January Newsletter

Happy 2019 everyone! We hope the new year brings you health and success - and lots of papers.

This month we feature our alumna Dr. Elizabeth Berezovsky, our fellow Dr. Jacqueline Ward and a few members of the LPDA Communication subcommittee. For those of you who couldn’t make it, we have included a recap of the last RETC-hosted LEADERS seminar about starting a lab.

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!
LPDA Executive Board
Co-Presidents: Defne Bayik and Timothy Mead
Secretary: Nneha Sakre  Treasurer: Madhav Sankunny

Subcommittees

Career Development and Resources
Chair: Elizabeth Sweeny
Members: Christina Cajigas-Du Ross, Sromona Mukherjee, 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)

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

Mentorship/Advocacy
Chair: Iris Smith
Members: Elise Bara, Defne Bayik, Sudipta Biswas, Christina Cajigas-Du Ross, Emily Esakov, Vivek Narayan, Ángel Reyes-Rodriguez, 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

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
Dear Lerner Postdocs,

I am happy to be stepping into my new role as the Manager of Postdoctoral Training and Programs in the Research Education and Training Center (RETC). As many of you know, I previously held a postdoctoral research fellow position in Dr. Nima Sharifi’s lab in the department of Cancer Biology, working on androgen metabolism in castration resistant prostate cancer. It was a challenging decision to leave my postdoctoral position because I knew I would miss the bench and hands-on research. Ultimately, however, this is the direction I want my career to take and am thankful that I get to remain connected to the impressive research being conducted at Lerner. Career choices are not easy for most of us and helping postdocs transition into the right career is one of the reasons I am looking forward to serving in this position.

As a postdoc, I also served on the Lerner Postdoctoral Association (LPDA) Leadership Council and Executive Board, as well as on the Lerner Diversity Council. I am excited to bring my experience into my RETC position and look forward to getting to know more of you. I will continue to work with the LPDA communications committee to bring you our monthly newsletter and plan to add a new recurring section that recaps informational webinars held by the National Postdoc Association. Next month, we’ll visit the topic of “managing imposter syndrome”. One of my favorite parts of the newsletter is recognizing your accomplishments. Please continue sending them in to the LPDA communications committee! Suggestions for the newsletter are also welcomed and we love to hear your feedback.

As I begin my new role, I hope to contribute to the hard work RETC offers the Lerner postdoc community. I will continue to support the LPDA by providing postdoctoral programming that aids in your career and soft skill development. I’m proud of the research you all do here and want you to know that the entire RETC office is here to support you. I’m looking forward to the new opportunities we will create throughout this year.

Wishing you a Happy New Year,

Kelsey Bohn, PhD

Manager, Postdoctoral Training and Programs
Research Education and Training Center
Lerner Research Institute, Cleveland Clinic
bohnk@ccf.org
In which lab were you a Postdoc? How long ago?
I worked in Dr. Kurt Runge’s lab from 2010 to 2015.

What did you work on at Lerner?
My main focus at Lerner was studying the relationship between cellular stress and aging using *Saccharomyces cerevisiae* as a model system.

Where are you now, and what do you work on?
I am the Director of Technical Operations at BioMotiv, a pharmaceutical accelerator with the mission of translating breakthrough discoveries made at research institutions into medicines. I oversee R&D operations for our portfolio of drug development programs.

How did your time at LRI prepare you for your current role?
Working in Kurt’s lab, I had exposure to many different aspects of fundamental biology and learned a wide range of genetic, biochemical, and cell biological techniques. My current role requires me to review data for projects in a variety of therapeutic areas and also evaluate new technologies for drug discovery and development. The diverse training that I received at LRI has been invaluable in my current position, and I am thankful for it.

Is there something you particularly miss from your time at LRI?
Now that I am out of the lab, I miss the hands-on aspect of performing basic research. Also, convenient access to seminars from LRI colleagues, staff and invited guests.

How was the transition to your current role?
It was a fairly smooth transition. Starting out, there were many aspects of drug development that I was ignorant of. I have learned a lot in the past few years, and continue to learn.

What is your favorite part of your current job?
I am lucky to work alongside colleagues who are deeply motivated by the goal of creating life-changing and life-saving medicines. This aspect makes it exciting to come to work each day.

In one sentence, what advice would you give current LRI postdocs?
Learn as much as you can from your postdoc experience, and keep an open mind about where you might end up.
MEET YOUR FELLOW

Dr. Jacqueline Ward, who received an honorable mention at the annual graduate medical education awards for her paper published in *PLoS Genetics*, is from Ravenna, a small town southeast of Cleveland. She completed her undergraduate and master’s degrees from John Carroll University and attended Cleveland State University for her PhD, doing her research at the LRI on GPCR-activated miRNA expression. After completing her PhD, Dr. Ward joined Dr. Michelle Longworth’s lab, and started to work with human cells and tissues (having previously worked with *Drosophila*). Dr. Ward saw the opportunity to branch out, not only learning a lot from Dr Longworth’s line of work, but also using her knowledge of gene regulation and applying it to a new area of research.

When not in the lab, Dr Ward enjoys spending time outdoors with her husband, daughter and their families. She’s expecting another child this year “so life is about to get even more fun!”

“I’m expecting another child this year, so life is about to get even more fun!”

-Dr. Ward
Dr. Benjamin Krishna is from Hertfordshire, north of London. His big claim to fame is that it’s where Pride and Prejudice was set. He completed his undergraduate degree in biochemistry at the University of Oxford and then switched to Cambridge for a PhD in infection and immunity. He currently works on Human Cytomegalovirus (HCMV) in Dr. Christine O’Connor’s lab. HCMV is a common virus that is a major threat to immunocompromised patients. He specifically works on HCMV latency, a type of infection where the virus remains in the cell but doesn’t replicate. He was close to finishing his PhD and looking for postdoctoral opportunities in the USA working with HCMV. Dr. O’Connor was starting an HCMV lab at Lerner and looking for a postdoc. To make things even better, Dr. O’Connor has worked mostly with HCMV-encoded GPCRs, which was the focus of his PhD. It was a perfect match! He likes cooking. He used to focus mostly on curries, as that’s what his dad makes but he’s now started baking, roasting, risottos and stir-fries!

“Cleveland Clinic offered a research environment which matched with my research interest perfectly”
-Dr. Krishna

Dr. Xiaoguang Fang is from Jingdezhen, Jiangxi, China. He received his bachelor’s degree at Jiangxi Normal University, Nanchang, China and his PhD degree at Xiamen University, Xiamen, China. He is working as a postdoctoral research fellow in Dr. Shideng Bao’ lab in Cancer Biology. He is working on the cancer stem cells (CSCs) that are believed to be the root of many cancers. Dr. Fang is training at Lerner because Cleveland Clinic is ranked the second best hospital in the United States and provides a great academic atmosphere and service to researchers. He likes to play basketball when he is not working in the lab.

“Cleveland Clinic ranks 2nd best hospital in the USA and is a great place for research”
-Dr. Fang

Dr. Isha Kapoor is from India. She earned her master’s degree in biochemistry from Patna University, Patna, Bihar, India and PhD in acute myeloid leukemia from CSIR-Central Drug Research Institute, Lucknow, India. Currently, she is working in Dr. Almasan’s lab in Cancer Biology. Her work primarily focuses on understanding how critical therapeutics work and why they fail to work in patients with chronic lymphocytic leukemia. Specifically, she is examining resistance mechanisms of inhibitors to the BCL-2 family proteins that are the key determinants of apoptosis. Her research experience at Cleveland Clinic is highly rewarding. She is also conscious of the outstanding research being pursued by various groups at Cleveland Clinic. The pursuit of knowledge and learning is the absolute goal of her life. Cleveland Clinic’s unique commitment to foster intellectual excellence is remarkable and attractive for her future pursuits. When she is not working, she loves hanging out with her family and playing with her 6-month old baby. Also, she enjoys cooking.

“The pursuit of knowledge and learning is the absolute goal of my life”
-Dr. Kapoor
UPCOMING EVENTS

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

MARK YOUR CALENDARS for the LEADERS sessions of the month!

**February 11th**  
Sarah Kostiha Smith and Dr. Kelsey Bohn, Program Managers, Research Education and Training Center, LRI  
"Everything You Need to Know About Trainee Resources at Lerner"  
3:00 - 4:00 PM in NE1-205

**February 25th**  
Dr. Christine Moravec, Director, Research Education and Training Center, LRI  
"Career Goals"  
3:00 - 4:00 PM in NE1-205

These sessions are organized by RETC. Please be reminded that those who attend all sessions will receive a certificate of completion.

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The Lerner Postdoctoral Association  
Social Event

2nd Annual New Year's Kick Off  
Bingo is back!

Play bingo and win prizes (fleece jackets for winners)  
Pizza, cake and salad will be served.

Thursday, January 24th  
NE1-205  
5:00 - 6:30 PM

*This event is only for the trainees (grad students, postdocs and research associates). Please have your ID ready for verification at the door.*
RECENT EVENTS

Hope for the Holidays Toy Drive

The LPDA and LGSA hosted a toy drive to aid the Cuyahoga County Division of Children and Family Services. Toys for 3,812 foster kids (ages- newborn to 11 years) were collected November 7th through December 10th in designated boxes throughout LRI. This event was overseen by the Social/Outreach and Mentorship/Advocacy subcommittees. The LPDA extends a big thanks to all those who generously donated to this cause. You have made a real difference in the lives of these kids during the holidays!
RECENT EVENTS

RETC holiday party

The Research Education and Training Center (RETC) organized a spectacular holiday party for the LRI trainees on December 19, 2018. The Lerner Commons was festively decorated to reflect the holiday spirit. Trainees celebrated the end of the year engaging in lively conversation, playing games and enjoying the delicious food and drinks that were served.
LEADERS Seminar: Starting a Lab
With Drs. Sara Bass-Schumacher, Christopher Hine, and Jessica Williams

This was the final LEADERS seminar for the year and postdocs who have attended most of the LEADERS series will receive a certificate. The next session will include some previous topics and some new topics and the schedule will be shared very soon.

Before starting a lab, you must first obtain a faculty position. You should spend time thinking about what type of position most interests you. Do you like teaching? Do you want a career more focused on research? During your postdoc, you should supplement your time spent in the lab training students or teaching undergraduate courses if you intend to apply for positions with teaching expectations. If you intend to work in more of a research position, you should try to get independent funding and publish high-impact papers.

Establish what you want to do during your postdoc training. Network at conferences and search job advertisements for open positions. It is best to “strike while the iron is hot” when applying for jobs. If you’ve just secured your own funding or published a high-impact article, start applying for jobs. Be sure to shop around when job searching and identify the strengths and weaknesses of each position. Dr. Williams mentioned that the interview process is also your time to interview the institution. Identify friends and people who will support you.

The timeline of starting a lab is different for everyone, but in general, the first 6 months are consumed by paperwork (IACUC, IRB, IBC, etc.), ordering and hiring. Dr. Williams noted this as the “honeymoon phase” of starting a lab. While ordering new equipment and supplies, keep in mind where the money should be invested. Dr. Bass-Schumacher recommended keeping the standard lab procedures such as genotyping to the tried-and-true methods which are generally less expensive, while reserving funds for innovative experiments that may be more expensive. It is also a good idea to utilize the core facilities whenever possible or suggest shared resources to be purchased by the department. (continued on pg 11)
RECENT EVENTS

LEADERS Seminar: Starting a Lab
With Drs. Sara Bass-Schumacher, Christopher Hine and Jessica Williams

(continued from pg 10) Dr. Hine believes that hiring personnel is the best way to generate data, which can ultimately lead to more funding and publications- a worthy investment. Hiring personnel can be quite challenging as a new investigator. However, you should still be selective and wait for the right applicants. Dr. Williams advised that having an empty lab is better than making the wrong decision.

While starting a lab is an exciting time and the ultimate goal of many researchers, there are obstacles to overcome. Dr. Hine recommended to step out of your comfort zone and separate yourself from what you did as a postdoc. “On Friday you are a postdoc, and then on Monday you are a PI. Set yourself up as an independent investigator. Take two steps forward and one step to the left.” A lot of things change when you transition from a postdoc to a PI. Dr. Bass-Schumacher was surprised at the amount of junk mail she received, including predatory journals and conferences. “You should try to sort it out sooner rather than later. You don’t have enough hours in a day.”

Time management is so important when you run your own lab. Experiments must be conducted, grants must be written, papers must be prepared and students must be mentored. Dr. Bass-Schumacher offered advice on mentorship, “You have to think of your strengths and weaknesses as a mentor. Think about what works well for you and what works well for them.” Dr. Hine agreed, “You don’t want them to hate work. You want someone to enjoy coming to the lab.”

We were very fortunate to receive this advice from three successful, new investigators. This session outlined the events leading up to becoming an independent investigator and opened up a great discussion. They have also offered their contact information for additional questions.

Sara Bass-Schumacher: basss4@ccf.org Chris Hine: hinec@ccf.org Jessica Williams: williaj39@ccf.org
Assistant Professor (Cell Molecular Biology) Cleveland State University
The Department of Biological, Geological, and Environmental Sciences at Cleveland State University invites applications for a tenure-track, full-time Assistant Professor position beginning August 2019. Applicants must have a Ph.D. in biology or a related field, a minimum of 3 years of postdoctoral experience, a record of publications in peer-reviewed journals, and demonstrated potential for excellence in research and teaching. For more details click here

Postdoctoral Research Associate, Scripps Research Institute
Up to four postdoctoral positions are available in Dr. Jiang Zhu’s laboratory for highly motivated candidates who are interested in vaccine development for HIV-1, HCV, Ebola, Zika, Dengue, Flu, RSV, MERS-CoV, Lassa, and other important viral pathogens. Successful candidates will have a recent Ph.D. in microbiology, immunology, vaccinology, and structural biology. Prior research experience in mRNA/lipid formulation, structural biology, and animal study will be a plus. Candidates at both junior and senior levels are welcome to apply. For more details click here

Assistant Professor, Ohio State University Medical Center
Ohio State University Medical Center is currently recruiting a highly talented candidate for the position of Assistant Professor in the division of hematology within the department of Internal medicine. Doctoral degree in molecular biology, pharmacology, or related area required; extensive research experience (5 years minimum) required; prior track record of publications required; experience in signaling and methylation of experimental therapeutics desired. For more details click here

Assistant Professor of Biochemistry, Oklahoma State University
The Department of Biochemistry/Microbiology of Oklahoma State University Center for Health Sciences invites applications for a tenure-track faculty position at the Assistant Professor level. Position is for a full time, 12-month appointment in the division of Biomedical Sciences. Candidates must have a doctoral degree and should have knowledge of the fundamental concepts of eukaryote biochemistry, and expertise in nucleic acids, molecular biology of eukaryotes, and molecular neuroscience (preferred). For more details click here

Merck Research Laboratories Postdoctoral Fellow Programs
Merck Research laboratories (MRL) is currently recruiting postdoctoral fellows for a best industry experience for postdoctoral researchers, providing an academic focus in a commercial environment. For more details click here

Senior Scientist, Translational Oncology-AbbVie, Illinois, Lake County
AbbVie Oncology is seeking a highly motivated Senior Scientist to advance our oncology late-stage clinical pipeline and approved medicines through translational research. The Senior Scientist will work with a multi-disciplinary team on data analysis and experimental execution of different aspects of translational research. For more details click here

Scientist I, Molecular and Cellular Biology-Abbvie, Massachusetts, Worcester
Seeking a highly motivated and talented scientist with background in protein characterization and assay development to join the AbbVie Global Biologics organization to support AbbVie’s collaboration with the Calico Labs on aging and age-related diseases. For more details click here
Awards

Congratulations to Dr. Brian Yard from the Abazeed lab in the Department of Translational Hematology and Oncology Research!
Dr. Yard received a Cleveland Clinic annual fund grant as principal investigator. His grant was titled “Discovery of Gene Mutations that Govern Sensitivity to Radiation: Advancing Precision Radiotherapy”. The goal of the project is to uncover genetic variants that confer radiation resistance and to see if any of these variants can be therapeutically exploited to sensitize radioresistant tumors to treatment.

Congratulations to Dr. Debjit Khan from the Fox lab in the Department of Cardiovascular and Metabolic Sciences!
Dr. Khan received the American Heart Association postdoctoral fellowship as principal investigator. His grant was titled “Elucidation of mechanisms directing rear localization of mRNAs in migrating endothelial cells.” The goal of Dr. Khan’s project is to identify a novel system that establishes polarization of mRNAs that encode proteins critical for endothelial cell migration. This in turn will elucidate possible molecular therapeutic targets in binary RNA-protein and ternary RNA-protein-cytoskeleton interactions in vascular diseases.

Congratulations to Dr. Iyappan Ramachandiran from the Fox lab in the Department of Cardiovascular and Metabolic Sciences!
Dr. Ramachandiran received the American Heart Association postdoctoral fellowship as principal investigator. His grant was titled “iNOS-S100A8/A9 nitrosylase mediated S-nitrosylation of LTA4H and its pro-inflammatory influence of myeloid cells.”
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.