edward received his undergraduate degree from Case Western Reserve University in biomedical engineering. While there, he was a member of the social fraternity Phi Kappa Psi, eventually serving as the President of the CWRU Chapter and as an Associate Justice overseeing all Greek organizations on campus. Additionally, he was also a certified Emergency Medical Technician and served as a volunteer for the campus ambulance service.

Edward chose to pursue his PhD at CWRU, working for the Muschler Lab where he also conducted his undergraduate research. As an undergrad, his research focused on both 2D and 3D image analysis of progenitor and stem cell populations. In graduate school, his thesis project has focused on identifying the components of the secretome and extracellular vesicles produced by Mesenchymal Stromal Cells cultured from patient samples in order to better understand their immunomodulatory effects for tissue regeneration. He hopes to leverage these findings as a way to develop more repeatable and reproducible tools and therapeutics to improve tissue regeneration.

Outside of the lab, he has continued to pursue extracurricular activities, serving as the President of the CWRU Biomedical Engineering Graduate Student Association, serving on the LRI Graduate Student Steering Committee for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, participating in the CWRU 3 Minute Thesis competition, and helping to organize the annual winter clothing drive at both the LRI and CWRU for students at the local Bolton Elementary School. In his limited free time, Edward organizes social events with the CWRU Graduate Student Association, as well as hosting events with his friends.

Edward was the recipient of the Case School of Engineering Swanger Graduate Fellowship award in 2019. Additionally, he received the Caregiver Celebrations Excellence award for his efforts in organizing the winter clothing drive.

“I’ve learned how important it is to connect with those we are trying to help and recognize the tangible impact of our work. I also hope that as BME GSA President, I can continue to foster collaboration between grad students in different fields across the LRI and CWRU and ensure they have good experiences during their time here.”

- Edward Carson
Meet your Lerner Trainee Association Leaders

This month, meet members of your LTA Mentorship and Advocacy Committee. They work to advocate for trainees by addressing trainee concerns to appropriate channels and providing opportunities for trainees to be mentors as well as to gain mentors of their own.

Feel free to reach out to current members or RETC@ccf.org to discuss their research and/or learn more about what their committee does!

Dr. Jia Liu
postdoc in Dr. Ela Plow's Lab
Biomedical Engineering

Research Overview: I am studying the effect of brain stimulation paired with conventional rehabilitation on upper limb functional enhancement in SCI.

I joined the committee to gain more professional involvement in mentorship, leadership, and academic advocacy

Dr. Akhil Mohan
postdoc in Dr. Ela Plow's Lab
Biomedical Engineering

Research Overview: I am studying the effectiveness of Contralaterally Controlled Functional Electrical Stimulation (CCFES) combined with repetitive Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation (rTMS) in chronic stroke survivors with severe upper limb impairment and injury.

I joined the committee to hear, meet, and connect with a diverse group peers and mentors
Meet your Lerner Trainee Association Leaders

Dr. Christina K. Cajigas-Du Ross
postdoc in Dr. Laura Nagy Lab
Inflammation and Immunity

**Research Overview:** I am understanding the role of dsRNA-induced IRF3 activation (a viral innate immune response mechanism) in fibrotic liver injury, including its role in modulating innate immune cell populations and hepatic stellate cell activation to develop more effective treatments for Alcohol-associated liver diseases (ALD) like hepatic fibrosis.

"I joined the committee to gain more professional involvement in mentorship, leadership, and academic advocacy"

Morgan McGrath
MD/PhD Candidate in Dr. Jay Alberts Lab
Biomedical Engineering

**Research Overview:** I am developing and validating a virtual reality assessment paradigm to evaluate instrumental activities of daily living in neurological populations.

"I joined the committee to get more involved in the trainee community at CCF and contribute to interesting seminars and events that promote positive mentorship strategies"
Upcoming Events

LEADERS 2022 Seminar Series

LERNER EXPERIENCE IN ADVANCED DEVELOPMENT
OF EDUCATION AND RESEARCH SKILLS

From LRI Trainee to High School Educator

WHO:
- Crystal Miller, PhD
  Director of Fellowship in Science Research and Engineering (SERP), Research Seminar Teacher, Hathaway Brown School
- Mary Ruehr, PhD
  Science Teacher (Grades 9-12), Stow Munroe Falls High School

WHEN:
April 11, 2022, 4:00 - 5:00 PM

WHERE:
Zoom (Contact RETC@ccf.org for link)
Upcoming Events

Session 2

“Communicate Your Research Through Effective Poster Design”

Laura Greenwald, MBA, MEd
Communications Manager, Education Institute; Clinical Associate Professor of Medicine, Cleveland Clinic Lerner College of Medicine of Case Western Reserve University

Amy Moore, MEd
Staff Editor, Cleveland Clinic Journal of Medicine & Manager, Medical Writing Education Program, Education Institute

Please pre-register to receive the Zoom link information:

Earn a Science Communications Track Certificate

The Science Communications Track will consist of live seminars and asynchronous activities throughout 2022 designed to introduce you to the various careers and related skills in this field. To earn a certificate at the end of the year, trainees must earn 70 points. For more details, please refer to the track packet.
Upcoming Events

Upcoming NIH Office of Intramural Training & Education Events

**CAREERS IN THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT: OPTIONS AND APPLYING**
*Speaker(s): Lori Conlan, PhD, Director, Office of Postdoctoral Services*
April 19, 2022, 3:30 – 4:30 PM
Virtual – register [here](#)

In this "How to" workshop, we will examine career options for biomedical scientists in the federal government. We will also cover navigating USAjobs.gov, creating your resume, and how to be successful at getting a job at the NIH or other agencies within the United States Federal Government.

**BUILDING BELONGING IN A TIME OF OTHERING**
April 22, 2022, 12 – 3 PM
Virtual – register [here](#)

This 3-hour, online, interactive workshop will examine the phenomenon of “othering,” which occurs across race, ethnicity, immigrant status, religion, sex and gender, sexual orientation, disability, age and socioeconomic status. Please note that this part of a diversity and inclusion seminar series being hosted by the NIH OITE. More information about the series can be found [here](#).

**CAREERS IN PROJECT MANAGEMENT**
April 27, 2022, 11 AM – 12 PM
Virtual – register [here](#)

Project Managers use a variety of skills, tools, and techniques to ensure that a given scientific endeavor is well-designed, on time, and prepared for obstacles. This involves developing the project strategy; optimizing the project in terms of time, cost, value and risk; monitoring the execution of project tasks; and evaluating the project after its completion. Throughout this process, Project Managers provide a structured approach to making the everyday decisions that keep a scientific business running and guide a project from inception to successful completion.

**15TH ANNUAL NIH CAREER SYMPOSIUM- AN ONLINE EVENT**
May 11 – 13, 2022
Virtual – register [here](#) for free

The NIH Career Symposium highlights the diversity of career choices available to your generation of biomedical researchers. Whether you are a new graduate student, postdoc, or clinical fellow just beginning to consider career options or a senior student/fellow ready to look for a job, the NIH Career Symposium is for you. Wondering what the Career Symposium is all about? [View the 2020 Virtual Career Symposium YouTube playlist](#).
Recent Events

Highlights from the LEADERS seminar – From LRI Trainee to Training University Students

-William (BJ) Massey

Did you miss the virtual LEADERS seminar ‘From LRI Trainee to Training University Students’ moderated by the LTA’s Dr. Christina Du Ross? Here is the recap! Find the recording here.

On March 14th, three LRI alumni joined us via Zoom to discuss their career journeys from the LRI to their various positions in which they support the training of university students. Our three panelists were:

Dr. Barsanjit Mazumder was a postdoctoral fellow in the lab of Dr. Paul Fox and is currently a professor of molecular genetics at Cleveland State University (CSU).

Dr. Ángel L. Reyes-Rodríguez was a postdoctoral fellow in the neuroscience department, contributed heavily to the LPDA (now the LTA), and is currently the Director of the McNair Scholars Program at CSU.

Dr. Monique Ogletree was a postdoctoral fellow in the lab of Dr. Christine Moravec and is now an instructional associate professor at the University of Houston.

What is something you wish that you had become more proficient at earlier on (knowing now what your career path would be)?

Dr. Ogletree: I wished that I had more experience with “politics” and how to go about promoting myself and working together on a team with people with different goals.

Dr. Mazumder: As a current PI, I wish I had been more deliberate about developing and promoting my independent thought process because being a scientist with an independent research group requires being able to follow novel lines of investigation.

Dr. Reyes-Rodríguez: I learned many of the non-science skills needed for my current position in helping undergraduates obtain research experience needed to go to graduate school; however, I wish that I had started this process earlier.

What has helped you develop your mentoring style?

All: The overarching themes of the responses to this question were that one’s mentoring style is commonly learned from one’s previous mentors and that in mentoring students the mentor should be empathetic to the mentee’s different abilities and needs. They also emphasized that listening to the mentee regarding their specific needs and expectations is important.

What are some important considerations when building CVs for positions like those that you all hold?

Dr. Ogletree: As someone with a teaching-heavy position, you should make a conscious effort to get teaching experience and make sure that it is communicated effectively on your CV. I also recommend that in the teaching area, it is important to note the differences between lecturing occasionally and being a course director that is responsible for teaching, grading, and dealing with student or administrative issues that arise.

Dr. Reyes-Rodríguez: I advocate using a hybrid CV-resume that highlights experiences relevant to the job and excludes achievements more relevant to academia such as presentations. I also think that the cover letter is essential to connect the dots of what is in your CV to put forth your ability to do the job for which you are applying.

https://www.science.org/doi/10.1126/science.361.6401.522
Now Hiring

Postdoctoral Position in Cancer Therapeutics | Yale University | New Haven, CT
The Sheltzer Lab at Yale University is seeking postdoctoral researchers for a funded project researching and developing anti-cancer therapeutic strategies. Our laboratory is applying a combination of techniques, including CRISPR screens, targeted mutagenesis, live-cell microscopy, and molecular pharmacology, to study cancer drugs. We have recently discovered the first selective inhibitor of the key cancer-driving kinase CDK11, and we are investigating the effects of ablating this enzyme in normal cells and in growing tumors. We have discovered roles for CDK11 in transcription, cell division, and splicing, and we are seeking to gain a molecular understanding of its various cellular functions. Additionally, we are uncovering and characterizing genomic biomarkers that confer increased sensitivity to CDK11 inhibition. Finally, we are interested in determining the consequences of combining CDK11 inhibition with other therapeutic approaches, including PARP inhibitors and immune checkpoint inhibitors. These findings will contribute to the development of CDK11 inhibitors as a novel therapeutic strategy in cancer. Candidates who are interested in applying to this position should send a CV and cover letter to Dr. Sheltzer at Jason.Sheltzer@yale.edu.

Program Officer, Open Science Strategy | Howard Hughes Medical Institute | Chevy Chase, MD
In this critical role, you will help us build a healthier academic ecosystem by leveraging your knowledge and genuine interest in promoting better science communications. By establishing relationships throughout our science community, you will have your finger on the pulse of what is needed to advance HHMI’s open science initiatives and will help develop programs for scientists to engage in new publishing strategies. Your strong analytical, communications, and interpersonal skills will be used daily to collaborate effectively with a wide array of internal and external partners. For more information click here.

Associate Research Scientist, Life Science and Medicine | Northeastern University | Portland, ME
Northeastern University invites applications for one or more Research Scientist positions in the fields of Computational Medicine and Biomedical Data Science, located at The Roux Institute at Northeastern University, in Portland, Maine. As an independent contributor to the Life Science and Medicine Research mission, the Research Scientist will be responsible for contributing to research programs in data-driven approaches for diagnosing and treating disease, and for predicting treatment outcomes. These efforts will be coordinated under the umbrella of Life Science and Medicine Research, a research vertical led by incoming Director Raimond Winslow. Besides the faculty title of “Research Scientist”, the successful candidate will be named as an “Institute Member” at the Roux Institute. For more information click here.

Scientist, Protein Biochemistry | Elevian | Newton, MA
Elevian is seeking a dedicated, innovative, and motivated scientist with extensive hands-on experience in protein expression in mammalian and/or in other systems, protein purification, and protein characterization including the development and execution of cellular, biochemical, and biophysical assays. The successful candidate will be an important member of Elevian’s R&D team and contribute to the discovery and development of recombinant protein and antibody therapeutics for stroke and other degenerative diseases. For more information click here.
Congratulations to Dr. Nannan Gao from the Fariba Rezaee Lab in the department of Inflammation and Immunity!
Dr. Gao received an Abstract Scholarship from the American Thoracic Society (ATS). The scholarship includes a full in-training registration for the 2022 ATS International Conference (May 2022, San Francisco).

Congratulations to Dr. Adam Lauko from the Justin Lathia Lab in the department of Cardiovascular and Metabolic Sciences!
Dr. Lauko successfully defended his dissertation titled, “SerpinB3 Drives Cancer Stem Cell Survival in Glioblastoma.” This work is under review for publication.

Congratulations to Dr. Susana Lechuga from the Andrei Ivanov Lab in the department of Inflammation and Immunity!
Dr. Lechuga was selected to give a talk at the Experimental Biology 2022 annual meeting in Philadelphia, PA. The title of the talk was “Myosin chaperone, UNC-45A, is a novel regulator of intestinal epithelial barrier integrity and repair”.
Dr. Lechuga also published her work “A myosin chaperone, UNC-45A, is a novel regulator of intestinal epithelial barrier integrity and repair” in The FASEB Journal. Click here.

Congratulations to Dr. Noah Daniels from the Richard Padgett Lab in the department of Cardiovascular and Metabolic Sciences!
Dr. Daniels successfully defended his dissertation titled, “Functional Analyses of Human DDX41 and LUC7-like Proteins in Splicing Regulation and Myeloid Neoplasms”. This work has been published in Cell Reports. Click here.
Wellness Resources

Well-Being, Self-Care and Emotional Support for Caregivers

Please note: A connection to the Cleveland Clinic network is required to access many of these resources.

For a more detailed and complete list of resources, please visit this link.

Caregiver Experience Wellness Portal: disconnect, unwind or say thank you virtually

Caring for Caregivers: confidential services that preserve, restore and enhance wellbeing of our caregivers. Available at 1-800-989-8820 (including new Boost telephone appointment).

Cleveland Clinic Office of Caregiver Experience on Facebook and Instagram.

Connect Today/Learner Connect: resiliency resources to help you manage complex, changing times (virtual meetings, change and stress management, and communication)

Occupational Health: If you have further questions about COVID-19 please contact the COVID-19 Caregiver Hotline at 216-445-8246.

OneClick to Well-Being: well-being information and resources for staff

Spiritual Care and Healing Services: information for the religious and spiritual needs of CCF patients, their families and loved ones, and Cleveland Clinic caregivers. (216) 444-2518

CCPD Victim Advocacy: resource to help educate and support the CCF community on domestic violence. Email the committee at: dvcommittee@ccf.org

Join in on live virtual Yoga, Mediation, Fitness and Culinary Medicine sessions. These are available for free to all caregivers. All sessions will be held via the Webex platform, registration is required at: http://clevelandclinic.org/CILMevents

**Graduate Students are welcome to join!
Behind the Scenes

This newsletter is written by the communications teams of the Lerner Trainee Association Leadership Council and fellow trainees. We welcome your questions and suggestions!

Email LRTTraineeAssoc@ccf.org to connect with us.

LTA Communications Team
Kelsey Bohn, PhD, Alan Chen, Kaitlyn Daff, William (BJ) Massey, Anthony Santilli, PhD, and Juan Venegas, MD

Lerner Trainee Association Leadership Council

Executive Board
Co-Presidents:, Kelly Mitchell and Shilpa Rao
Coordinator: Priya Putta
Treasurer: position open!

Career Development and Resources
Co-Chairs: Christina Cajigas-Du Ross, Adya Sapra, Ki-Soo Jeong
Members: Sumit Bhutada, Ian Houlihan, and Priya Putta

Mentorship/Advocacy
Co-Chairs: Raneem Khedraki, Jia Liu, Morgan McGrath, Akhil Mohan
Members: Christina Cajigas-Du Ross, Juan Venegas, Jie Yang, Madeline Newcomb

Communications
Co-Chairs: Juan Venegas and Alan Chen
Members: Kelsey Bohn, Kaitlyn Daff, William (BJ) Massey, and Anthony Santilli

Social/Outreach
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