April ended on a sweet note as we celebrated LRI appreciation week with various activities. We hope you were able to participate in one or more events.

This month we have a career development seminar led by Dr. Christa Pawlowski on May 17 and a LEADERS seminar hosted by RETC and led by Dr. Amy Nowacki on May 20. Lerner alumnus Dr. Saurabh Chattopadhyay and our fellow postdoc Dr. Carlos Sanz-Garcia are featured this issue.

This month’s newsletter includes a recap of the recent LEADERS seminars and salient points from the National Postdoctoral Association annual meeting. Please check out our monthly featured article.

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

Subcommittees

Career Development and Resources
Chair: Elizabeth Sweeny
Members: Christina Cajigas-Du Ross, Vishal Nanavaty, Nneha Sakre, 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 Student Association (LGSA)

Mentorship/Advocacy
Chair: Iris Smith
Members: Elise Baron, Defne Bayik, 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, Ashley Nemes and Maksim Sinyuk
- 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, Lingjun Zhang and Yee Peng Phoon
- Social events
- Promote networking opportunities
- Community outreach
In which lab were you a postdoc? How long ago?
I started my postdoc in Dr. Indira Sen’s lab in the Department of Molecular Cardiology in 2002. After she retired in 2004, I continued my research in Dr. Ganes Sen’s lab in the Department of Molecular Genetics from 2005-2008.

What did you work on at Lerner?
My first project was studying the role of secreted Angiotensin Converting Enzyme in hypertension. My second project, which actually started as a side project, focused on the role of the interferon system in innate antiviral immunity. This project was very productive and became close to my heart.

Where are you now, and what do you work on?
I am currently at the University of Toledo College of Medicine and Life Sciences (in Toledo, Ohio) working as an assistant professor. My laboratory is currently focused on investigating cellular restriction mechanisms to control virus infection.

How did your time at Lerner prepare you for your current role?
My time at Lerner, particularly the exposure to a wide range of technical skills I received from working on several projects, prepared me for my current position. In addition to the technical skills, I benefited significantly from the rigorous lab meetings and fellow seminars, where I could exercise and polish my communication skills. At Lerner, we are highly trained to effectively communicate our science. In addition to my supervisor, I had several excellent mentors who played significant roles in shaping my research career.

Is there something you particularly miss from your time at Lerner?
I miss my mentors, friends, and the administrative and core staff members from Lerner, particularly those who may have worked behind the scenes but played significant roles in my success. I miss the ‘coffee time’ with my friends.

How was the transition to your current role?
The transition was very smooth, mainly because I could continue to collaborate with my mentors at LRI. These collaborations became important to establish a successful research program in my laboratory.

What is your favorite part of your current job?
The fun part of my current job is interacting with the students at various levels.

In one sentence, what advice would you give current Lerner postdocs?
In addition to the technical skills, it is crucial to be able to communicate your science effectively with a wide variety of audiences.
Dr. Carlos Sanz-Garcia, who recently published a paper in the *Journal of Hepatology*, is from Valencia, Spain. He earned his Bachelor’s Degree and PhD at the Instituto Investigaciones Biomedicas (IIBm) in Madrid. During his PhD, he studied the role of inflammation in liver diseases. He also did an internship with Dr. Laura Nagy, which was very successful. He decided to return to the Nagy lab for his postdoc. His project focuses on how interferon regulatory factor 3 contributes to the progression of alcoholic- and high fat diet-induced liver injury. Back in Valencia, he was part of a folk dance group, but in Cleveland he is more into sports, like dodgeball and volleyball.
UPCOMING EVENTS

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

Basic Statistical Methods Part 2

WHO: Amy Nowacki, PhD
Department of Quantitative Health Sciences, LRI

WHEN: May 20, 2019
3:00 - 4:00 pm

WHERE: NE1-205

Taking Care of Yourself

WHO: Jennifer Johnson, MBA, MSSA,
LISW-S
Occupational Health Department,
Caring for Caregivers, Cleveland Clinic

WHEN: June 10, 2019
3:00 - 4:00 pm

WHERE: NE1-205

Free Beginner Yoga on the Rooftop

May 20th 5:00 PM- 6:00 PM

Location  Cleveland Clinic’s rooftop terrace, 10th floor of J Building

Join fellow caregivers on the rooftop for free yoga. Bring your own mat, and learn the basic fundamentals of yoga, including poses, breath work, relaxation and meditation. No yoga experience necessary. All are welcome.
UPCOMING EVENTS

The Lerner Postdoctoral Association
Career Development Seminar Series

Marketing Yourself for Non-Academic Careers

Christa Pawlowski, PhD

Friday, May 17th
NE1-205  2:00-3:00pm
Dr. Driscoll’s seminar covered mentor-mentee relationships. During her engaging presentation, she discussed what healthy mentoring relationships entail. One of the most important messages from the seminar is that communication is essential to a healthy mentor-mentee relationship and that communication is a two-way street. Along similar lines, any good mentoring relationship entails perspective-taking. Both the PI and the trainee should work to understand where the other person is coming from. Dr. Driscoll also mentioned that while our PIs are our primary mentors, it is beneficial to have supplemental mentors who can provide additional perspectives on areas such as career development, transitioning to the next stage of your career, etc.
Did you miss the LEADERS seminar on ‘Bench to boardroom to bedside’ by Geoffrey Vince, PhD? Here is a recap of the seminar!

Dr. Vince only planned to spend one year as a postdoctoral research fellow at Cleveland Clinic. Instead, he rose to the position of associate staff, during which time he invented a method of intravascular ultrasound, and then moved into business. He was Vice President of Clinical Affairs and Advanced R&D for the Volcano Corporation before returning to Lerner as Chair of Biomedical Engineering and Applied Therapeutics. For the LEADERS Seminar, he spoke about his change in career from academia to business. Comparing the organizations, Dr. Vince commented that businesses often pay higher salaries and money can be provided to solve problems quickly. Time, however, is of the essence and missing a deadline by only a few hours can cost a company millions. Bureaucracy is often greatly reduced compared to academia, but every problem needs to be solved. Nobody is allowed to “try”, they must “do”.

The work, however, is rewarding. Companies can only make money by providing goods and services that help people, which means that the work you do will genuinely help patients. In Dr. Vince’s case, this is the VH IVUS machine, which allows doctors to map the location and composition of plaques in the blood vessels of patients. The work, however, is more about developing products than basic research, and that development is controlled by the demands of current and potential customers.

So what should you do if you think that you have a commercially useful idea? Speak to the Innovations Office about technology transfer. They can help you to understand if your work clearly meets a clinical need, if it’s commercially viable, and they can help with patents. The real key is to meet an unmet need: your clever new piece of technology must be faster, cheaper, more efficient or in some way better, to make it commercially viable.
The 17th Annual National Postdoctoral Association (NPA) meeting was held on April 12 - 14, 2019 in Orlando, Florida. Drs. Kelsey Bohn, Elise Baron, and Defne Bayik represented the Lerner Research Institute by attending sessions, networking, and sharing best practices for postdoctoral associations and postdoctoral program offices. They returned to Cleveland with a lot of ideas about how to best serve our postdocs and will be working with the LPDA and RETC to implement them.

They will be focusing on promoting good mentorship and incorporating more interactive programming such as workshops within Lerner. Attendees at the NPA meeting shared tools and resources on topics such as:

- Negotiation techniques
- Developing your mentor network
- Happiness and wellness
- Identifying your strengths
- Core conflicts

RETC and the LPDA are excited to expand the programming available to Lerner trainees for career and skill development. Stay tuned!

-Kelsey Bohn, PhD
There comes an important time in everyone's life when we all get asked an astonishingly deep question by a well-meaning family member, teacher, or peer: "What do you want to be when you grow up?" I remember going through multiple stages during my childhood and teenage years when I wanted to be a dentist, a surgeon, an ER physician, and a pediatrician, in that exact order. However, my life, as all lives do, has taken many twists and turns from what I imagined as a child. Somehow, during my undergraduate education, I fell in love with science, and I ended up earning my PhD in regulatory biology from Cleveland State University under the mentorship of Dr. Justin Lathia, who guided me as a person as well as a scientist. Currently, I have the honor of working as a postdoctoral fellow with Dr. Jessica Williams and her talented research technician Brandon Smith, studying the molecular mechanisms behind multiple sclerosis. I had grand ambitions from an early age, many of which have been achieved and many that I have yet to live up to. However, there was one driving force behind what I wanted to do “when I grew up.”

I never wanted to stop learning. I never wanted to leave behind the thrill of uncovering the unknown. The study of life fascinated me and continues to do so, as I’m sure is the case for many who may be reading this. However, the world of grants, funding, and manuscripts has a way of leaching away our childhood wonder of science as it falls along the wayside due to the monotony of our daily schedule. I wrote this article to give inspiration to current scientists: those who are joining or are thinking of joining the field, and those whose natural curiosity makes them want to unravel the universe and its mysteries.

This is my letter to science.

Science is meant to be objective. It is not supposed to care about personal opinions, although it is human nature to color the world through our own preconceptions. It does not judge, nor does it rush to conclusions about gender, sex, color, ethnicity, race, religion, or any of the myriad of other prejudices that we seem to care so much about. Science is only concerned with real, observable, and replicable facts. To me, science is a pure subject. It is a white light in an otherwise dark and unknowable universe. It is the shining beacon toward which the ship of humanity sails. Science is meant to unite. It reminds us that we are all human, that we stand or fall together. Science is capricious. It is rational and yet emotional. It brings hope and it brings warning. It brings answers but begins new questions. Science is often simple and also vastly complex. However, science acknowledges its weaknesses. One of its most endearing features is that it is mutable and corrects itself when new data is uncovered.

Science can and has been used for ill. It is a tool, after all. Nuclear weapons, biological warfare, chemical munitions, to name a few, have all been used to harm our fellow human beings. However, such destructive power has often been utilized by short-sighted individuals whose primary goal is not the advancement of humanity, but rather the protection of their own temporary power.
Let us instead draw our eyes and minds to those who devoted their lives toward the progression of science simply because it benefited others. Great minds such as Albert Einstein, Marie Curie, Charles Darwin, Isaac Newton, Ada Lovelace, Rosalind Franklin, Stephen Hawking, and so many other luminaries who I simply do not have the space to acknowledge were all bent on one goal: to help understand the universe, the world, or even our own bodies. While I can’t claim to have insight into their own personal motivations, it comforts me that they devoted their lives toward a singular pursuit of learning and as a result of their insight, we have been able to use their accumulated information for the betterment of our entire world.

That is why I love science. It gives my life meaning in a unique way. I don’t hypothesize, experiment, revise, and confirm my ideas simply for my own self-interest. I do it because I know that every success and every failure still moves our collective knowledge an incremental step forward. That is not to say that it is wrong to enjoy awards and accolades for one’s hard work. Such laurels help everyone remember why science is so precious and why the hard work and talent of those individuals and teams are worthy of praise. It is important to remember that science is not only about the success of one person, although it may seem that way to outside observers.

While a brilliant scientist may make a stunning discovery or invention, they are simply applying the tenets discovered by their forebears in novel and oftentimes ingenious ways. After all, science is not a race, but a marathon; it is not a straight road but a steady climb up a steep staircase; it is the never-ending effort by millions of great minds over thousands of years to help humanity’s progress.

I love science because I delight in the exultation of peeling back a single layer of the unknown. In fact, it is one of the greatest motivational forces leading my life. However, it is also easy to fall into despair as experiments fail and ideas do not fit into predicted hypotheses, and it may feel as though your skills as a scientist seem to desert you when you need them most. To all of you who may be undergoing such difficulties, I want to remind you that it doesn’t matter how large or small the finding is, whether it fits the original hypothesis, leads to a publication in the most prestigious journals, or gets rejected for funding. As long as your methods are sound, your experiments are well-controlled, and your conclusions are demonstrative of the data, then you should take pride in a job well done. It is not your task to judge the importance of the science you are conducting, but it is imperative that we never forget what made each of us fall in love with the field.

Science is what you make of it. To me, it is a never-ending roller coaster of thrills, disappointments, joys, failures, beginnings, and conclusions. It is the mechanism that allows me to fulfill my urge to keep learning and yet never satisfies my thirst for knowledge. That is why I love what I do and why I am proud to be a scientist.

Acknowledgements: Edited by Erin Mulkearns-Hubert, PhD
LOOKING FOR A JOB? NOW HIRING!

Institute Research Scientist - Translational biology
MD Anderson, Houston, TX, US
Seeking a highly motivated and collaborative individual to become a part of the Therapeutics Discovery Division. Ideal candidates will have a proven track record of leading translational efforts in support of advancing and positioning therapeutics in the clinical, as well as possess excellent communication, collaboration, organization and leadership skills. Bachelor's degree in biology, biochemistry, molecular biology, cell biology, enzymology, pharmacology, chemistry or related field is required. PhD, MD or equivalent degree in biology, cell biology, molecular biology or related field is preferred.
For more details click here

Postdoctoral Research Associate, Kent State University
A postdoctoral research associate position is available in the area of Neuroendocrine Control of Reproduction in the laboratory of Dr. Michael Lehman at the Kent State University, Kent, Ohio. Research will focus on the roles of neuropeptides expressed in the arcuate nucleus of the hypothalamus. Candidates must have a PhD degree and solid experience with neuroendocrine research, neuroanatomy of hypothalamus, and contemporary techniques.
For more details click here

Research Biologist
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Atlanta, GA, US
Seeking a highly motivated and talented individual to function as the Team Lead of the Diagnostics and Biology Team to serve as a nationally and internationally recognized expert, program manager, lead researcher, and senior scientist in parasitic disease diagnostics, parasite biology, laboratory-based surveillance, and molecular epidemiology. Applicants must have a degree in biological sciences, agriculture, natural resource management, chemistry or related disciplines, appropriate to the position.
For more details click here

Scientist - Discovery Biology
NGM Biopharmaceuticals, San Francisco, CA
Looking for an enthusiastic and highly motivated scientist to join drug discovery efforts. A successful candidate is expected to exhibit a combination of molecular/cell biology, biochemistry and in vivo experiences. PhD in biological Sciences is required.
For more details click here

Staff Scientist, Stem Cell Biology Group (NIEHS)
Seeking an experienced scientist with a proven track record in developmental and stem cell biology. Expertise in pluripotent stem cells and mouse embryonic development is preferred. Candidates must possess a PhD. in developmental or cell biology and 3+ years of postdoctoral experience. Experience with stem cell biology, mouse embryology, and animal models is highly preferred.
For more details click here

Adjunct Faculty-Chemistry & Biological Sciences
Kent State University- Tuscarawas Campus, New Philadelphia, OH
Kent State University at Tuscarawas is accepting applications for part-time faculty positions in chemistry or biological Sciences. PhD in chemistry or biology. Prior teaching experience is desired.
For more details click here
Congratulations to Dr. Salma Ben-Salem from the Heemers lab in the Department of Cancer Biology!

Dr. Ben-Salem received the Case Comprehensive Cancer Center Trainee Travel Award to attend the American Association for Cancer Research annual meeting held in Atlanta, Georgia. Her poster was titled “Prostate cancer progression depends on the activity of the mitotic kinase citron kinase.” The goal of her project is to study the involvement of one of the kinases downstream of the protein androgen receptor, and its role during prostate cancer progression.

Congratulations to Dr. Nara Yoon from the Theory Division (Scott Lab) in the Department of Translational Hematology and Oncology!

Dr. Yoon accepted a new position as a tenure track Assistant Professor in the Department of Mathematics and Computer Science at Adelphi University in Garden City, New York. She will teach classes of pure/applied mathematics and data science and mentor students’ research projects on mathematical biology. Having a PhD in applied mathematics and the interdisciplinary research experience as a postdoc at the Lerner Research Institute helped her to learn data science, improve her computational skills, and enhance her skills in applied mathematics.
RECENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Congratulations to Dr. Joseph Fogerty from the Perkins Lab in the Department of Ophthalmic Research!

Dr. Fogerty received the Knights Templar Eye Foundation Career Starter Grant as principal investigator, titled “Mechanisms of retinal regeneration in cep290 mutant zebrafish, a model for Leber’s Congenital Amaurosis”. The goal of this project is to determine if signaling pathways that are activated in the retina in response to acute injury are similarly activated in a model of inherited, progressive retinal degeneration, and if amplification of those signaling pathways can stimulate photoreceptor regeneration.

Congratulations to Dr. Onkar Sawant from the Rao Lab in the Department of Ophthalmic Research!

Dr. Sawant published an original article titled “The circadian clock gene Bmal1 is required to control the timing of retinal neurogenesis and lamination of Müller glia in the mouse retina” in FASEB Journal (April 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 guarantee 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.

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