

The Medical Scientist Training Program

School of Medicine & Dentistry - University of Rochester Medical Center

MSTP Newsletter



VOLUME 5, ISSUE 3

UNIVERSITY OF ROCHESTER

WINTER, 2012

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Message from:

Salvatore Priore, G4 in Chemistry

MSTP Student Council President

On behalf of the entire Medical Scientist Research Symposium planning committee, I would like to thank all of my peers for making our first event such an amazing success. The symposium was designed to showcase the research accomplishments of our Medical Scientist Training Program and to engage the University community through student presentations and keynote addresses on significant topics in translational medicine. I think everyone will agree that we have made an excellent start to a fine annual tradition for our program. Of course this event would not have been possible without the generosity of Dr. Thomas A. and Joyce E. Pearson. If you happen to bump into Dr. Pearson, please remember to thank him for his support.



(left to right: Dr. Kerry O'Banion, Scott Peslak, co-Chair, MSRS, Katie Herman, Emily Walters, Alex Hajduczuk, MSRS Organizing Committee, Dr. Doris Taylor, Sal Priore, Co-Chair, MSRS, Dr. Burns Blaxall, host to Dr. Taylor, Brigid Waterhouse, Administrative Assistant, MSTP, Cathy Senecal-Rice, Administrator, MSTP)

Our keynote speaker this year was Doris Taylor, Ph.D., Director of the Center for Cardiovascular Repair at the University of Minnesota. Dr. Taylor shared her groundbreaking research aimed at using stem cells to re-grow functional organs. One day when this technique is the standard of care for heart transplantation, you can have bragging rights that you met the inventor of this amazing technology just as it was beginning to emerge!



While it seems like next years symposium is far off, we've already begun planning! PLEASE SAVE THE DATE! Next year, the MSRS will be held on: **Wednesday, January 9, 2013**. Our keynote speaker will be Anthony Atala, M.D., Professor and Chair of Urology at Wake Forest University.

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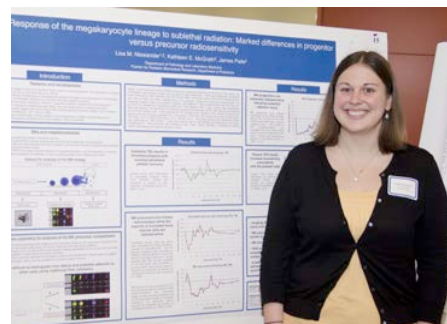
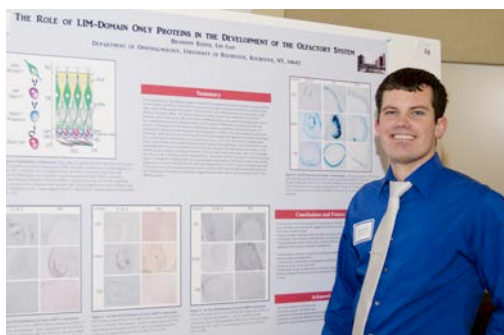
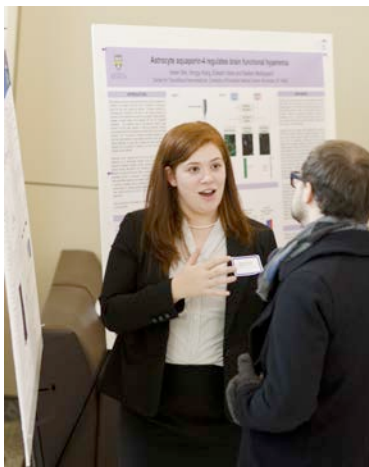
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Next year we will try to integrate some new ideas to improve the quality and efficiency of the symposium. This includes inviting graduate students and faculty from Biomedical Engineering and the Department of Urology to participate in our poster session and keynote address. We hope this will increase the visibility of the MSRS and provide the opportunity for a clinical case presentation related to the area of our keynote speaker. In addition, we are thinking of possibly reducing the poster presentations to a single, 90-minute session. We still plan on having a wonderful luncheon as well as wine and cheese reception after the keynote in partnership with the Second Friday Science Social.

The MSRS is only going to get better, and if you would like to be actively involved in planning the 2013 symposium, or if you have any comments or suggestions, I encourage you to email me (Salvatore_priore@urmc.rochester.edu). One of the most enjoyable aspects of being a member of an academic community is getting together to share camaraderie and great science. I look forward to seeing you all there.



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MSTP Student Highlights

Top 10 Things We Like About Rochester!

Andy Cox (G1 in IMV, B. Kim, advisor):

- 1 Farmer's market
- 2 Eastman Jazz
- 3 Little Theater
- 4 Rochester Curling Club
- 5 Phillip's European desserts
- 6 Rocco's
- 7 hiking on Mendon Ponds Park trails
- 8 Marketview Liquor's "great & under \$8" wine deal!
- 9 Java's Coffee
- 10 Running daily along the Erie Canal

Alex Hajduczuk (M1)

10. Garbage Plates
9. Living in the White Coat Ghetto
8. Sheridan's Pub
7. Rochester winter weather
6. Thomas Creek Men's League hockey
5. Lillian's Ukrainian Restaurant in Fairport
4. Rochester summers
3. Ukrainian community in Webster
2. Buffalo Sabres/Rochester Amerks hockey
1. The UR Medical Scientist Training Program

Michael Jacob (M3; formerly G in NBA. C. Duffy, advisor)

1. Flour City Bakery
2. Southwedge Farmer's Market
3. Eastman School of Music
4. Finger Lakes
5. Generous supply of snow (usually except for this year)
6. Dinosaur BBQ
7. Joe Bean Coffee
8. Affordable housing
9. Biopsychosocialists
10. Wegmans (I guess I have to)

Ana Nunes (M4; formerly G in Pharm/Phys.; M. Noble, advisor)

1. The community of the MD/PhD program
2. The White Coat Ghetto and the ability to own your own home
3. The Public Market
4. Wegmans
5. The Erie Canal and Genesee Valley Park
6. Eastman School of Music
7. The fine arts and sculpture scene

8. All the festivals, Lilac, Park Ave, Corn Hill
9. The MSTP wine tour and holiday party
10. The ease of access to the airport

Sal Priore (G4 in Chemistry, D. Turner, advisor).

- 10-Jet Blue ROC ----> NYC/JFK
- 9-Cheap Rent
- 8-Summer Festivals
- 7-Memorial Art Gallery
- 6-Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra
- 5-Eastman School of Music
- 4-Public Market (ranked best in USA!)
- 3-Pellegrino's Deli/Distillery Bar & Grill (tie)
- 2-DiBella's
- 1-Wegmans

Imran Punekar (G4 in NBA, J. Mink, advisor).

- #1 You can get from any point to any other point within Rochester within 12 minutes.
- #2 The airport is 8 min away.
- #3 Everything's on the way home.
- #4-10: TBD

Jharon Silva (G3 in IMV, S. Dewhurst, advisor):

- 1 Weather
- 2 Accessibility to everything via the inner/outer loops (until they fill them in!)
- 3 Good Luck restaurant
- 4 Random nature trails
- 5 Mendon Ponds Park
- 6 Mt. Hope Cemetery
- 7 Access to Finger Lakes
- 8 World Gym on East Ave
- 9 Coffee cart in the Atrium
- 10 Rolling out of bed and into work

Helen Wei (G3 in NBA; M. Nedergaard/E. Vates, co-advisors):

- 1 Mild, beautiful summers
- 2 Affordable housing
- 3 Manageable automobile traffic density
- 4 Canal trail
- 5 Salsa dancing
- 6 Wegman's supermarket
- 7 Accessible hiking/camping areas
- 8 Eastman School of Music
- 9 Museum of Play
- 10 Always a winter wonderland! (well, except this year!)

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Calendar of Events:

February 18

Social Event: Curling! Rochester Curling Club.

March 17

Social Event: Volleyball at Hot Shots!

April 20-21

Revisit Weekend for accepted applicants

April 30

Last day for MD/PhD Program applicants to hold multiple acceptances

May 6

Graduation Party – Brunch @ Mario's

May 18

SMD Commencement, Eastman Theatre

August 10

MSTP Retreat

August 13

First year medical school begins

Past Events

March 25-26, 2011 was the **annual MSTP Revisit** for accepted applicants. Seven applicants returned to Rochester for a jam-packed weekend of faculty meetings, indoor rock-climbing, an elegant Friday night dinner at Rochester Academy of Medicine, a trip to the Rochester Public Market, the Memorial Art Gallery for brunch and art, dinner Saturday at the port of Rochester and a housing tour on Sunday.



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Graduation Party for the largest MSTP graduating class of NINE was held Sunday, May 1 at Mario's via Abruzzi. The graduating class was presented with gifts of champagne. Posters were displayed showing photos from waaay back when they entered the MSTP to present! See page 15 for details on the graduating class.



MSTP Outreach Symposium was held May 7 in the School of Medicine for undergrads and high school students to learn what is involved in MD/PhD training and the application process. Almost 150 people attended and it was another successful symposium.



MSTP Fourth Year Medical Students gave an interesting panel discussion on **April 26** entitled "How To Graduate...Finally!" This was extremely enlightening for everyone in attendance. The 4th years give advice on choosing clerkships, interviewing for residency programs, etc. and has now become an annual dinner seminar.

Friday, May 13 was the **M.D. Commencement Ceremony** at Eastman Theatre. **Robert Ambrosini, Abdallah Bitar, Cui Qi, Kate Eisenberg, Conan Kinsey, Kofi Mensah, David Meoli, Michael Moravan** and **Nancy Ann Oberheim Bush** received their M.D.

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degrees. See page 15 for additional details on our largest MSTP graduating class ever.



The 4th of July was celebrated a few days late at the **2nd Annual MD/PhD Golf Scramble** on July 6 at Eagle Vale Golf Club in Penfield, NY. Foursomes of all skill levels played and had a great time with wonderful weather.

July 30, 20 students boarded a shuttlebus for the annual **Finger Lakes Wine Tasting Tour** on Seneca and Cayuga Lakes. Wineries included Thirsty Owl, Sheldrake Point Americana and Swedish Hill as well as a hiking/lunch break at Taughannock Falls, a beautiful park with a 200-foot waterfall.

Six students represented the University of Rochester at the **annual MD/PhD Program National Student Conference** in Keystone, Colorado **July 14-18**. Adrienne Chesser, Laura DiChiacchio, Sal Priore, Scott Peslak, Aisha Siebert and Mercedes Szpunar were invited to attend. Only one altitude-related illness was reported, despite warnings by Cathy Senecal-Rice to avoid alcoholic beverages.

Aisha Siebert was awarded a travel diversity award for her abstract.



The AAMC annual **MD/PhD Program Administrator & Director's GREAT Group Conference** was held in Minneapolis, MN this year **July 28-30**. Cathy Senecal-Rice, MSTP Administrator was on the organizing committee this year, as well as planned and participated in a session called "Professional Skill Development for Administrators: Managing Relationships". Brigid Waterhouse, MSTP Administrative Assistant and Kerry O'Banion, MSTP Director also attended the conference.



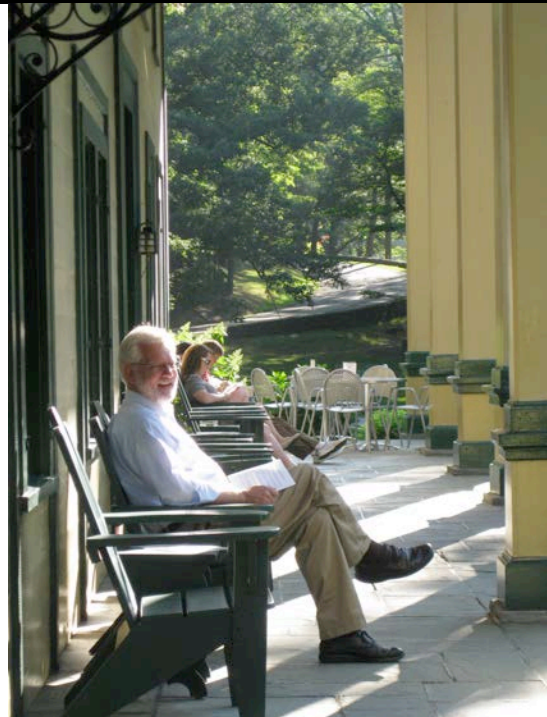
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The August social event was a **pre-Retreat picnic** to introduce the incoming students. It was held at Genesee Valley Park on **August 4**. Hots, burgers and sausage were served up by street vendor Alex for the second year in a row. Brigid brought her famous macaroni & cheese, as well as peanut butter cookies!



The annual **MD/PhD Program Retreat** was held the following day at Glen Iris Inn in Letchworth State Park, the "Grand Canyon of the East" on **August 5**. Our keynote speaker this year was Stephen Hammes, M.D., Ph.D., Professor of Medicine, Chief of Endocrine Metabolism Division. Dr. Hammes spoke to us on "Are We There Yet? How to Succeed (?) in Science without Really Planning". It was such a gorgeous day that we held the afternoon poster session outside under the trees!



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Student Council elections resulted in the following newly-elected officers:

Salvatore Priore, President
Aisha Siebert, Public Relations Chair
Emily Walters, Katie Herman, Events co-Chairs
Alex Hajduczuk, Evan McConnell, Applicant Dinner co-Coordinator
Laura Fornarola and Andy Cox, Admissions
Adrienne Chesser, Hosting Coordinator
Katie Herman, First Year Class, Greeters
Adrienne Chesser, Bisi Lawal, Outreach
Alison Gaylo, Salvador Pena., Social Events
William Alexander, Andrew Shubin: 1st/2nd year medical school curriculum committee
Chris Richardson, 3rd/4th year medical school curriculum committee;
Brandon Bader, Danielle deCampo, representatives to Honor Board

The first **MSTP Dinner Seminar** was held August 23. Matt Bellizzi, M.D., Ph.D., Neuroimmunology Fellow in the Department of Neurology at UR spoke on the career path he chose and how he chose it. Matt is an alumni of the MSTP, graduating in 2007 after completing his graduate work in neuroscience in Dr. Handy Gelbard's lab.

The first **MSTP Student Body meeting** was held September 17 and was extremely well-attended. Sal Priore, newly-elected Student Council President presided over the meeting. Topics discussed included ideas for dinner seminars and social events, the winter MD/PhD Symposium. There was much enthusiasm generated for the upcoming year!

Mercedes Szpunar, 4th year graduate student in Pathology (advisor Ed Brown, Ph.D.) ran the Rochester Marathon on September 18 in 4 hours, 2 min. Then, on October 30, a mere 42 days later, she ran the Marine Corps Marathon in Washington, DC in 4 hours, 26 min.! Wow, does she have energy to burn...



The second dinner seminar of the year on October 3 brought in an MSTP alumni from way back when. Gary Brenner, M.D., Ph.D., Associate Director, Center for Pain Medicine at Massachusetts General Hospital spoke on his career pathway as well as his research. It was wonderful to see him again after all these years.

Adrienne Chesser, first year graduate student in MSTP and Dr. Kerry O'Banion, Director represented the MSTP at the annual **SACNAS (Society for Advancement of Chicanos and Native Americans in Science) conference** in San Jose, CA October 27-30. They spoke with many undergrads from across the country about what it takes to be a physician scientist. Dr. Edith Lord, Senior Associate Dean of Graduate Education also attended.

The first social event of the year occurred on November 29. A **Beer Tasting** was held at Tap & Mallet, a local brewery with an astounding selection of ales, IPA, porters, etc. Lots of great food was on hand to sample as well.

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Dr. Kerry O'Banion MSTP Director and Aisha Siebert, first-year graduate student in MSTP represented the UR MSTP at the annual **ABRCMS (Annual Biomedical Research Conference for Minority Students)** in St. Louis, MO November 10-12. They shared a recruiting booth with Dr. Edith Lord, Dean of Graduate Education, Dr. Lisa Opanashuk, Director of the PREP Program (Postbacch. Research Education Program)

Dr. Gary Paige presented the MSTP dinner seminar on **December 12, 2011 "A Jazz Approach to Neurobiology"**, being an avid jazz fan (he attends the Rochester International Jazz Festival as does Cathy Senecal-Rice each year).



The annual **MSTP holiday party** was held December 16, 2011. Fourth year graduate student Scott Peslak hosted it at his home. Wife Laurie even built a bar in the basement for us!



The Dirty Santa gift exchange got down and "dirty" as always. Unlike last year, there was no lobster but the big hits were hiking socks, a board game and exercise ball which can double as a desk chair (Cathy and Brigid use them every day!).



January 13, 2012 was the first annual **Medical Scientist Research Symposium** with keynote speaker *Doris Taylor, Ph.D., FAHA* See page 1 for details ("Message").

A **beer and wine tasting** was held at the home of Adrienne Chesser, G2 in Neuroscience on February 4, 2012. 16 students and their guests were in attendance and attempted to determine who had the most discriminating palate by tasting a variety of vintages and brews from the Finger Lakes.

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MSTP BABY BOOM!!!

IT'S A GIRL!

Chris Richardson M3 (defended in Microbiology & Immunology; I. Sanz, advisor; see Page 18) and wife Emily had a beautiful little girl Natalie born May 8, 2011 (on Mother's Day!). She weighed in at 8 lb. 3 oz., 21 in. Her 4 siblings are very excited to have a little sister!



WEDDINGS

Sam Carrell (M2) was married to Ellie Michele Frett on July 9, 2011 at High Falls in Rochester, NY. Ellie is a graduate student in Dr. Robert Dirksen's laboratory in Pharmacology & Physiology studying skeletal muscle. A honeymoon in the Caribbean is planned for the future, although they spent a few days after the wedding in the Finger Lakes, also called the "Napa Valley" of the East for its wonderful grapevines and wineries.



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Katie Herman (M2) married David Bruestle on July 15, 2011 in their hometown of Cincinnati, Ohio. They even stopped for ice cream between the ceremony and reception! Katie is a talented French horn player and majored in French horn at Eastman School of Music prior to being accepted into the MSTP.

David is pursuing a doctorate in Musical Arts (DMA) at Eastman School in trombone performance; he hopes to someday perform in an orchestra but in the meantime works at Towpath Bikes in Pittsford. Cycling is one of David and Katie's favorite hobbies!



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Kevin Makino (G5 in Health Services Research, Dr. Peter Veazie, advisor) married Kelly Cosman January 22, 2011 in Hawaii, where Kevin was born and his parents reside. Kelly is a first year medical student at UR SMD this year. She was formerly health project coordinator for URM's Alzheimer Disease Care, Research and Education Program.



They renewed their vows in Rochester on June 4 so that local friends could attend. The reception was held in a friends' historic barn complete with fiddler and caller for an old-fashioned square dance!



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WELCOME!

Medical Scientist Training Program Entering Class 2011



(left to right: Salvador Pena, Alex Hajduczok, Stephanie Syc, William Alexander, Michael-John Beltejar, Adnan Hirad, Nguyen Mai)

We welcomed seven new students into the MSTP in August, 2011.

William Alexander

William is originally from Knoxville, Tennessee, receiving a B.A. in chemistry in May, 2010 from Maryville College in Maryville, Tennessee. William is familiar with the URM as he spent a summer in the Strong Children's Research Center Training Program. He worked in the lab of Dr. Arshad Rahman, Associate Professor of Pediatrics in 2010. He is an avid tennis player, having played on the men's tennis team in college all 4 years and leading them to the first GSAC Men's Conference Tournament Championship!

Michael-John Beltejar

Michael-John or M.J. or Mike, depending on what you prefer is originally from the Philippines, attended UC Berkeley and graduated with a B.A. in molecular and cell biology in 12/2001. Mike began his career early by working in the lab of Dr. Steve Dewhurst while he attended SUNY Brockport. He also began his MSTP career early by doing a lab rotation with Dr. Danielle Benoit in May, 2011!

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Alex Hajduczuk

Alex hails from Buffalo, NY. He attended UR, double-majoring in biochemistry and economics, graduating with a B.S./B.S. in May, 2011. He also started early in the MSTP by doing a lab rotation with Dr. Burns Blaxall in cardiovascular research in the Cardiovascular Research Institute. In his free time, Alex is very involved in the Ukraine community and does some incredible Ukrainian dance performances, which he may need to demonstrate for us at one of the MSTP events!



Adnan Hirad

A native of Somalia, Adnan received a B.S. in chemistry and biochemistry at CUNY Lehman in the Bronx in 2008. Most recently, he worked at the University of Pennsylvania in a molecular imaging lab coordinating and conducting molecular biology experiments related to a study designing and testing molecular probes for cancer. For stress relief, Adnan enjoys making snow angels (when/if we ever get snow in Rochester this year!)

Nguyen Mai

Nguyen is moving to the East Coast for the first time in her life! Originally from Vietnam, she attended UCLA and majored in psychobiology (honors program). She graduated in 2010 with a B.S. Nguyen is an avid photographer in her spare time, having taken hundreds of photos during MSTP Revisit, which can be seen on the MSTP Facebook page!

Salvador Pena

The MSTP's second Sal (not to be confused with Sal Priore!) is also from California, Los Angeles specifically. He moved to Rochester to attend UR undergrad in 2004 graduated with both a B.A. and B.S. in biology and chemistry in 2008. He was accepted into UR medical school as a REMS (Rochester Early Medical Scholar) student in undergrad, entering in 2008, and completed two years before deciding to take a year out to pursue research as part of a master's program in neuroscience in Dr. Maiken Nedergaard's lab. For fun, Sal enjoys reading, reading and more reading!

Stephanie Syc

Stephanie was born in Chicago and has been working in Baltimore, MD for the past year at Johns Hopkins University in the lab of Dr. Peter Calabresi in the Division of Neuroimmunology. She is also taking graduate classes in public health at Johns Hopkins. Previous to that, she attended Brown University, graduating in 2008 with a B.S. degree and majoring in neuroscience. Her hobbies include horseback riding, having been on the varsity equestrian team at Brown.

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FAREWELL TO OUR GRADUATES!



(left to right: Abdallah Bitar, Kate Eisenberg, Cui Qi, Rob Ambrosini, Kofi Mensah, Dave Meoli, Conan Kinsey, Nancy Ann Oberheim Bush and Mike Moravan)

Friday, May 13, 2011 was the **School of Medicine & Dentistry Commencement** at Eastman Theatre. The nine (largest class in our history!) MSTP graduates this year were:

Rob Ambrosini is staying with us, we're happy to say! He is doing a preliminary year at Strong Memorial Hospital followed by Diagnostic Radiology residency.

Abdallah Bitar will be doing a prestigious Internal Medicine/Research track at Scripps Clinic/Green Hospital in San Diego, CA.

Qi Cui is doing a transitional year at UPMC Mercy Hospital in Pittsburgh, PA followed by an Ophthalmology residency at UCSF.

Kate Eisenberg matched as our first intern in Family Medicine/Urban residency at Strong Memorial Hospital right here in Rochester also!

Conan Kinsey matched in Internal Medicine at University of Utah in Salt Lake City, UT. He and wife Jenny will most likely be doing a lot of hiking and skiing in those mountains!

Kofi Mensah is headed for New York City, where he will join the prestigious Hospital for Special Surgery at Cornell University in an Orthopaedic Surgery residency.

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David Meoli received his first choice and is going to the deep south to Vanderbilt University Internal Medicine Residency Program.

Michael Moravan will also stay close to home at Strong Memorial Hospital doing a residency in Neurological Surgery.

Nancy Ann Oberheim Bush is going to UCSF where she'll be entering a neurology residency program.

Congratulations on this great accomplishment! It was a long road, but you all made it!

HONORS AND AWARDS

Adam Dziorny (M3; previously G in BME, A. Luebke/J. Walton, co-advisors)

The following abstract won 3rd place in the post-doc competition at the Neurotoxicology 2011 research conference:

Dziorny AC, Orlando MS, Love T, Harrington D, Myers GJ, Davidson PW. Auditory processing in offspring of mothers who consumed a pregnancy diet high in fish. *Neurotoxicology 2011* (Research Triangle Park, NC), Oct. 31 – Nov 2, 2011

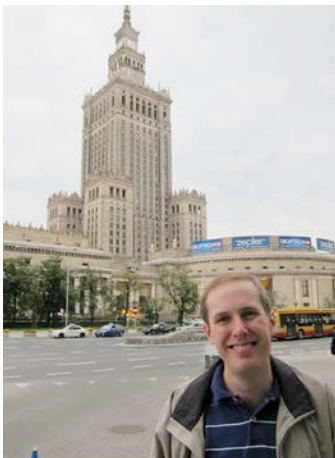
Anat Kohn (G4 in Genetics, M. Hilton, advisor) was accepted to attend the Gordon Research Conference on Cartilage Biology & Pathology March 6-11, 2011 in Ventura Beach, CA.

Susan Lee (M3; previously G in Neuroscience, L. Bennetto, advisor) was awarded a Trainee Abstract Travel award for the 2011 OHBM (Organization for Human Brain Mapping) Annual Meeting in Quebec City, Canada which took place June, 2011.

Susan also had the great honor of winning the University of Rochester Medical Faculty Council URSMD Trainee/Student Travel Award for Spring, 2011 in Basic Science Research.

Salvador Pena (G1 in Pathology; M. Nedergaard, advisor) was awarded the Merritt & Marjorie Cleveland Fellowship at the University of Rochester School of Medicine Opening Convocation on October 5, 2011. This fund supports a first year graduate student with an interest in developing a neuroscience-related research career.

Scott Peslak (G4 in Pathology, J. Palis, advisor) received the following awards:



- Travel award for 2011 Gordon Research Conference - Red Cells, Proctor Academy, Andover, NH (July 24-29, 2011) - abstract selected for oral presentation and poster presentation, entitled "EPO-mediated expansion of late-stage erythroid progenitors in the marrow is essential for recovery of the erythron following clastogenic injury."

- Scholars-in-Training Award, sponsored by NIAID, for the Radiation Research Society Annual Meeting, to be held in conjunction with the 14th International Congress of Radiation Research, Warsaw, Poland (August 28-September 1, 2011) - abstract selected for poster presentation, entitled "Erythropoietin mitigation significantly improves recovery of the erythroid lineage following sublethal total body irradiation."

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- Abstract Achievement Award for the 53rd American Society of Hematology Annual Meeting, San Diego, CA (December 10-13, 2011) - abstract selected for oral presentation, entitled "EPO-Dependent Recovery of Late-Stage Erythroid Progenitors in the Marrow Precedes Splenic Expansion: Insights From a Sublethal Radiation Model."

- Recipient of the 2011 Gilbert B. Forbes Prize in Pediatrics, University of Rochester Opening Convocation, Rochester, NY. October 5, 2011.

- University of Rochester Department of Pathology Best Paper Award 2011 for the publication "Sublethal radiation injury uncovers a functional transition during erythroid maturation", published in Experimental Hematology, April 2011, 39(4), 434-445.

- Department of Pathology Graduate Student Poster Travel Award, Pathology Research Day, University of Rochester, Rochester, NY, May 25th, 2011.

Andrew Shubin (M2) received the Victor Emmel Prize in Histology at the University of Rochester School of Medicine Opening Convocation on October 5, 2011. This prize is given to a first year medical or graduate student who best exemplifies the qualities of achievement, professionalism and scholarship that characterized Dr. Emmel, a distinguished teacher, scholar and former director of medical histology in the Department of Neurobiology & Anatomy.

Jharon Silva (G3, IMV, S. Dewhurst, advisor) – was honored with the Outstanding Poster Award for World AIDS Day Scientific Symposium 2011

- <http://www.urmc.rochester.edu/dcfar/news.cfm>

-
Adam Simning (M3; previously G in Epidemiology; E. vanWijngaarden, advisor). Received the American Association for Geriatric Psychiatry's (AAGP) 2011 Member-in-Training Award for best original research performed by a medical student, resident, or fellow. Also received the Gerontological Society of America (GSA) Health Sciences Section 2010 Person-in-Training Award for my dissertation research.

PRESENTATIONS:

Rebecca Porter (currently M3; former G4, Pathology, L. Calvi, advisor) was selected to give an oral presentation at the American Society of Hematology Annual Meeting in San Diego, CA (December 10-13, 2011) on "The Effects of Prostaglandin E2, a Substance Released by Blood Vessels, on the Stem Cells that Give Rise to all Blood Types".

Adam Simning - I was invited to present my dissertation research at the AAGP and GSA annual meetings as well as at Grand Rounds for the University of Rochester Psychiatry Department.

THESIS DEFENSES:

Melisa Carrasco – Melisa entered the MD/PhD Program at Rochester in 2005, but then took a leave of absence in 2007 when she went to University of Michigan for her graduate work. She defended her thesis on February 3, 2012 at the University of Michigan where she has been doing her graduate work in neuroscience. Melisa will return to Rochester in July, 2012 to begin third year medical school and complete her MD/PhD requirements.

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Vincent Fong - Vincent defended on February 13, 2012 “Novel Targeting Strategies for Adenovirus Vectors: Investigating the Rad51 Promoter and Inducible elements”. He completed his graduate work in Microbiology & Immunology under the advisement of Dr. Steve Dewhurst. He returned to third year medical school in July, 2011.

Susan Lee – Susan defended her thesis on April 4, 2011 entitled “Audiovisual Integration During Language Comprehension: The Neural Basis of Social Communication in Autism and Typical Development”. Her graduate degree is in neuroscience, thesis advisor Loisa Bennetto, Ph.D. Dr. Lee returned to third year medical school in July, 2011.

Dave Meoli – Dave defended on February 2, 2011 (Happy Groundhog Day!) in the Pharmacology & Physiology Graduate Program under co-advisors Mark Taubman, M.D. and James White, M.D. His thesis was titled “Vascular Cell Migration in Pulmonary Arterial Hypertension”. Dave graduated in May, 2011 and is now a resident in Internal Medicine at Vanderbilt University.

Keith Olsen – Keith returned to third year medical school in July, 2011; he completed graduate work in Microbiology & Immunology; Advisor - Patricia Sime, M.D.; defense seminar took place August 9, 2011; Title: “The Role of Transglutaminase 2 in Pulmonary Fibrosis”.

Joanna Touger Olsen – Joanna completed her graduate school requirements in Microbiology & Immunology; Advisor – Steve Dewhurst, Ph.D. Her defense seminar was December 2, 2011 entitled “SEVI, A Natural Enhancer of HIV Infection, as a Novel Target to Prevent HIV Transmission”. Joanna plans to return to third year medical school in January, 2012.

Rebecca Porter – Rebecca returned to medical school (3rd year) in July 2011. Her thesis defense took place July 21, 2011 under the guidance of her advisor Laura Calvi, M.D. Title: “Prostaglandin E2 is a Positive Regulator of Hematopoietic Stem and Progenitor Cells under Normal Conditions and in Response to Radiation Injury”. Her Ph.D. degree is in Pathology.

Chris Richardson – Chris happily and successfully defended his thesis on 12/15/10 in Microbiology & Immunology (advisor: Inaki Sanz, M.D.). Title: “A Study of the Molecular Characteristics of 9G4+ Autoantibodies and of B cell Tolerance in Systemic Lupus Erythematosus”. Chris has now returned to medical school and is in 4th year expected to graduate in May, 2012.

Adam Simning defended on April 4, 2011 on his thesis titled “Anxiety and Depression in Older Adult Public Housing Residents: Prevalence, Correlates and Implications for Care”; Advisor – Edwin vanWijngaarden, Ph.D. in the Epidemiology Graduate Program. Adam returned to third year medical school in July, 2011.

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Grants

Adrienne Chesser (G2 in NSC, Kim Tieu, Ph.D., advisor) – was awarded an F30 entitled “Mitochondrial dynamics underlie gene-environment interactions in Parkinson’s”

Rebecca Porter (M3; formerly G in Pathology; Laura Calvi, Ph.D., advisor) received an F30 award titled “The role of PGE2 in protecting primitive hematopoietic cells from injury”.

Phil Rappold (G3 in NSC, Kim Tieu, Ph.D., advisor) was also awarded an F30 entitled “Role of Mitochondrial dynamics in Parkinson’s disease processes and therapeutics”

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Alumni News

Thank you to everyone who responded to our plea to contact us. Feel free to keep us up-to-date. Enjoy reading about your fellow alumni. We hope to hear from many more. Please send correspondence to: cathy_senecalrice@urmc.rochester.edu

Alison Bertuch, M.D., Ph.D. (1993) tells us "I was promoted to Associate Professor with tenure in Pediatrics and Molecular and Human Genetics at Baylor College of Medicine. I remain in the hematology/oncology section and am now director of our Bone Marrow Failure Program. I also provide the oversight of the research component of our Pediatric Hematology/Oncology Fellowship program. I am now the co-director of the Baylor College of Medicine Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences Interdepartmental Graduate Program in Cell and Molecular Biology (which means I interact with graduate students a lot). Lastly, I was recently awarded a \$930,000 grant from the Cancer Prevention and Research Institute of Texas for a three year proposal entitled: Novel Mechanisms Leading to Telomere Dysfunction and Cancer Predisposition. Life is good."

Joseph Bliss, M.D., Ph.D. (1998) was promoted to Associate Professor of Pediatrics at the Warren Alpert Medical School of Brown University. Joe was recently elected to the Council for the Eastern Society for Pediatric Research and is also Staff Neonatologist at Women & Infants Hospital of Rhode Island. He and wife Cindy (M.D. '98) have four children.



*Merry Christmas!
The Bliss Family
Joe, Cindy, Dan, Eric,
Heather & Kathryn*

peace on earth



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Paul Burkat, M.D., Ph.D. (2001) is now on the faculty at University of Rochester where he is Senior Fellow in the Department of Psychiatry. Paul works in the comprehensive psychiatric emergency program (psychiatric emergency room) and in the Strong Epilepsy Center, doing a combination of outpatient clinic work and inpatient consultation. He and wife Veronica have a beautiful son, Nicholas, who will be two years old in January.



Anthony (“Tony”) Flores, M.D. (2006), Ph.D. (2004), MPH (2006) is pleased to tell us that he has almost completed his training and will become Assistant Professor of Pediatric Infectious Disease at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston, TX effective July, 2012. And he'll actually be earning a salary before age 40, much to wife Paula's delight! She and dogs Sofia and Salvatore love Houston. Tony was also recently awarded a prestigious 4-year Robert Wood Johnson Foundation grant (entitled “Molecular genetic changes contributing to asymptomatic carriage in group A *Streptococcus*”)

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Marc Halterman, M.D., Ph.D. (2002) is Assistant Professor of Neurology and Pediatrics in the Center for Neural Development & Disease at University of Rochester. Marc was recently appointed by Dr. Kerry O'Banion as Director of Scientific Reasoning in Medicine (SRM), an MD/PhD Program-specific credit course for students in first and second year medical school. Marc also received an RO1 from the NIH/NINDS entitled "Targeting phosphatase regulated cleavage of HIF-1-a in ischemic brain injury"; Grant Number: R01 NS076617-01.

Outside of work, in addition to spending time with wife Jill (also a physician at SMD in Pediatrics) and 2 children, Marc is guitarist and lead vocalist for a band called "Mansfield Avenue". The band plays at various venues in Rochester, so if you're in town, check out their website to see where they're playing!
<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Mansfield-Avenue/294585147790>



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James Kim, M.D., Ph.D. (1999) and wife Christie are proud to announce the birth of their first child Aedan Hawthorne Jaesu Kim born on September 29, 2011. Aedan weighed 7.3 lbs. 20 inches long. James recently moved from California (Stanford University) to a new position at UT Southwestern Medical School in Dallas, Texas as Assistant Professor of Medicine in the Division of Hematology/Oncology. Lots of big changes last year for the Kim family!



Kuei Lim, M.D. ('07), Ph.D. ('05) reports that he is currently at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania as an epilepsy fellow. He completed his neurology residency at NYU/Bellevue Hospitals in June of this year. He also passed the Board certification exam in Neurology.

Kuei is also the recipient of the 2012 Taking Flight Award by CURE (Citizens united for Research in Epilepsy). He will be working in Peter Crino's laboratory doing epilepsy research at University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine.

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David Mathews, M.D. ('03), Ph.D. ('02) announces the birth of his second child, a boy named John David (see below) born in December, 2011. Big sister Audrey (age 3) loves her new baby brother!



Thuy Phung, M.D., Ph.D. (1999), now Assistant Professor of Pathology & Immunology at Baylor College of Medicine has been awarded the prestigious Research Scholar Grant from the American Cancer Society. The award, in the amount of \$720,000 was given in support of her research project, "Novel functions of Akt isoforms in vascular tumors". The American Cancer Society grant is awarded to researchers whose work is expected to make great contributions to the fight against cancer.



Ramothea Webster, M.D ('07)., Ph.D. ('04) is now a Major in the U.S. Air Force in Family Medicine. Ramothea tells she is stationed at Langley Air Force Base in Hampton, Virginia.

MD/PhD Alumni – Let us hear from you.

Our goal is to hear something from each graduate of the program. When we hear from you we will **bold** your name as a sign of acknowledgement. We encourage you to contact us and watch us **boldly** grow. **We need current e-mail addresses for names in RED.** Please contact Cathy Senecal-Rice, Administrator, MD/PhD Program at: cathy_senecalrice@URMC.Rochester.edu

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Adam, Jamie, M.D. 2001, Ph.D. 2000
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Arceci, Robert J., M.D. 1981, Ph.D. 1980
Bahler, David W., M.D., Ph.D. 1987
Bellizzi, Matthew, M.D., Ph.D., 2007
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Bertuch, Alison A., M.D., Ph.D. 1993
Abdallah Bitar, M.D. 2011, Ph.D. 2009
Bleicher, Paul A., M.D., Ph.D. 1983
Bliss, Joseph, M.D., Ph.D. 1998
Breneman, Stephen, M.D. 1998, Ph.D. 1996
Brenner, Gary J., M.D., Ph.D. 1995
Burkard, Mark, M.D. 2002, Ph.D. 2000
Burkat, Paul, M.D. 2003, Ph.D. 2001
Bush Oberheim, Nancy Ann, M.D. 2011, Ph.D. 2008
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Chin, Michael T., M.D. 1991, Ph.D. 1989
Colbert, Robert A., M.D. 1987, Ph.D. 1986
Collins, Tucker O., M.D., Ph.D. 1981
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Dedon, Peter C., M.D., Ph.D. 1987
Deng, Sophie, M.D., Ph.D. 2001
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DiPersio, John F., M.D., Ph.D. 1980
Dragone, Leonard L., M.D. 1996, Ph.D. 1994
Duke, Cindy, M.D. 2009, Ph.D. 2007
Dunn, Michael G., M.D., Ph.D. 1983
Elshatory, Yasser, M.D. 2010, Ph.D. 2008
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Gallo, Richard L., M.D., Ph.D. 1986
Gambello, Michael J., M.D., Ph.D. 1993
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Goldstein, Barry M., M.D. 1981, Ph.D. 1982
Greene, James, M.D., Ph.D. 1998
Grimsrud, Christopher, M.D., Ph.D. 2000
Guillet, Ernest G., Jr., M.D., Ph.D. 1979
Guillet, Ronnie B., M.D., Ph.D. 1980
Hall, Craig G., MD-PhD, 1984
Hallows, Kenneth R., M.D. 1995, Ph.D. 1994
Halterman, Marc, M.D. 2002, Ph.D. 2002
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Junig, Jeffrey, M.D. 1987, Ph.D., 1986
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Kenny, Alan, M.D. 2002, Ph.D. 2000
Kim, James, M.D., Ph.D. 1999
Kim, Jin, M.D. 2000, Ph.D. 1998
Kimbrough, John, M.D., Ph.D. 2000
Kinsey, Conan, M.D. 2011, Ph.D. 2009
Kishore, Sarita, M.D. 2010, Ph.D. 2009
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Kruse, John, M.D. 1990, Ph.D. 1989
Kulas, Donald, M.D. 1997, Ph.D. 1995
Lerner, Robert M., M.D. 1977, Ph.D. 1978
Lesser, Harold, M.D., Ph.D. 1989
Lichtman, Andrew H., M.D., Ph.D. 1981
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Martin, Stephen S. M.D., Ph.D. 1981
Massa, Stephen M., M.D., Ph.D. 1984
Mathews, David H., M.D. 2003, Ph.D. 2002
Mathews, Marlene, M.D. 2010, Ph.D. 2009
Maytin, Edward V., M.D., Ph.D. 1985
McAdam, Alexander J., M.D. 1995, Ph.D. '94
McFarland, Nikolaus, M.D. 2002, Ph.D. 2000
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Meoli, David, M.D., Ph.D. 2011
Milano, Michael, M.D., Ph.D. 2000
Moravan, Michael, M.D. 2011, Ph.D. 2010
Naik, Amish, M.D., 2009, Ph.D. 2007
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Navon, Samuel E., M.D., Ph.D. 1989
Nead, Michael, M.D., Ph.D. 1999
Nguyen, Minh-Doan Thi, M.D. '02, Ph.D. 2000
Nichols, Alan R., M.D., Ph.D. 1980
Nierenberg, Jay, M.D. 1997, Ph.D. 2001
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Palmer, Edward, M.D., Ph.D. 1980
Peale, Franklin V., Jr., Ph.D. 1989, M.D. 1990
Pearson, Alexander, M.D. 2010, Ph.D. 2009
Phung, Thuy L., M.D., Ph.D. 1999
Podell, David N., M.D., Ph.D. 1980
Profenno, Louis, M.D., Ph.D. 1999
Proweller, Aaron, M.D., Ph.D. 1998
Querfurth, Henry W., M.D., Ph.D. 1983
Razavi, Babak, M.D., Ph.D. 2009
Ribes, Julie A., M.D., Ph.D. 1990
Richards, Julie, M.D. 2004, Ph.D. 2002
Robak, Laurie, M.D. 2010, Ph.D. 2009

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Roda, Ricardo, M.D. 2005, Ph.D. 2003

Roshal, Mikhail, M.D. 2005, Ph.D. 2003

Rosier, Randy N., M.D., Ph.D. 1978

Rubin, Edward M., M.D., Ph.D. 1980

Rumbaugh, Jeffrey, M.D., Ph.D. 2000

Sandhu, Faheem A., M.D. 1995, Ph.D. 1994

Scully, Sean P., M.D. 1986, Ph.D. 1985

Seed, Patrick, M.D., Ph.D. 1998

Senyk, Oksana, M.D., Ph.D. 1984

Shaftel, Solomon, M.D., 2009, Ph.D. 2007

Shimamura, Akiko, M.D. 1991, Ph.D. 1990

Snyder, Lawrence H., M.D., Ph.D. 1992

Storozynsky, Eugene, M.D. 2000, Ph.D. 1998

Tan (Formerly Cheun), Jane E., M.D.1995,Ph.D. 1993

Thertulien, Raymond, M.D. 1994, Ph.D. 1992

Thom, Stephen R., M.D., Ph.D. 1981

Toribara, Neil W., M.D. 1981, Ph.D. 1982

Waldman, David L., M.D., Ph.D. 1988

Webster, Ramothea, M.D. 2007, Ph.D. 2004

Wenger, Tara Arndt, M.D. 2008, Ph.D. 2006

Williams, Joseph, M.D., Ph.D. 1989

Williams, Marshall T., M.D., Ph.D. 1980

Wilson, Robert E., M.D., Ph.D. 1989

Wingrove, Douglas E., M.D. 1987, Ph.D. 1986

Winn, Virginia Dragone, M.D.1996, Ph.D. 1994

Zambidis, Elias, M.D., Ph.D. 1998

Zanghi, Christine Gorman, M.D. 2009, Ph.D. 2007

We hope you have enjoyed reading about your fellow alumni and current MD/PhD students. We thank everyone who wrote and sent in pictures and hope it will inspire others to do the same. If you would like to communicate with any of your fellow alumni, please send an email with the name of the person to Cathy Senecal-Rice: cathy_senecalrice@urmc.rochester.edu. This may be an avenue for current MD/PhD Program students to network with alumni that have a common interest. In this way, privacy is secured and the recipient has the choice whether to reply or not. Again, thank you for participating.

This Newsletter was designed and distributed with the direction and approval of the Medical Scientist Training Program Executive Committee. If you do not wish to receive future mailings please e-mail this request to Catherine Senecal-Rice at: cathy_senecalrice@urmc.rochester.edu