

GSBS NEWS

1st White Lab Coat Ceremony



Spring 2015


UTHealth
The University of Texas
Health Science Center at Houston

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS
**MDAnderson
Cancer Center**

Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences

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GSBS students Katherine Dextraze, George Edwards III and Michael Lehrer show off their new white lab coats. In September 2014, the school held its first White Lab Coat Ceremony. Read more about this event on page 12.

Benefactor News



GSBS UTHealth Constellation Gala supporters—Stars in their Crowns

UTHealth's inaugural Constellation Gala, held on Nov. 14, 2014, was a success of galactic proportions, raising more than \$1.85 million for student scholarships and faculty endowments. Below are the GSBS stars:

Russell and Diana Hawkins deserve the spotlight with their generous five-year renewal of Discovery Fellowships that supports innovative, graduate student research teams who are targeting neurodegenerative disease.

Steve Lasher and Janiece Longoria established a new permanent endowed graduate research award dedicated to cancer biology.

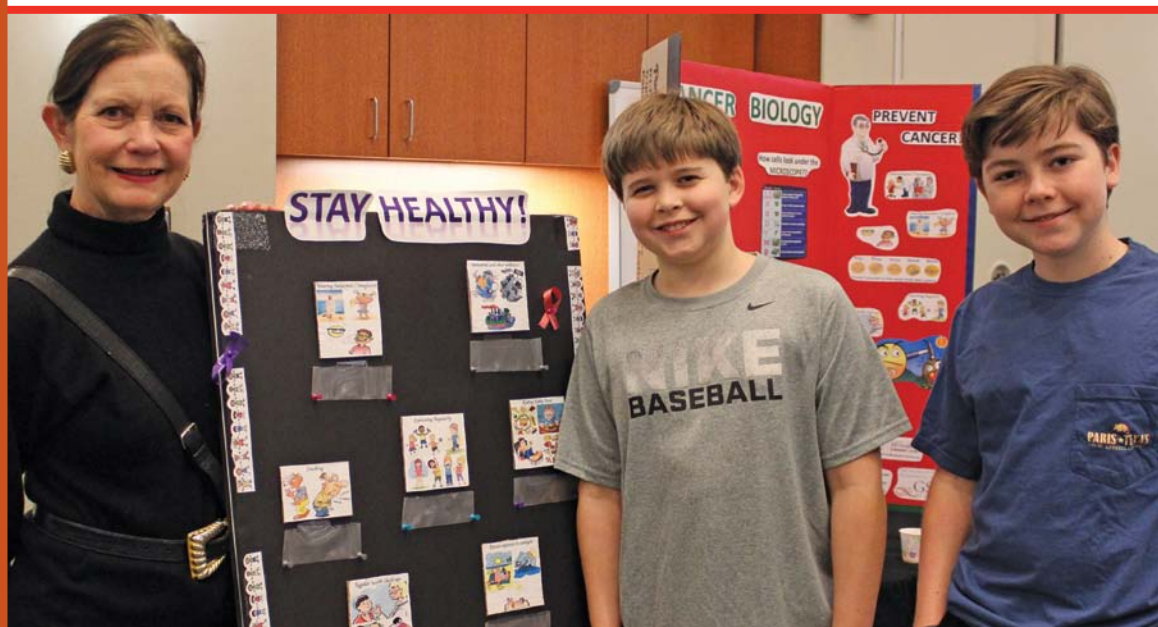
Britt Schmidt rallied Cameron International Corporation's community gift for a one-of-a-kind fellowship to be presented in September to an exceptional graduate student whose research is focused on cancer.

Tadd Tellepsen energized the efforts of several Advisory Council members to team up for a GSBS Table including Chase Robison, Jack Kins, Brad Jones and Ed Randall IV.

Jesse and Hetta Heath hosted a table of friends in support of the graduate school and UTHealth and included the GSBS deans.

MD Anderson Cancer Center sponsored a table for longtime GSBS supporters of the Cancer Answers/Andrew Sowell-Wade Huggins Endowed Scholarships.

Celestial thanks to all!



Hetta Heath, GSBS supporter and wife of UTHealth Development Board member Jesse Heath, attended the school's Science Night with her grandson, Connor Heath, and his friend, Charlie Pagan. Learn more about this event on page 15.

More Benefactor News on page 25



Double Take

A
Message
from GSBS
Deans
Barton
& Blackburn

GSBS Deans Michelle Barton, Ph.D., left, and Michael Blackburn, Ph.D., right, with second-year student Maryam Shariati at the 2014 White Lab Coat Ceremony.

As two deans sharing leadership of our graduate school, we've learned the firsthand benefits of teamwork. Having a partner doubles your time, energy, ideas, support, solutions—and backup!

For GSBS, the idea of “dream teams” is being put into motion on several levels by:

1) Building a well-trained, cohesive team of students, who thoroughly get to know their classmates, by sharing a lively, interactive core course, the Foundations of Biomedical Sciences. This course provides active learning in scientific knowledge and team building skills to all entering students. To carry that dream team idea further, we established a formal white lab coat ceremony for 2nd year students to mark the important milestone of joining a faculty mentor's lab. Our research teams thrive on diversity and the student group AMBR (Association of Minority Biomedical Researchers) meets regularly to share information aimed at success and retention. Also we have a lively outreach program to help the community (Science Night, Food Bank, Hermann Park Conservancy, etc.)—these are important steps in this process.

2) Building an empowered team of faculty by assisting them in training and education, e.g, with paid program coordinators, financial bridging support, excellence in teaching awards, mentorship training and grant preparation support.

3) Building a strong, multi-layered staff who are updat-

ing internet technology and equipment, overseeing a new website, preparing for development and marketing growth (thank you Advisory Council Subcommittee!), revising curricula and programs, keeping GSBS social media news fresh, getting ready for academic review during the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) accreditation process and engaging alumni talent for career expertise to help GSBS students move forward.

4) Building a team of partners throughout UTHealth and MD Anderson as we engage leadership at both institutions, as well as that of the Texas Medical Center, to support training of the best and brightest.

5) Building a network of awareness about our UT-GSBS at Houston, spreading the word among other graduate schools to improve our nationwide academic rankings, attract top-achieving students and faculty, and increase overall resource opportunities. To address this step a nationally distributed “annual report” is in our future.

If you have additional ideas and would like to help build these dream teams with us, please give us a call—we welcome your help.

Michelle C. Barton, Ph.D., Dean; 713.500.9855, mbarton@mdanderson.org

Michael R. Blackburn, Ph.D., Dean; 713.500.9880, Michael.R.Blackburn@uth.tmc.edu

2014 Alumni Reunion at the Houston Zoo



Distinguished Alumna Dolores J. Lamb, Ph.D., HCLD



Dolores J. Lamb, Ph.D. is the director of the Center for Reproductive Medicine; The Lester and Sue Smith Chair in Urologic Research; the vice chair for research (Scott Department of Urology) and a professor in the Departments of Urology and Molecular and Cellular Biology at Baylor College of Medicine (BCM). She is an investigator in the fields of urology, male infertility, steroid hormone action, prostate cancer and genitourinary birth defects. Her experience is unique as she has an extensive background in both the clinical diagnostic and the basic science arenas of men's health.

Before joining BCM, Lamb received her Ph.D. from GSBS in 1980. Her advisor was Barbara Sanborn, Ph.D. After graduation, Lamb was an NIH postdoctoral fellow in Reproductive Biology at The University of Texas Medical School at Houston, and an NIH-NRSA postdoctoral fellow in the Department of Cell Biology at BCM.

She is also a registered clinical chemist and high complexity laboratory director (American Association of Bioanalysts) who supervises one of the largest andrology laboratories in the country (Laboratory for Male Reproductive Research and Testing).

Over her career, Lamb has received numerous awards including the Distinguished Reproductive Urology Award for significant contributions in the field of reproductive urology from the Society for the Study of Male Reproduction (2013); the Faculty Educator Award from BCM in recognition of the more than 88 fellows trained in andrology research, eight of whom have already reached the rank of Department Chair of Urology (2010); and the first Distinguished Researcher Award from the American Society of Reproductive Medicine (2005).

Other recognitions include being named the Ramon Guiteras Lecturer for her lifetime contributions to the field of Urology and a distinguished andrologist by the American Society of Andrology.



Lamb poses with Anna Steinberger, Ph.D., a former GSBS faculty member who was part of Lamb's student committee while she was studying at the school.



Lamb has served on several boards including the Editorial Boards of Fertility and Sterility, Journal of Urology: Investigative Urology, Biology of Reproduction; and the Journal of Andrology, Human Reproduction (Associate Editor). Currently she is a member of the Editorial Boards of the Urology, Steroids, International Journal of Andrology, Fertility and Sterility (Associate Editor), and the Asian Journal of Andrology.

She has served as the past-president of the Society for Male Reproduction and Urology of the American Society for Reproductive Medicine; the ASRM Board of Directors (the first Ph.D. in the history of the society to be elected to the presidential chain); and the Society for Basic Urologic Research. Other leadership roles include secretary/past-president for the American Society of Andrology and secretary of Society of Women in Urology.

Currently, Lamb serves on the American Association of Bioanalysts Board and the American Board of Bioanalysts, the Executive Committee and Board of the American Society for Reproductive Medicine, the Executive Committee and Board of the Society of Women in Urology.

This year's alumni event was held at the Houston Zoo at the jaguar habitat.



Lamb poses with GSBS Deans Michelle Barton, Ph.D. and Michael Blackburn, Ph.D.



2014 Alumni Reunion



Melissa & Chris Singh

Tom & Lalla Goka



Karen & Sam Kaplan



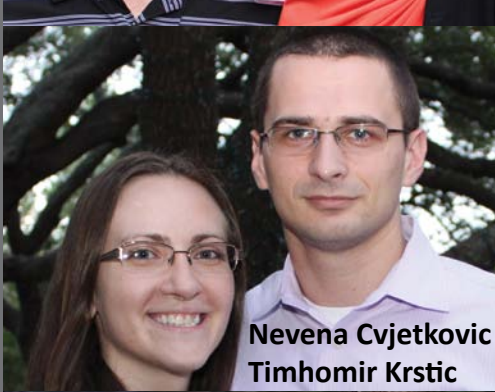
Andy & Lindsey Minter



Kendra Allton



Sol & Victoria Bobst



Nevena Cvjetkovic & Timhomir Krstic



Ajay Kwatra



Misty & Richard Hajek



Yuquin Chen & Kurt Evenson



Tom & Jill Wood



Jennifer Frey



Kadir & Zeynep Coban Akdemir



Eric & Tamara Laskowski



Michael Thomas



Molli McGahren Murray



Anne Netek Hart



Magalie Leduc



Amber Johnson



Hannah Wingate



Brittany Parker Kerrigan



Lauren Murphy & Rob Hollenbeck



Jackie Peltier Horn



Pavan Nagaraji & Proleta Datta



Carolyn, June & Joy Marshall



Natasha Saad & Hussein Abbas



Jane & James Kirscher



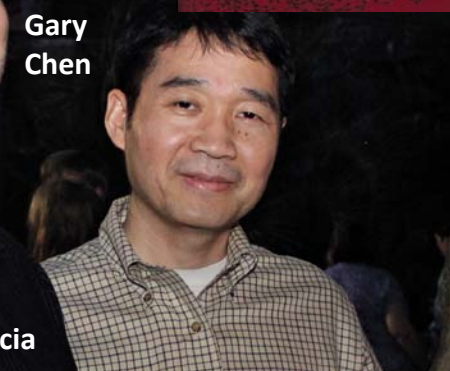
Angela Alexander & Isaac Wun



Lei Deng



Hector & Martha Garcia



Gary Chen



GSBS Faculty President
Vasanthi Jayaraman, Ph.D.

MEMBERS REAPPOINTED WITH COMMENDATION

- Joseph Alcorn, Ph.D.
- Dean Lee, M.D., Ph.D.
- Jingfei Ma, Ph.D.
- Hope Northrup, M.D.
- Dean Tang, M.D., Ph.D.

MEMBERS REAPPOINTED WITH HIGHEST COMMENDATION

- Theresa Koehler, Ph.D.
- Richard Wendt, Ph.D.

MEMBERS REAPPOINTED WITH VERY HIGHEST COMMENDATION

- Claire Singletary, M.S.

NEW EMERITUS MEMBER

- Fernando Cabral, Ph.D.
- Henry Strobel, Ph.D.

NEW REGULAR MEMBERS

- Vahid Afshar-Kharghan, M.D.
- Raymond Cho, M.D.
- Erik Cressman, M.D., Ph.D.
- George Eisenhoffer, Ph.D.
- Sharon Giordano, M.D.
- Michelle Hildebrandt, Ph.D.
- Jian Hu, Ph.D.
- Humam Kadara, Ph.D.
- Bruce Kone, M.D.
- Suyu Liu, Ph.D.
- Xiaoming Liu, Ph.D.
- Florencia McAllister, M.D.
- Consuelo Walss-Bass, Ph.D.
- Haoqiang Ying, M.D., Ph.D.
- Ken Young, M.D, Ph.D.

NEW ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

- Rong Chen, Ph.D.
- Nevena Cvjetkovic, M.S.
- Jessica Davis, M.S.
- Song Gao, Ph.D.
- Nancy Gordon, M.D.
- Sonal Gupta, Ph.D.
- H.L. Anthony Liu, Ph.D.
- Christopher Nelson, Ph.D.

INCLUDES ACTIONS TAKEN BY THE GSBS MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE IN AUGUST, OCTOBER & DECEMBER 2014 AND FEBRUARY 2015



GSBS students have selected **Jill Schumacher, Ph.D.**, as the recipient of the **2015 John P. McGovern Award for Outstanding Teaching**.

Schumacher is an associate professor in the Department of Genetics, The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center, and the director of the Foundations of Biomedical Research Course at the graduate school. She has been a GSBS faculty member since 1999.

She has been major advisor to seven students at GSBS and has taught over 240 lecture hours.

She obtained her Ph.D. in Genetics from the University of Washington in 1995. After graduation, she held a postdoctoral fellowship at the National Cancer Institute (NCI), National Institutes of Health (NIH), in Maryland.

Schumacher will receive this honor at the school’s commencement on Saturday, May 23.

GSBS faculty receive over \$18 million in CPRIT funding

By Tracey Barnett

The University of Texas Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences at Houston would like to recognize several faculty members who recently received funding for the Cancer Prevention and Research Institute of Texas (CPRIT). Of the 36 CPRIT Individual Investigator Research Awards, GSBS faculty members were awarded 16 grants totaling more than \$14 million. Additionally, the CPRIT Oversight Committee recently adopted new priorities focused on childhood and adolescent cancer as well as prevention and detection. Two grants from faculty members were funded in this area, totaling more than \$3 million.

Listed below are the studies by GSBS faculty funded by CPRIT:

Individual Investigator Research Awards (IIRA) – 16 grants totaling \$14,327,977

- Elucidating the Evolution of the Premalignant Airway Genome in Space and Time – \$886,173 (Humam Kadara, Ph.D.)
- Role of PTEN Feedback Mechanism in Cancer – \$900,000 (Min Sup Song, Ph.D.)
- Investigating the Regulation of miRNA and lncRNAs by p63 in Mammary Tumor Progression and Metastasis – \$900,000 (Elsa Flores, Ph.D.)
- Genome Stability and Immune Diversity Controlled by the POLQ Pathway – \$900,000 (Kevin McBride, Ph.D.)
- Identifying Drivers of Lung Metastasis in Triple Negative Breast Cancer – \$899,637 (Helen Piwnicka-Worms, Ph.D.)
- Regulation of Dormancy of Metastatic Prostate Cancer Cells by Bone Microenvironment – \$900,000 (Sue-Hwa Lin, Ph.D.)
- Discovering the Molecular Mechanisms that Determine Replicative Lifespan – \$892,104 (Jessica Tyler, Ph.D.)
- Function of Fibroblasts and Collagen I in Pancreas Cancer – \$898,811 (Raghu Kalluri, M.D., Ph.D.)
- Role of TBK1 in Regulating Dendritic Cell Function and Antitumor Immunity – \$876,958 (Shao-Cong Sun, Ph.D.)
- EGFR Arginine Methylations: Biomarkers for Cetuximab Resistance in Colon Cancer – \$900,000 (Mien-Chie Hung, Ph.D.)
- Mechanisms of De Novo and Acquired Resistance to Therapeutic Treatment of Bone-Metastatic Prostate Cancer – \$900,000 (Gary Gallick, Ph.D.)
- T-Cell Activating Immunotherapy for Indolent B-Cell Malignancies – \$852,595 (Sattva Neelapu, M.D.)
- Leukemia Inhibitory Factor Receptor Signaling and Function in Cancer – \$900,000 (Li Ma, Ph.D.)
- On the Role of DEAR1 in the Regulation of Cell Polarity and Progression from DCIS to Invasive Breast Cancer – \$899,846 (Ann Killary, Ph.D.)
- Tumor Cell Epithelial-Mesenchymal Transition in Regulating Immunosuppression and Metastasis in Lung Cancer – \$900,000 (Don Gibbons, M.D., Ph.D.)
- Counteracting Tumor Evasion of Antibody Immunity by a Novel Therapeutic Strategy – \$900,000 (Zhiqiang An, Ph.D.)

Individual Investigator Research Awards (IIRA) for Cancer in Children and Adolescents – 2 grants totaling \$3,861,658

- Defining and Treating Targetable Lesions in AYA Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia – \$1,989,950 (Marina Konopleva, M.D., Ph.D.)
- Epigenetics in Medulloblastoma Development and Therapeutics – \$1,871,708 (Vidya Gopalakrishnan, Ph.D.)

To see all the grants funded by CPRIT, visit www.cprit.state.tx.us/news/cprit-awards-58-research-grants-to-advance-the-fight-against-cancer-02-18-2015/

CPRIT was established in 2007 via Texas constitutional amendment. The organization works to fund ground-breaking cancer research and prevention programs and services across the state.



Khandan Keyomarsi, Ph.D., and **Kevin Morano, Ph.D.**, were named recipients of The University of Texas System Regents' Outstanding Teaching Award. This honor recognizes those who deliver the highest quality of instruction in the classroom, the laboratory, the field or online. Keyomarsi is a professor in the Department of Experimental Radiation Oncology at The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center. She is affiliated with the Programs in Cancer Biology, Cell and Regulatory Biology, Clinical and Translational Sciences and Experimental Therapeutics. Morano is a professor in the Department of Microbiology and Molecular Genetics at the UTHealth Medical School. At GSBS, he is affiliated with the Programs in Microbiology and Molecular Genetics; Biochemistry and Molecular Biology; and Cell and Regulatory Biology.



Guillermina Lozano, Ph.D., and **David Piwnica-Worms, M.D., Ph.D.**, became members of the Institute of Medicine (IOM) of the National Academies in recognition of their contributions to medical science and health care. Lozano is chair of the Department of Genetics at MD Anderson. Piwnica-Worms is the chair of the Department of Cancer Systems Imaging also at MD Anderson.



Joya Chandra, Ph.D., received the Texas Business Women Inc. Recognition award. Chandra is an associate professor in the Department of Pediatrics at MD Anderson. She is also a GSBS alumna.

Several faculty members were named members of The University of Texas Kenneth I. Shine, M.D., Academy of Health Science Education (Shine Academy) for 2014 and 2015. These members include **Carrie Cameron,**

Ph.D.; **Leonard Cleary, Ph.D.**; **Varsha Gandhi, Ph.D.**; **Khandan Keyomarsi, Ph.D.**; **Kevin Morano, Ph.D.**; and **Steven Norris, Ph.D.**



Andy Futreal, Ph.D., was awarded the inaugural Jack and Beverly Randall Prize for Excellence in Cancer Research. The \$100,000 cash prize honors a distinguished faculty member at MD Anderson, with the focus alternating between innovations in cancer research and excellence in patient care. Longtime MD Anderson Cancer Center Board of Visitors member Jack Randall and his wife, Beverly, recently established the prize through a \$1 million endowment.



MD Anderson's Women Faculty Programs recognized **Sharon Dent, Ph.D.**, as the President's awardee at the 3rd Annual President's Leadership Award for Advancing Women Faculty Presentation in March. Dent is a professor and chair of the Department of Epigenetics and Molecular Carcinogenesis.



Raghu Kalluri, M.D., Ph.D., received the Jacob-Henle Medal in February, awarded annually by the Georg-August University in Göttingen, Germany, one of that country's oldest institutions of higher learning. Kalluri is professor and chair in the Department of Cancer Biology at MD Anderson and is affiliated with Programs in Cancer Biology and Clinical and Translational Sciences.



Fabio Triolo, M.Ph.D., Ph.D., was one of the recipients of the 2014 Italian Flame Awards presented by Italian Cultural & Community Center of Houston. Triolo is an associate professor of pediatric surgery and cellular therapy core director at The UTHealth Medical School.

GSBS Faculty Grant Assistance: GSBS is proud to offer our faculty a new tool to help them with grants. Visit gsbs.uth.edu/faculty/grant-assistance.htm for more details.



Research by faculty member **Laurence Cooper, M.D., Ph.D.**, and a colleague from the College of Biological Sciences at Minnesota, has led to a broad licensing agreement with The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center, Intrexon Corporation, a leader in synthetic biology and its oncology partner ZIOPHARM Oncology. The exclusive sublicensing agreement through MD Anderson for intellectual property was developed

at the University of Minnesota for the development of non-viral adoptive cellular cancer immunotherapies. Research conducted by the two pioneered the design and clinical investigation of novel chimeric antigen receptor CAR T cell therapies using non-viral gene integration platforms. Cooper has been a faculty member with GSBS since 2010 and is a professor affiliated with the Programs in Immunology and Clinical and Translational Sciences.



A study led by GSBS alumna and faculty member **Dihua Yu, M.D., Ph.D.**, demonstrates that a protein known as 14-3-3 zeta can switch TGF- β from suppressing tumors in pre-cancerous cells to promoting metastasis in breast cancer cells, spreading to the bones by changing the TGF- β 's partner proteins. Yu's results were published in February's issue of *Cancer Cell*. Work by GSBS students Sunil Acharya, Frank Lowery and Lin Zhang contributed to this research. GSBS faculty member Mien-Chie Hung, Ph.D., as well as GSBS alumni Jia Xu, Ph.D., and Jun Yao, Ph.D., also contributed research to this study. Other contributors include researchers from MD Anderson, Baylor College of Medicine and F. Hoffman La Roche Ltd., Basel, Switzerland. Yu is a professor and is affiliated with the Programs in Cancer Biology and Clinical and Translational Sciences.

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GSBS program gets new name

By Tracey Barnett

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board has approved the request from GSBS Program in Molecular Carcinogenesis to change its name to the Program in Epigenetics and Molecular Carcinogenesis (EMC), effective immediately.

“The relatively new field of Epigenetics has become a central focus of the research directed by our faculty and as such, is a distinguishing feature of our GSBS Program,” stated GSBS Assistant Dean Ellen Richie, Ph.D., and Program Director David Johnson, Ph.D.

In their request for the new designation to GSBS Deans Michelle Barton, Ph.D., and Michael Blackburn, Ph.D., Richie and Johnson noted, “at the same time, we submit that Molecular Carcinogenesis should be retained in our program name because our faculty members are equally committed to research aimed at defining the aberrant molecular pathways that instigate and promote cancer and to develop improved strategies for cancer prevention and intervention. Furthermore, Epigenetics and Molecular Carcinogenesis are highly integrated fields as epigenetic regulation plays a key role in regulating the molecular pathways that influence development, survival and differentiation of normal and neoplastic cells. We feel that changing our program designation to Epigenetics and Molecular Carcinogenesis will more accurately represent our overall research mission to prospective graduate students as well as to the scientific community at large.”

Currently, there are 24 faculty members and 19 graduate students in the EMC Program located at The Virginia Harris Cockrell Cancer Research Center at The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center (also known as Science Park) near Smithville in the Lost Pines region of Central Texas.

GSBS hosts inaugural White Lab Coat Ceremony

By Rob Cahill & Tracey Barnett



In their new lab coats; from left to right: Sara Siegel, Paul Kurywchak, Morayo Adebisi, George Edwards III, Elisa Vesely, Albert Hunt, Arianexys Aquino and Sahily Reyes.

Years from now should there be a big breakthrough for a cure of Alzheimer's disease, it may well be due in part to the work Amy Ford is starting at The University of Texas Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences at Houston.

Ford and 44 other second-year doctoral students were ceremonially paired with their mentors, faculty members, who will guide the students' efforts in education and research. Mentors actively train their mentees throughout the Ph.D. process of developing research skills and a body of original work that comprises their dissertation and publications.

“The white [lab] coat reminds us that our scientific efforts and collaborations will have a positive impact on the health and care of patients.”

— Katherine Dextraze (Advisor: Richard Bouchard, Ph.D.; Program: Medical Physics)

In honor of the sacred trust between student and mentor, Michael Blackburn, Ph.D., and Michelle Barton, Ph.D. – the joint deans of the school – organized the school's first ever white lab coat ceremony on Sept. 12. Students were presented monogrammed lab coats by their mentors, or program representatives.

The school is operated by The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston (UTHealth) and The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center, and has trained more than 2,000 biomedical scientists.

Ford's mentor is Kevin Morano, Ph.D., who is known for his research on how the body's building blocks—proteins—are maintained and repaired. Morano, a faculty member at the graduate school and a professor of microbiology and molecular genetics at the UTHealth Medical School, believes this information is critical to treating neurodegenerative diseases.

“We're looking at protein quality control,” said Ford, who has a biology degree from the University of North Texas in Denton. “To me in order to get to the translation stage (where drugs are developed), you have to know the basics.”

To be a good scientist, according to Morano, a person has to be curious and dedicated, and he said Ford is both.

Morano is optimistic that new treatments could be in the offing for the 5 million plus people in the United States who suffer with the memory-robbing condition of Alzheimer's. Currently, the treatment options are limited.

“Amy's work could someday lead to a pill that would activate protein quality control systems to get rid of the misfolded and aggregated proteins associated with Alzheimer's disease,” Morano said.



“This ceremony is a special way to feel integrated into GSBS history, and I will always cherish this moment. It makes you really realize where you have come from and what amazing future awaits.”

— George Edwards III (Advisor: Claudio Soto, Ph.D.; Program: Neuroscience)

Second year student Yifan Wang and his mentor – Steven Lin, M.D., Ph.D., graduate school faculty member and assistant professor of radiation oncology at MD Anderson Cancer Center—are tackling another intractable health problem, lung cancer.

It claims the lives of tens of thousands of people in the United States every year. Most patients with advanced lung cancer die within five years.

“I want to develop new ways to treat lung cancer,” Wang said. “I’m particularly interested in identifying genes we can target to enhance radiotherapy and immunotherapy effects.”

“My goal is to improve the cure rates of patients with lung cancer by targeting the biologic susceptibilities of cancer cells,” Lin said.

Forty-five second-year GSBS doctoral students were recently paired with faculty members who will guide the students toward completion of their research training and doctoral degrees.

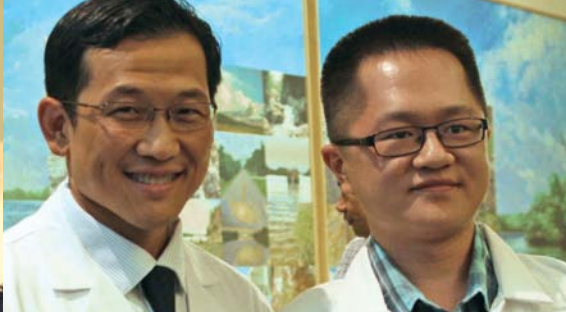
A new tradition



The 2015 ceremony is scheduled for Friday, September 25, at 4p.m. in the Onstead Auditorium. Images from 2014 event are featured on the next page. Visit go.uth.edu/WCC2015 to view all the photos.



Erin Atkinson & Dr. Bin Wang



Dr. Steven Lin & Yifan Wang



Dr. Carmen Dessauer & Tanya Baldwin



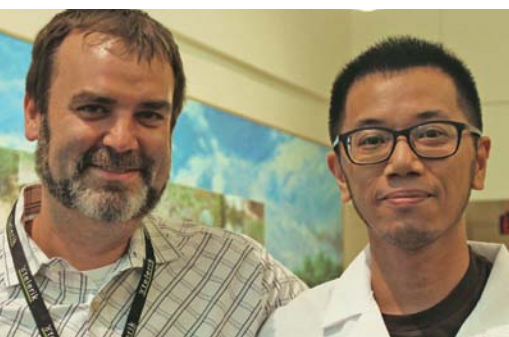
Todd Bartkowiak & Dr. Ben Zhu



Dr. Pierre McCrea & Ryan Baumert



Dr. Claudio Soto & Keri Callegari



Dr. Chad Huff & Jiun-Sheng Roger Chen



Dr. Sanjay Shete & Alexander Davis



Dr. Andrew Gladden & Megan Fentess



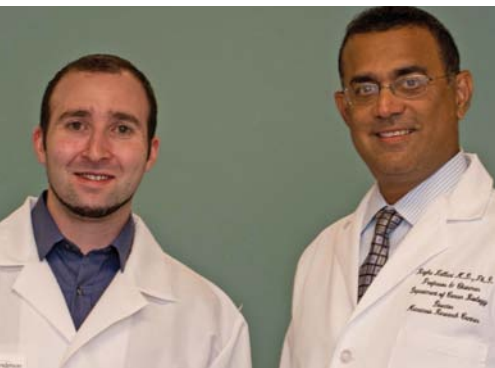
Dr. Ann Killary & Jeanne Pierzynski



Dr. Pramod Dash & Georgene Hergenroeder



Sara Loupot & Dr. David Followill



Ehsan Ehsanipour & Dr. Raghu Kalluri



Max Odem & Dr. Edgar Walters



Dr. Kevin Morano & Amy Ford

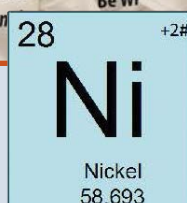
Student life @ GSBS



Foundations of Biomedical Research: This new core course provided 41 incoming graduate students with an overview of modern biomedical sciences spanning historical perspectives to cutting edge approaches. The course combines traditional didactic lectures and interactive critical thinking and problem solving exercises to provide students with a strong background in fundamental graduate-level topics including genetics, molecular and cellular biology, biochemistry, physiology, developmental biology and biostatistics. This course fulfills the GSBS breadth requirement. Pictured above is the inaugural class celebrating the end of the term with course director, Jill Schumacher, Ph.D.



SCIENCE



NIGHT



The GSBS Outreach Program hosted its second annual Science Night on Saturday, January 17, at the MD Anderson South Campus Research Building II. The event included fun activities and interesting science for local elementary school children and their families while showcasing the pioneering scientists at UTHealth and MD Anderson. Visit go.uth.edu/2015gsbsscienecnight to see photos from the event.



A study co-authored by GSBS student **Brittany Coughlin** and GSBS faculty members Leonard Cleary, Ph.D., and John Byrne, Ph.D., was recently published in *The Journal of Neuroscience*. The team was part of a group of neuroscientists from The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston that conducted an experiment in an animal memory model in an effort to find the reason for “chemo brain” side-effects of cancer chemotherapy. Coughlin is affiliated with the Program in Neuroscience. She is also the recipient of the Zilkha Family Discovery Fellowship in Neuroengineering (2011-present) and Roberta M. and Jean M. Worsham Endowed Scholar (2013-2014).



Veronica Garcia was awarded a Robert D. Watkins Graduate Research Fellowship from the American Society for Microbiology. Each fellow is awarded up to a \$21,000 annual stipend for three years. Garcia is affiliated with the Program in Microbiology and Molecular Genetics and her advisor is Kevin Morano, Ph.D.



A study by GSBS researchers and The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer was published in *Nature* in the fall of 2014. Student **Avinashnarayan Venkatanarayan** was the first author of the publication which included work from GSBS student Eliot Sananikone; GSBS faculty James Bankson, Ph.D., Elsa Flores, Ph.D. (Venkatanarayan’s advisor), and Kenneth Tsai, M.D., Ph.D.; and GSBS alumna Deepavali Chakravarti. This group was part of the team of scientists whose work found that altering proteins in tumor suppressor genes causes rapid regression of tumors that are deficient in or totally missing p53.

Six students received 2015 Cancer Prevention Research Institute of Texas (CPRIT) Graduate Scholar Awards: **Erin Atkinson** (Advisor: Bin Wang, Ph.D.); **Vincent Bernard** (Advisor: Anirban Maitra, M.B.B.S.); **Seema Mukherjee** (Advisor: Lauren

Byers, M.D.); **Whijae Roh** (Advisor: Andrew Futreal, Ph.D.); **Kaushik Thakkar** (Advisor: Michelle Barton, Ph.D.); and **Jaime Veland** (Advisor: Taiping Chen, Ph.D.).

A study by researchers from GSBS and MD Anderson was published in *Nature Cell Biology* in February. Student **Elinav Shoshan** was the first author of the publication which included work from GSBS faculty members: Menashe Bar-Eli, Ph.D. (Shoshan’s advisor); George Calin, M.D., Ph.D.; Isaiah Fidler, Ph.D.; Jeffrey Gershenwald, M.D.; Patrick Hwu, M.D.; and Anil Sood, M.D.; and GSBS alumni: Russell Braeuer, Ph.D.; Aaron Mobley, Ph.D.; Guermarie Velazquez-Torres, Ph.D.; and Yu-ye Wen, Ph.D.



A study first-authored by GSBS student **Rajesha Rupaimoole** and co-authored by GSBS researchers Kshipra Gharpure; Michael McGuire; Nouara Sadaoui; Menashe Bar-Eli, Ph.D.; George Calin, M.D., Ph.D.; Gabriel Lopez-Berestein, M.D.; and Anil Sood, M.D., was published in *Nature Communications* (November 2014). The team was part of a group of scientists from The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center whose work found that oxygen-deprived RNA molecules lead to tumor progression. Rupaimoole was a Russell and Diana Hawkins Family Foundation Discovery Fellow affiliated with the Cancer Biology Program. He graduated in December 2014.



Melissa Robinson was awarded the 2015 Thomas F. Burks Scholarship for Academic Merit. This \$1,500 scholarship honors Dr. Thomas F. Burks, a distinguished research scientist who served The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston as its chief academic officer from 1991 to 2001. It was established on the recommendation of the Interfaculty Council (IFC) at UTHealth to provide scholarship support to students based on academic merit. The scholarship is awarded to a student who has matriculated and has established an academic record at one of the schools of UTHealth.

American Legion Auxiliary Scholarship Awards



Students

Pushan Dasgupta
Marco Leung
Aundrietta Duncan
Erin Atkinson
Andrew John Davis
Amber Mathews
Amanda Herrmann
Margie Sutton

Advisors

Giulio Draetta, M.D., Ph.D.
Nicholas Navin, Ph.D.
Michelle Barton, Ph.D.
Bin Wang, Ph.D.
Elsa Flores, Ph.D.
Shao-Cong Sun, Ph.D.
Jeffrey Molldrem, M.D.
Robert Bast, Jr., M.D.

Since 1971 the American Legion Auxiliary has provided scholarships for GSBS students involved in cancer research. The money for this funding is raised through a wide range of Auxiliary activities. To date the auxiliary has raised more than \$1,397,000 for renewable scholarships which currently are \$5,000 each to support graduate student education.

R. W. (Bill) Butcher Award



Nick Parchim

Advisor: Yang Xia M.D., Ph.D.



Kemly Philip

Advisor: Michael Blackburn, Ph.D.

Established in 1997, the R. W. (Bill) Butcher Endowed Fund provides an annual award of \$3,500 for students who demonstrate excellence in research, have a commitment to a career in biomedical research, and make a professional contribution to the community or have faced a particular life challenge.

City Federation of Women's Clubs Endowed Fellowship in the Biomedical Sciences



Michelle Martinez-Rivera

Advisor: Zahid Siddik, Ph.D.

Established in 2005, this \$2,500 fellowship rewards an exceptional GSBS student who is working in an area vital to the biomedical sciences and is of particular current significance in that year's national research perspective.

The Antje Wuelfrath Gee and Harry Gee, Jr. Family Legacy Award



Hong Liu

Advisor: Yang Xia, M.D., Ph.D.

This \$4,500 endowed award was created by the Gee family to support exceptional GSBS graduate students in good standing who have yet to complete their third year at GSBS and who obtained all or part of their preparatory education in China, Germany, Mexico or the Philippines.

Gigli Family Endowed Scholarship



Veronica Garcia

Advisor: Kevin Morano, Ph.D.

Jing Li

Advisor: Michelle Barton, Ph.D.

This \$1,000 endowed scholarship was created by Dr. Irma Gigli, a retired GSBS faculty member and deputy director emerita of The Brown Foundation Institute of Molecular Medicine, to honor her parents. The scholarship is intended to help exceptional graduate students who are making excellent progress towards their degree, particularly those who are first generation in their family to enroll in graduate school.

Floyd Haar, M.D., Endowed Memorial Research Award in Memory of Freda Haar



Maitri Shah

Advisor: George Calin, M.D., Ph.D.

This \$1,500 award is provided to recognize an exceptional GSBS student conducting critical research in the area of stem cells as it applies to leukemia, or the study of stem cells and their use in treatment of other cancers.

The Jacqueline T. Hecht Founding Director Scholarship



Elizabeth Baack

Advisor: Rebecca Carter, M.S.

Victoria Wagner

Advisor: Claire Singletary, M.S.

This \$1,000 scholarship, created in 2010 to honor Dr. Jacqueline T. Hecht, Founding Director of the Program in Genetic Counseling, is to be used to help recruit exceptional new students or to award outstanding current students in Specialized Masters Program in the Genetic Counseling.

T. C. Hsu Endowed Memorial Scholarship



Felix Nwajei

Advisor: Tomasz Zal, Ph.D.

Avinash Venkatanarayan

Advisor: Elsa Flores, Ph.D.

To remember Dr. Hsu and his remarkable research in genetics and cancer biology, his daughter Margaret established this memorial scholarship in 2003. Early supporters included MD Anderson Cancer Center Foundation, colleagues, faculty, friends and former students of Dr. Hsu. The endowment is a living testimony that acknowledges the stellar research accomplishments with \$8,000 in awards.

Investing in Student Futures Endowed Fellowship



Veronica Rowlett

Advisor: William Margolin, Ph.D.

This \$4,500 fellowship endowment was established by Priscilla Saunders, Ph.D., in memory of her husband Grady Saunders, Ph.D., and increased by gifts of many others.

Barbara L. Kennedy Memorial Scholarship



Katelynn Sagaser

Advisor: Claire Singletary, M.S.

This \$1,000 scholarship was established in 2002 for a student in the Specialized Masters Program in Genetic Counseling. The winner is selected by a review committee appointed by the WINGS Chapter of the American Business Women's Association.

Marilyn and Frederick R. Lummis, Jr., M.D., Fellowship in the Biomedical Sciences



Sangita Pal

Advisor: Jessica Tyler, Ph.D.

Dr. and Mrs. Lummis made a generous gift to GSBS to create this award given for scientific excellence and innovation in any area of biomedical research. This \$25,000 stipend award given each year is intended to encourage novel research with a high potential to impact the particular field of study and ultimately human health.

Dee S. and Patricia Osborne Endowed Scholarship in the Neurosciences

Established by the Linda and Ronny Finger Foundation in 2001-2002, this endowed scholarship honors former University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston Development Board president, Dee Osborne, and his wife Patricia. Recipients are top achievers in neuroscience scientific research poster competitions.



Students

Joe Alcorn
Madeline Farley
Curtis Neveu
Max Odem

Advisors

Scott Lane, Ph.D.
M. Neal Waxham, Ph.D.
John Byrne, Ph.D.
Edgar Walters, Ph.D.

Presidents' Research Scholars



Students

Rajesh Rupaimoole
Avinash Venkatanarayan
Aaron Pan
Melissa Robinson

Advisors

Anil Sood, M.D.
Elsa Flores, Ph.D.
Michael Andreeff, M.D., Ph.D.
Hung Ton-That, Ph.D.

Through generous funding from The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston President Giuseppe N. Colasurdo, M.D., and The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center President Ronald A. DePinho, M.D., recognition is given to advanced GSBS students who have demonstrated excellence in research. This year's recipients each received a cash award of \$5,000.

The Fadine Jackson Roquemore Scholarship in Cancer Research



Paloma Monroig

Advisor: George Calin, M.D., Ph.D.

Established in 2012 by a longtime supporter of GSBS graduate students, this \$2,000 scholarship encourages and rewards a promising graduate student whose doctoral work is focused on cancer research.

Sjoerd Steunebrink Endowed Scholarship Fund



Elizabeth Baack

Advisor: Rebecca Carter, M.S.



Katelynn Sagaser

Advisor: Claire Singletary, M.S.

The endowment was established by the Board of Regents of The University of Texas System in 1999. Gift funds were provided by the Sjoerd Steunebrink Estate of Boise, Idaho. This award rotates yearly among the six UTHealth schools and is used as a recruitment tool for incoming students.

Sam Taub and Beatrice Burton Endowed Fellowship in Vision Disease



Ariana Andrei

Advisor: Roger Janz, Ph.D.



Heather Turner

Advisor: Michael Galko, Ph.D.

Mary Wright and her sister, Joanna Ross, established this \$3,500 endowed fellowship in 2004. The Sam Taub and Beatrice Burton Fellowship in Vision Disease honors their grandfather and great aunt and supports excellence in the research of eye and sight-related problems and potential therapies.

Tzu Chi Scholarship Award for Excellence



Aundrietta Duncan

Advisor: Michelle Barton, Ph.D.



Dennis Ruder

Advisor: Ignacio Wistuba, M.D.

The Tzu Chi Foundation provides this \$1,000 scholarship to recognize and assist outstanding GSBS doctoral students. Successful applicants demonstrate both excellence in academic achievement and persistent community involvement. Students must be in a Ph.D. program; in good academic standing in GSBS; and making timely progress toward completion of their degree.

President James T. Willerson, M.D., Endowed Scholarship in Genetic Counseling



Meagan Giles

Advisor: Claire Singletary, M.S.

This scholarship was established in honor of former UTHealth President James T. Willerson, who was a longtime supporter of the GSBS. The endowment provides a \$1,000 scholarship for a student in the Specialized Masters Program in the Genetic Counseling.

Nancy Beamer Willerson Endowed Scholarship in Genetic Counseling



Caiqian Wu

Advisor: Molly Daniels, M.S.

This scholarship was established in honor of Nancy Beamer Willerson, a longtime supporter of the GSBS. The endowment provides a \$1,000 scholarship for a student in the Specialized Masters Program in the Genetic Counseling.

Roberta M. and Jean M. Worsham Endowed Fellowship in the Behavioral and Neurosciences



Albert Hunt

Advisor: Nicholas Justice, Ph.D.



Leandra Mangieri

Advisor: Qingchun Tong, Ph.D.

This endowed fellowship of \$2,000 fosters exceptional students working in the fields of the behavioral sciences or neurosciences particularly in the areas of addiction or obsessive/compulsive behavior.

The Wei Yu Family Endowed Fellowship



Lin Zhang

Advisor: Dihua Yu, M.D., Ph.D.

This endowed fellowship of \$2,500 was established in 2011 as a thank you to GSBS for providing Dr. Wei Yu with his Ph.D. education and to provide support for post-candidacy students who work in the broad area of virology.

Discovery Fellowships

Pauline Altman-Goldstein Foundation Discovery Fellowships



Kshipra Gharpure
Advisor: Anil Sood, M.D.

Johnathon Rose
Advisor: Giulio Draetta, M.D., Ph.D.

These Discovery Fellowships provide full stipends to exceptional GSBS doctoral students whose innovative work in cancer research is part of the Moon Shots Program at MD Anderson. The Fellowships may be renewed for up to three years.

Russell and Diana Hawkins Family Foundation Discovery Fellowships in Neurodegenerative Disease



Curtis Neveu
Advisor: John Byrne, Ph.D.

Natalie Sirisaengtaksin
Advisor: Andrew Bean, Ph.D.

These Discovery Fellowships provide full stipends to exceptional GSBS doctoral students whose research is innovative in neurodegenerative disorders such as Parkinson's disease. The Fellowships may be renewed for up to three years.

In Memoriam



Richard "Dick" P. Schissler, Jr., (1927-2014), supporter of GSBS, placed importance on his business career and community involvement, as reflected in his many successes and accomplishments, but his true treasures were his family. He had the pleasure to give back to the Houston community through the establishment of the Schissler Foundation (previously known as the Schissler Charitable Foundation) in 1982.

At GSBS, the foundation has provided support to more than 60 students since 1993. Meeting the fellowship recipients was a favorite activity; he loved asking them thought-provoking questions that started highly relevant conversations around the GSBS Library table.



Wade Huggins (1963-2015), one of the namesakes of the Andrew Sowell -Wade Huggins Endowed Scholarships, which are presented annually at the Cancer Answers Luncheon. These scholarships were established by Marcia Huggins Jahnke and Joann Sowell in 1991 to celebrate the successful cancer treatment of their sons, Huggins and Andrew Sowell. To date, there have been more than 70 Andrew Sowell-Wade Huggins Scholars.

Wade's kind heart and generosity encouraged many.



From left: Duane Compton, Ph.D., with Priscilla Saunders, Ph.D., (GSBS supporter and wife of late GSBS faculty member Grady Saunders, Ph.D.) and GSBS faculty members Pierre McCrea, Ph.D., and Vicki Huff, Ph.D.

Compton named interim dean of Dartmouth medical school

GSBS alumnus Duane Compton, Ph.D., was named interim dean of the Geisel School of Medicine at Dartmouth College.

“I feel very honored that the faculty and administration at Dartmouth had the confidence in my abilities to appoint me Interim Dean of the medical school. It’s a wonderful group of faculty, students and staff and I’m excited to lead the institution,” said Compton.

Along with this new post, Compton is also a professor of biochemistry and senior associate dean at the Geisel School. He has been with Dartmouth since 1993.

Before joining Dartmouth in 1993, Compton completed his postdoctoral training in the field of cell biology at the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine. He obtained his Ph.D. from the graduate school in 1988. His advisor was Grady Saunders, Ph.D.

“I freely admit that during the time that I was training at GSBS,

I had no aspiration for a leadership position in the administration. I was very focused on a research career and my vision was to run an independent research laboratory,” said Compton. “In that respect, I feel indebted to GSBS for the training that the program provided. I still vividly recall some of my coursework, the journal clubs, and my thesis work in Grady Saunders’ laboratory and the wonderful group of people that were in his group at that time. I remember that biostatistics was a required course and I rely on those skills to this day. I recall the flexibility of the curriculum and how we could take courses at Baylor for credit. Overall, my strongest impression is the breadth of experience that was available to us as students throughout the Texas Medical Center.”

Compton visited GSBS on April 7 as an honored speaker in the 2015 Grady F. Saunders, Ph.D., Memorial Lecture Series. The lecture was sponsored by The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center, the Department of Genetics and the school.



Jacqueline Peltier Horn, Ph.D. (Arlinghaus/1981), pictured left, received Houston Baptist University’s 2014 Opal Goals-by Outstanding Teaching Award.

Mark Hickman, Ph.D. (2008/Hereld), is now a lieutenant colonel working at Walter Reed Army Institute of Research in Washington, D.C.

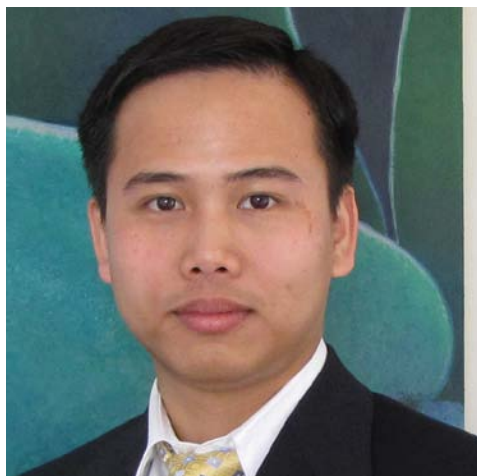


Michael Thomas, M.S. (1976/Jirgensons), pictured left, retired from MD Anderson Cancer Center in February. Thomas worked as Translational BMT Technologist and had been at the center for 45 years.

Michael Moyers, Ph.D. (1991/Horton), is the chairman of the Department of Medical Physics at China’s Fudan University.

Song Yi Ko, Ph.D. (Naora/2013) was named the recipient of the 2014 Alfred G. Knudson, Jr., M.D., Ph.D., Outstanding Dissertation Award.

Phan receives 2014 Young Face of Vietnam Award



GSBS alumnus Liem Phan, Ph.D., was named one of the recipients of the 2014 Representative Young Face of Vietnam Award.

This award is the highest honor for young people in Phan's home country of Vietnam and recognizes their outstanding achievements and contributions to society. Each year, 10 awards are given to outstanding youth by the government of Vietnam. More than 2.7 million people participated in this year's voting process.

The selection committee chose Phan as one of the recipients for the excellent milestones in his career and his significant contributions to society, which includes multiple prestigious awards such as the U.S. Department of Defense Breast Cancer Predoctoral Traineeship Award and The Vietnam Education Foundation (VEF) Fellowship.

In addition to these accolades, Phan has helped found the Vietnam Journal of Science, the first international and multi-disciplinary open access scientific journal in Vietnam. He has also organized the "Cancer Cell Signaling and Therapy Innovation" course in Vietnam for more than 400 oncologists, researchers and students in 2013 and 2014. This course was sponsored by the U.S. State Department—VEF; Vietnam National University (University of Science, Ho Chi Minh City) and Vietnam Academy of Science and Technology—Institute of Biotechnology. This course has provided its students with the most important and latest advances in the field of cancer.

Phan has also created an online platform to connect and promote collaborations among Vietnamese scientists, oncologists and students in Vietnam.

Phan graduated from GSBS in 2012 with a Ph.D. in Biomedical Sciences. His advisor was Mong-Hong Lee, Ph.D. Currently, Phan is a postdoctoral fellow at The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center in the Department of Molecular and Cellular Oncology.

Wasan named dean of Canadian pharmacy college



GSBS alumnus Kishor Wasan, Ph.D., was appointed to a five-year term as dean of the University of Saskatchewan's College of Pharmacy and Nutrition.

"The University of Texas (Health Science Center at Houston) and the GSBS gave me the foundation and the inspiration to, as noted in the GSBS mission – commit to success and make discoveries that have major impact on the treatment of diseases worldwide," said Wasan. "I completed my undergraduate pharmacy education in Austin and Ph.D. in Houston under the excellent supervision of Dr. Gabriel Lopez-Berestein. In addition to the academic credentials that I received, the Lone Star State provided me with invaluable experiences as a teacher, tutor, pharmacist preceptor, investigation pharmacist, research assistant, teaching assistant, clinical pharmacist and postdoctoral fellow. I am so appreciative of the financial support and recognition provided through many graduate student awards."

Along with this new post, Wasan is a Distinguished University Scholar and Canadian Institutes of Health Research/iCo Therapeutics Inc. Research Chair in Drug Delivery for Neglected Global Diseases. He is also a fellow of the Canadian Academy of Health Sciences, the American Association of Pharmaceutical Scientists and the Canadian Society of Pharmaceutical Scientists.

Before joining the University of Saskatchewan, Wasan was a professor and associate dean of research and graduate studies in the Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences at the University of British Columbia (UBC) and was the director and co-founder of the UBC Neglected Global Diseases Initiative (NGDI).

Wasan has published over 480 peer review articles and abstracts in top journals. He graduated from GSBS in 1993 with a Ph.D. in Pharmacology.

Photo courtesy of University of Saskatchewan's College of Pharmacy and Nutrition

Benefactor News (cont.)



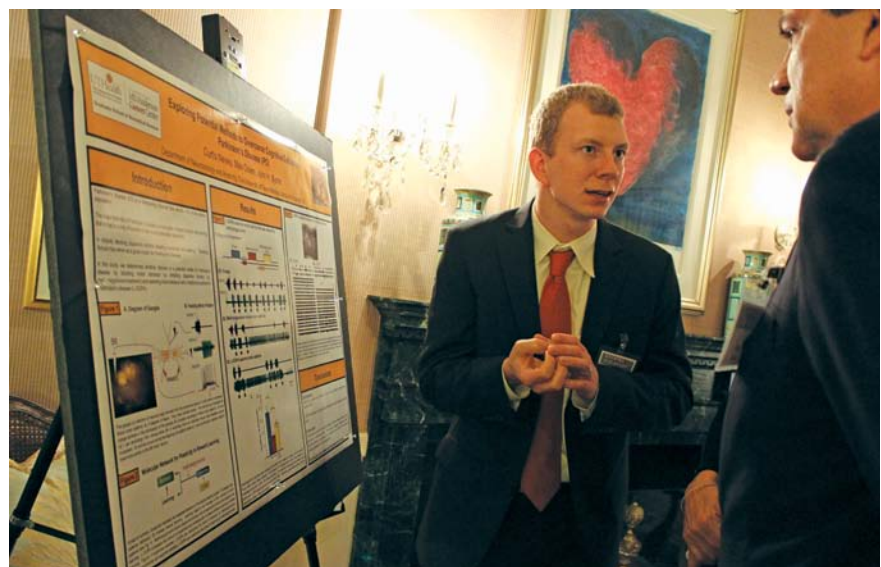
Evening of Discovery hosts Leslie and Jack Blanton, center, with GSBS award-winning students, from left to right: Curtis Neveu, Kshipra Gharpure, Kemly Philip, Natalie Sirisaengtaksin and Johnathon Rose.

The GSBS Evening of Discovery is a special night, hosted by the GSBS Advisory Council, to introduce a wider circle of friends to The University of Texas Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences at Houston and the exciting research being accomplished by its students on the way to their doctoral degrees. Conceived in 2007 by then council chair, Diana Hawkins, the event is hosted each year in a council members' home. This year, Leslie Blanton and her husband Jack were gracious hosts for the event.

The highly anticipated night offers a showcase for Discovery Fellowship recipients and other high achieving, award-winning students who present scientific posters about their research. For this year's scientific talent, five stellar young researchers presented their investigative work about Parkinson's Disease, lung disease, ovarian cancer and pancreatic cancer—the latter two also being part of MD Anderson's Moon Shots program.

Advisory Council Chair Britt Schmidt and GSBS Deans Barton and Blackburn welcomed 40 guests to the event and shared the graduate school story.

GSBS student Curtis Neveu explains his research which uses animal model systems to investigate treatments for Parkinson's disease to guest John Wallace. Neveu is one of the 2014-2015 Russell and Diana Hawkins Family Foundation Discovery Fellows.



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68	4.9%
70	5.1%
72	5.4%
74	5.7%
76	6%
78	6.4%
80	6.8%
82	7.2%
84	7.6%
86	8%
88	8.4%
90	9%



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Special Thanks and Gratitude

August 2, 2014 - April 15, 2015

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Innovation distinguishes between a leader and a follower. — Steve Jobs

*Advisory Council members

Our Contributors

Contributors – Making a contribution to GSBS up to \$999

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*I believe in innovation and that the way you get innovation
is you fund research and you learn the basic facts.— Bill Gates*

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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Deadline for news to be included in the next newsletter is July 31, 2015

Hello Alumni,

With a powerhouse of new Alumni Association Steering Committee members: Chandra Bartholomeusz, M.D., Ph.D. (2004/Ueno); Caitlin Elmore, Ph.D. (2011/Wright); Audrey Ester, Ph.D. (2010/Hecht); and Chad Wayne, Ph.D. (2002/Wilkinson) we are creating some new plans and benefits for the GSBS Alumni. First up was the GSBS Alumni Saint Arnold's Takeover on April 29. Social hours such as this one are designed exclusively for alumni (or soon to be alumni) and will center around provocative scientific discussion topics. We want to forge a more active group of local participants—after all there are over 400 of us in the Houston-Galveston area. Watch for more of these events and other new activities. Our hope is to give back to GSBS even as alumni receive added enrichment. Send me your thoughts or discussion ideas: crsingh4@gmail.com.



Right now we are in the process of determining the next Distinguished Alumni and are grateful for your outstanding nominations. Inside are photos from this past year's wildlife reunion night at the zoo where 2014-2015 Distinguished Alumna, Dr. Dorrie Lamb, parried interviewer UTHHealth AVP, Associate Dean Eric Solberg's questions about her choice of GSBS and success thereafter. Thanks to President Molli McGahren Murray, Ph.D. (2007/Keyomarsi), for leading the way and Steering Committee members Dianne Hammond, Ph.D. (1989/Strobel); Anne Netek Hart, Ph.D. (2011/Byrne); Jackie Peltier Horn, Ph.D. (1981/Arlinghaus); Steve Lott, Ph.D. (1997/Killary); Joy Marshall, Ph.D. (2003/Kaplan) and Melissa Adams-Singh, Ph.D. (2008/Carpenter). Finally, a shout-out to our Austin committee member, BethLynn Maxwell, Ph.D. (1980/Hsu) for her fresh ideas, and congrats to Dr. Hart elected as the new vice-president! One of the night's highlights definitely was hearing the jaguars talk back to Deans Blackburn and Barton—who else can get away with that?

A few dates to note: Graduation Celebration in the GSBS Student Commons on Thursday, 5-7 p.m., May 21, and Commencement, 10 a.m., Saturday, May 23, at Rice University.

Have a great summer and we'll see you next fall.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Singh', written over a light blue background.

Christopher Singh, Ph.D. (2011/Jagannath)
GSBS Alumni Association President
2014-2015

Message
to Alumni

From
GSBS
Alumni
President
Christopher
Singh, Ph.D.