

Spring 2013

GSBS NEWS

The University of Texas
GRADUATE SCHOOL of BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES *at Houston*




UTHealth
The University of Texas
Health Science Center at Houston

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS
MDAnderson
Cancer Center

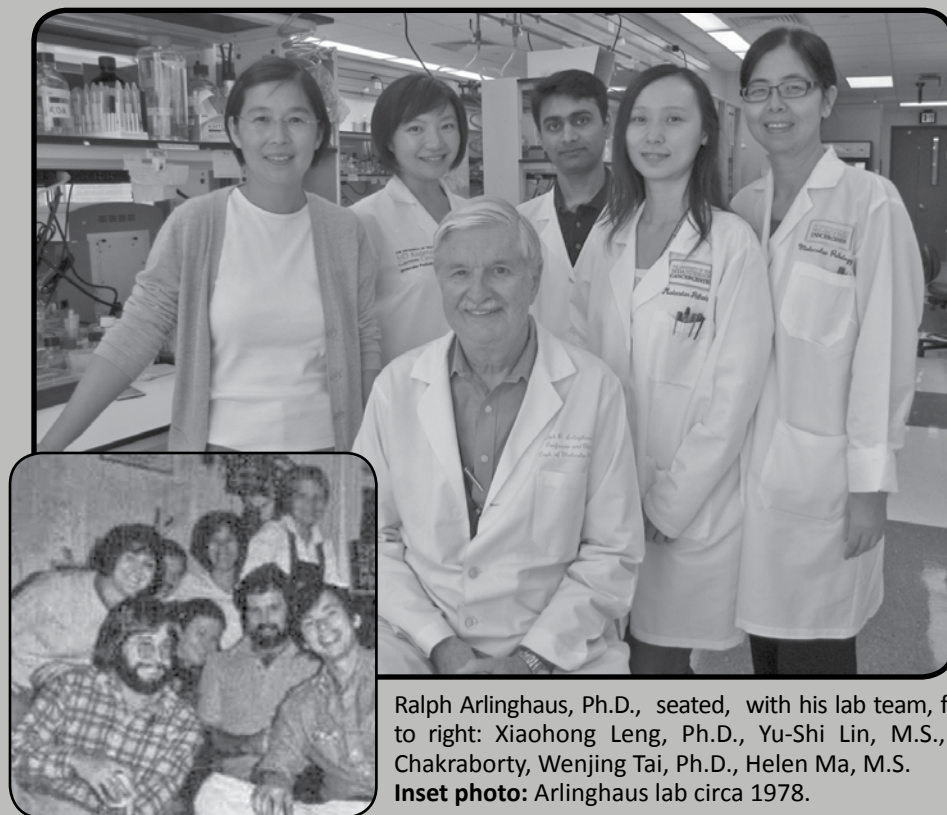
Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences

Benefactor News

Lectures series honors Dr. Arlinghaus

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AND GRATITUDE



Ralph Arlinghaus, Ph.D., seated, with his lab team, from left to right: Xiaohong Leng, Ph.D., Yu-Shi Lin, M.S., Sandip Chakraborty, Wenjing Tai, Ph.D., Helen Ma, M.S.
Inset photo: Arlinghaus lab circa 1978.

GSBS Alumni and 1980s labmates John Kopchick, Ph.D., Jackie Peltier Horn, Ph.D., and Deidre Vedder, Ph.D., are spearheading a drive to honor their mentor and invite you to join them in donating a monetary gift. The plan is to raise enough money to permanently establish or endow *The Ralph B. Arlinghaus, Ph.D., Lecture Series*. These special lectures, to be held annually, will provide the opportunity (and financial support) to bring topnotch scientists/clinicians to the Texas Medical Center for our students and faculty to meet, hear about their research and exchange ideas. We hope that you will join this endeavor—the Arlinghaus Lecture Series gives us a chance to honor Dr. A by continuing his advice to “learn from the best.”

One of the added benefits of contributing to the Lecture Series will be to attend a dinner with Arlinghaus and the first Ralph B. Arlinghaus, Ph.D., Lecturer, once the endowment is established. Additionally, there will be a permanent plaque displayed at the Graduate School with your name on it as a charter. Questions? Contact Linda Carter at 713.500.9865 or send a gift to UT-GSBS, P.O. Box 20334, Houston, TX, 77225-0334.

BACK COVER

Message to the Alumni:
Dianne Hammond, Ph.D.
President 2012-2013
GSBS Alumni Association

FRONT COVER

From left to right: Katherine Dextraze, Adam Yock, Aundrietta Duncan, Marco Leung and Patty DiMarco utilize the new GSBS Commons Student Lounge located near the GSBS reception area on the third floor of the Mitchell Building. Deans Michelle Barton and Michael Blackburn created the area, which features a self-serve coffee bar, as a place for students to socialize and study at the Graduate School.

Double Take

A Message from GSBS
Deans Barton and Blackburn



It's all about the decisions

Recruitment buzz has filled the halls of the Graduate School these last few months. It promises to be exciting as applications are evaluated, carefully-chosen students are interviewed and then further assessed for offers of admission, and responses arrive daily through April 15.

Close to 700 total applications for our Graduate School are reviewed. Then, 118 recruits are invited to be personally introduced to GSBS, our two great institutions—UTHealth and MD Anderson Cancer Center, the Texas Medical Center, and this international city of Houston we call home.

Las Vegas has nothing on us as we try to fathom the right mix of offers to make to field the highest caliber prospects. Offers to our top-choice, potential students must be balanced by the availability of support and the unpredictable tally of offers-tendered versus offers-accepted or declined. This is happening all over the nation right now as newly minted (or soon to be) degreed students in STEM majors—Science, Technology, Engineering and ath—are plotting their futures.

Our students are the next generation of biomedical pioneers, i.e., academic research scientists, scientific writers, intellectual property licensing agents, pharmaceutical company presidents, biotechnologists who establish their

own start-ups, teachers and discoverers of how to improve our health.

As new deans, we've also had the opportunity to make some other changes: a refreshed physical setting with its first-ever in-house coffee shop (see the GSBS Commons photo on the front cover); a revitalized website and increased social and regular media presence; a greater financial scholarship benefit through generous presidential and philanthropic support to attract the best incoming students and, an empowered faculty who became more fully engaged in a series of recruitment visits including concerted follow-up activities.

A recent visit with renowned geneticist, cancer researcher and early GSBS dean (1970-1976) Alfred G. Knudson, Jr., M.D., Ph.D., known for his "two-hit hypothesis" of cancer causation (today a research standard) brought inspiration and a very basic reminder. He said, "...the single most important quality to have for graduate students and all scientists is curiosity." We are most curious to see how our first new class of recruits turns out and we invite all of you to join the welcoming party.

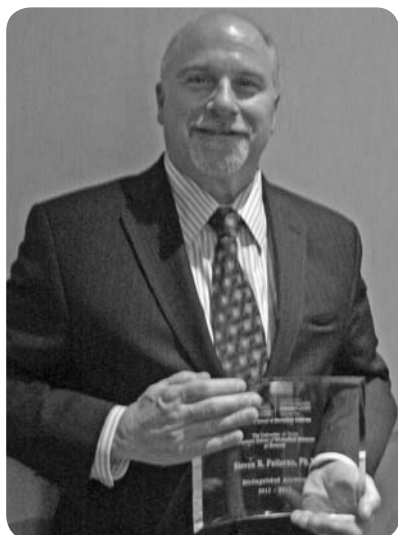
Artwork courtesy of Thornwood Gallery and artist Kevin Box

Michelle Barton

William R. Blackburn

Distinguished Alumnus

Steven R. Patierno, Ph.D. (1985/ Costa)



As Deputy Director of the Duke Cancer Institute, Steven Patierno, Ph.D., helps lead a top-ranked NCI-designated Comprehensive Cancer Center dedicated to expanding effective cancer outreach and education and advancing multi- and trans-disciplinary cancer treatment and research that provides care to more than 50,000 patients per year.

Having completed a B.S. in Pharmacy at the University of Connecticut, Patierno earned his doctoral degree at The University of Texas Graduate School of Biomedical Science at Houston where he was awarded the Rosalie B. Hite Graduate Fellowship in Cancer Research for his work in pharmacology/toxicology and the molecular biology of cancer causation. Following an NIH postdoctoral fellowship at the University of Southern California Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center he joined The George Washington (GW) University Medical Center, where most recently he served as founding Director of the GW Cancer Institute; Vivian Gill Distinguished Professor of Oncology; founding Director of the Molecular and Cellular Oncology Program; Professor of Pharmacology and Physiology; Genetics and Urology in the School of Medicine and Health Science; and Professor of Environmental, and Occupational Health and Global Health in the School of Public Health and Health Services. In June of 2012 Patierno became Deputy Director of Duke Cancer Institute.

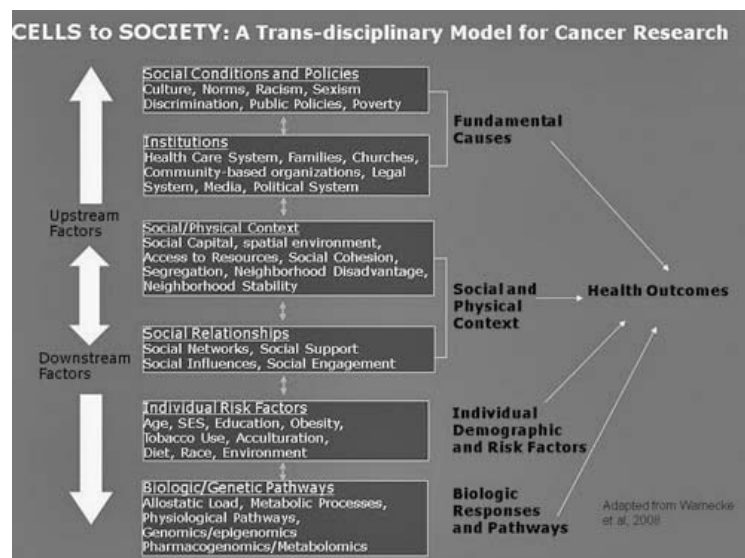
Patierno is internationally recognized as a leading expert in cancer causation and environmental carcinogenesis. His laboratory discovered the anti-cancer activity of a protein that is the subject of 10 U.S. patents and under commercial development by a bio-pharmaceutical company as a molecularly targeted cancer therapeutic. He was one of the founding members of the George Washington University Pharmacogenomics Program, the GW Entrepreneurs Roundtable and served as a senior advisor to the University's Technology Transfer Office.

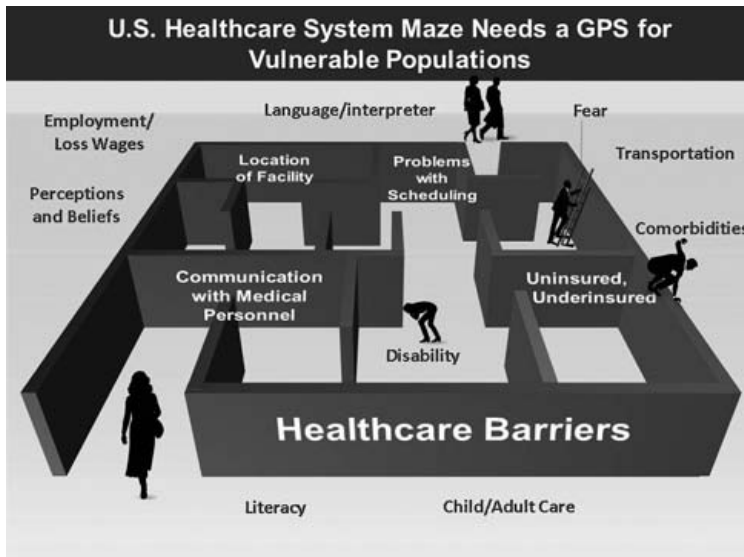
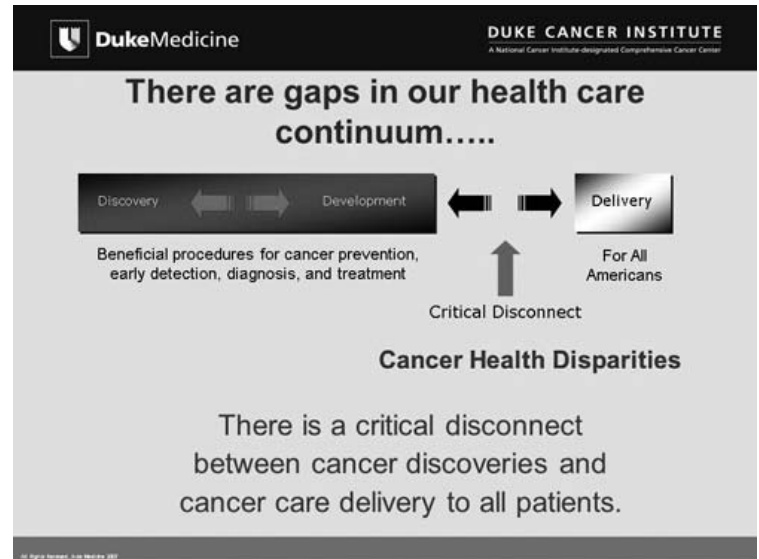
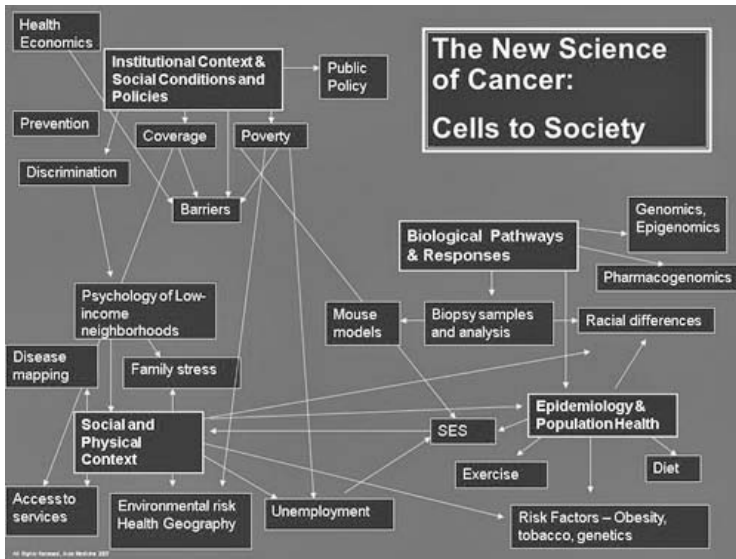
Patierno is an accomplished teacher and has been principal mentor to 21 Ph.D. graduate students, program director to over 50 additional graduate students and more than 20 postdoctoral fellows, medical residents and fellows, and a host of undergraduate trainees. While at GW Patierno played a major role in the creation and chartering of their School of Public Health and Health Services.

With over two decades of experience managing over \$30 million of grants, Patierno has secured and implemented many large, complex, biomedical and public health-related research grants (both laboratory and population sciences), as well as patient-centered and community-based grants in cancer disparities. Central to the mission of the Duke Cancer Institute is eliminating cancer health disparities and Patierno has received numerous awards for his leadership in this area.

Identifying the issues in cancer health disparities and streamlining the process to finding and activating solutions to this multifaceted problem were the primary focus of his talk at the GSBS Alumni Reunion where he was named the 2012-2013 Distinguished Alumnus. These slides are from his presentation and reflect his overarching interest in solving cancer health disparities...

A full biosketch and CV may be found at www.uthouston.edu/gsbs/alumni/distinguished-alumni/





Participation is needed from all sectors to find solutions:



DukeMedicine **DUKE CANCER INSTITUTE**
A National Cancer Institute-designated Comprehensive Cancer Center

Critical Role of Graduate Education and GSBS

1. Producing the next generation of scientists and clinicians who understand the complex intricacies of "omics" and cellular physiology, as well as broader context of biomedical research and the healthcare continuum.
2. Producing bright, science-trained young people willing to tackle complex problems at the systems and societal levels, including discovery, development, delivery, health care equity, health care economics etc.

DukeMedicine **DUKE CANCER INSTITUTE**
A National Cancer Institute-designated Comprehensive Cancer Center

Science on the leading edge.....

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Alumni Reunion 2012



Marenda
Wilson-Pham

Nam
Pham



Joy
Lademora

Brenda
Gaughan

Cheryl Spitzenberger

Lily
D'Agostino



Ivone
Bruno

Anthony
Bruno



Chris Pinaire

Nicole Pinaire



Hannah Wingate

Angela Alexander



Sol
Bobst



Bill Mattox

Bón Quy
Trinh

Dihua Yu

Paul
Chiao



Vaibhav
Juneja

Michael Valladolid



Dianne
Hammond

Shirlette
Milton

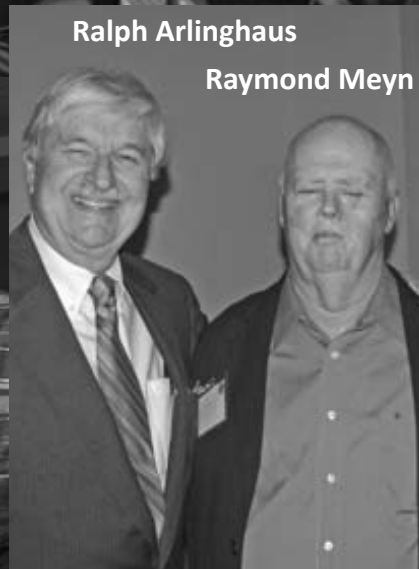
Michael
Milton



Tamara Solomon

Hector
Garcia

Martha
Garcia



Ralph Arlinghaus

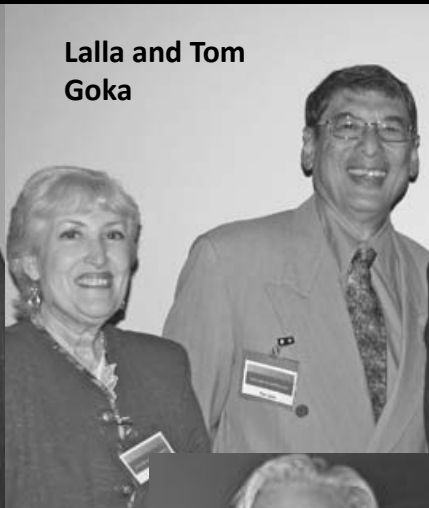
Raymond Meyn

Alumni Reunion 2012



**Christopher
Singh**

**Melissa
Adams-Singh**



**Lalla and Tom
Goka**



**Michael
Blackburn**



Steven Patierno

Michelle Barton



**Ashley
Hood**

**Eric
Solberg**



Jackie Peltier Horn



Jim Hammond



Priscilla Saunders



Dolores Peterson

Janina Hurlbert



**N. Burr
Furlong**

**Beng
Ho**



**Uday
Mahagaokar**

**Suneeta
Mahagaokar**



**Annie
Lee**

**Keith Syson
Chan**

**Vicki
Knutson**



David Jeter

**Cameron
Jeter**



Dah Hsi Ho

Anne Meyn



**Geoffrey
Bartholomeusz**

**Kadriye
Ozpolat**



**Bulent
Ozpolat**

**Chandra
Bartholomeusz**



Adam Yock

Tre' O'Brien

Brian Taylor

GSBS Faculty Membership Report



Dr. Kevin Morano
GSBS Faculty President
2011-2013

MEMBERS REAPPOINTED WITH COMMENDATION

David Johnson	Roger O'Neil
S. Cheenu Kappadath	Donna Reeve
Shiaw-Yih Lin	Kimberly Schluns
Gordon Mills	Jill Schumacher

MEMBERS REAPPOINTED WITH HIGHEST COMMENDATION

Valentin Dragoi	Ed Jackson
Elsa Flores	R. Jason Stafford
Varsha Gandhi	

NEW REGULAR MEMBERS

James P. Allison, Ph.D.
Professor and Chairman
Immunology
MD Anderson Cancer Center
Research interests: T cell co-stimulation; tumor immunology

Laura Beretta, Ph.D.
Professor
Molecular and Cellular Oncology
MD Anderson Cancer Center
Research interests: liver cancer; chronic liver injury; liver progenitor cells

Shawn B. Bratton, Ph.D.
Associate Professor
Molecular Carcinogenesis
MD Anderson Cancer Center
Research interests: apoptosis; autophagy; caspases; BCL-2 family members; inhibitor of apoptosis proteins

Powel H. Brown, M.D., Ph.D.
Professor and Chair
Clinical Cancer Prevention
MD Anderson Cancer Center
Research interests: breast cancer; gene regulation; signal transduction; cancer prevention

Francesca Cole, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
Molecular Carcinogenesis
MD Anderson Cancer Center
Research interests: DNA repair; homologous recombination; meiosis; gene conversion; evolution; mouse genetics

Michael A. Curran, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
Immunology
MD Anderson Cancer Center
Research interests: immunotherapy; tumor immunology; T-cell activation; myeloid-derived suppressor cells; combination therapies; cancer vaccines

Giulio F. Draetta, M.D., Ph.D.
Professor
Genomic Medicine
MD Anderson Cancer Center
Research interests: drug discovery; tumor initiating cells; functional genomics

Clifton David Fuller, M.D., Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
Radiation Oncology
MD Anderson Cancer Center
Research interests: radiation oncology; multimodality imaging; radiotherapy treatment planning, CT, MRI, PET, image-guided radiotherapy; imaging biomarkers; intensity modulated radiotherapy (IMRT); head and neck cancer

Jianhua Hu, Ph.D.
Associate Professor
Biostatistics
MD Anderson Cancer Center
Research interests: modeling correlated/longitudinal data; analysis of high dimensional bioinformatics/biomedical data; dimension reduction; variable selection; robust and nonparametric statistics; Bayesian statistics; clinical trial designs

Raghu Kalluri, M.D., Ph.D.
Professor and Chair
Cancer Biology
MD Anderson Cancer Center
Research interests: extracellular matrix biology; organ fibrosis; tumor microenvironment and cancer progression; metastasis; angiogenesis

Annemieke Kavelaars, Ph.D.
Professor
Symptom Research
MD Anderson Cancer Center
Research interests: neuroimmunology; molecular mechanisms; GPCR signaling; pain; inflammation

Ilya Levental, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
Integrative Biology and Pharmacology
UTHealth Medical School
Research interests: structure of eukaryotic membranes; post-translational mechanisms for targeting membrane microdomains; functional diversity in protein transmembrane domains

Ying Liu, M.D., Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
Neurosurgery and IMM
UTHealth Medical School
Research interests: pluripotent stem cells; spinal cord injury; neurodegenerative disease

Report includes
August 2012 through
February 2013
Membership Committee
Meetings

Naoki Nakayama, Ph.D.
Associate Professor
IMM
UTHealth Medical School
Research interests: stem cell biology; nuclear reprogramming; developmental biology; regenerative medicine; hematopoiesis; skeletogenesis

Vihang Narkar, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
Center for Metabolic and Degenerative Diseases – Institute of Molecular Medicine
UTHealth Medical School
Research interests: nuclear receptors; transcription; skeletal muscle; angiogenesis; diabetes; ischemia; muscular dystrophies

Jing Ning, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
Biomedical Statistics
MD Anderson Cancer Center
Research interests: design and analysis of clinical trials; longitudinal data analysis; univariate and multivariate survival analysis

Bulent Ozpolat, M.D., Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
Experimental Therapeutics
MD Anderson Cancer Center
Research interests: targeted therapies (small molecule and siRNA-gene therapy); autophagy; nanotechnology for drug and siRNA delivery; in vitro and in vivo models of breast, prostate, pancreatic and ovarian cancer and leukemia

Arvind Rao, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
Bioinformatics and Computational Biology
MD Anderson Cancer Center
Research interests: image informatics; data mining; machine learning; signal processing; image processing; genomics; bioinformatics

Jair C. Soares, M.D.
Professor and Chair
Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences
UTHealth Medical School
Research interests: mood disorders; neuroimaging; clinical psychopharmacology; clinical neurosciences

Keila E. Torres, M.D., Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
Surgical Oncology
MD Anderson Cancer Center
Research interests: soft tissue sarcomas; understanding the molecular events resulting in soft tissue sarcoma initiation, progression and metastasis

Eduardo Vilar-Sanchez, M.D., Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
Clinical Cancer Prevention
Research interests: medical oncology; colorectal cancer; cancer genetics; hereditary colorectal cancer; gastrointestinal cancers; drug discovery; drug development; chemoprevention

Pamela L. Wenzel, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
Center for Stem Cell and Regenerative Medicine, IMM/Pediatric Surgery
UTHealth Medical School
Research interests: stem cells; hematopoiesis; biomechanical force; development; immunology

Ignacio I. Wistuba, M.D.
Professor and Chairman
Translational Molecular Pathology
MD Anderson Cancer Center
Research interests: lung cancer molecular profiling; lung cancer early pathogenesis; lung cancer next-gen sequencing; lung cancer targeted therapy; lung cancer resistance to treatment mechanisms

Jiaqian Wu, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
Neurosurgery and IMM
UTHealth Medical School
Research interests: gene transcription and regulation of stem cell differentiation; genomics; proteomics and bioinformatics

NEW ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

Richard A. Amos, M.Sc.
Senior Medical Physicist
Radiation Physics
MD Anderson Cancer Center
Research interests: proton beam radiotherapy physics

Richard Castillo, Ph.D.
Instructor
Radiation Physics
MD Anderson Cancer Center
Research interests: deformable image registration; functional lung imaging; computed tomography; clinical validation

Lisa S. Chen, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
Experimental Therapeutics
MD Anderson Cancer Center
Research interests: leukemia; translational research; Pim kinase inhibitors; AML

GSBS Faculty Membership Report (Cont.)

Weiliang Du, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor

Radiation Physics

MD Anderson Cancer Center

Research interests: radiation therapy physics; image-guided radiation therapy; stereotactic radiation treatments; magnetic resonance imaging

Gerald S. Falchook, M.D.

Assistant Professor

Investigational Cancer Therapeutics

MD Anderson Cancer Center

Research interests: hematology/oncology; targeted therapy; phase I studies; drug development; clinical trial design; angiogenesis

Michele Guindani, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor

Biostatistics

MD Anderson Cancer Center

Research interests: statistics; Bayesian statistics; integrative genomics; multiplicity testing; spatial analysis

John P. Hagan, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor

Neurosurgery

UTHealth Medical School

Research interests: the role of microRNAs and their post-transcriptional regulators in developmental and cancer biology

Andrea E. Harbison, M.S.

Obstetrics, Gynecology and Reproductive Sciences

UTHealth Medical School

Research interests: genetic counseling; prenatal; multicultural issues

Jennifer L. Johnson, M.S.

Senior Medical Physicist

Radiation Physics

MD Anderson Cancer Center

Research interests: radiation therapy; quality and safety

Jennifer M. Lemons, M.S.

Instructor

Pediatrics

UTHealth Medical School

Research interests: genetics; genetic counseling

Dershan Luo, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor

Radiation Physics

MD Anderson Cancer Center

Research interests: gamma knife; PET, 4D

Adam D. Melancon, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor

Radiation Physics

MD Anderson Cancer Center

Research interests: proton therapy; biologically image-guided adaptive radiotherapy (BIGART)

Steven W. Millward, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor

Experimental Diagnostic Imaging

MD Anderson Cancer Center

Research interests: mRNA display; directed evolution; mini-proteins; cyclic peptides; unnatural amino acids; click chemistry; cancer; molecular imaging

Scott D. Olson, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor

Pediatric Surgery

UTHealth Medical School

Research interests: adult stem cell therapies; mesenchymal stem cells; immune modulation; traumatic brain injury

Kyla J. Patek, M.S.

Instructor

Obstetrics, Gynecology and Reproductive Sciences

UTHealth Medical School

Research interests: prenatal and preconception genetic counseling

Lan V. Pham, Ph.D.

Hematopathology

MD Anderson Cancer Center

Research interests: B-cell lymphomas; signal transduction; transcriptional regulation; cancer cell metabolism

Sarina A. Piha-Paul, M.D.

Assistant Professor

Investigational Cancer Therapeutics

MD Anderson Cancer Center

Research interests: Phase I trial design; non-invasive imaging biomarkers; novel drug development; molecular basis of cancer; targeted therapies

Dachun Wang, M.D.

Assistant Professor

Institute of Molecular Medicine

UTHealth Medical School

Research interests: stem cells; lung stem/progenitor cells; heart/lung injury/disease; cell-based therapy

James N. Yang, Ph.D.

Associate Professor

Radiation Physics

MD Anderson Cancer Center

Research interests: therapeutic radiation physics; intra- and extra-cranial radiosurgery; Monte Carlo simulation of radiation dosimetry

Niki Zacharias Millward, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor

Experimental Diagnostic Imaging

MD Anderson Cancer Center

Research interests: metabolic imaging; hyperpolarized magnetic resonance spectroscopy; cancer cell metabolism; magnetic resonance contrast agents

Eight GSBS faculty members and one visiting lecturer have been selected to contribute to groundbreaking research as part of the six teams in MD Anderson's Moon Shots Program, an unprecedented effort to dramatically accelerate the pace of converting scientific discoveries into clinical advances that reduce cancer deaths. These members are:

Michael Davies, M.D., Ph.D. **John Heymach, M.D., Ph.D.**
Mien-Chie Hung, Ph.D. **Guillermo Garcia-Manero, M.D.**
Jeffrey Gershenwald, M.D. **Christopher Logothetis, M.D.**
Gordon Mills, M.D., Ph.D. **William Plunkett, Ph.D.**
Anil Sood, M.D.

Dean Michelle Barton, Ph.D.; Dean Michael Blackburn, Ph.D.; and **Jacqueline Hecht, Ph.D.**, were selected as 2013 members of The University of Texas Academy of Health Science Education for their teaching excellence. Hecht is affiliated with the Human and Molecular Genetics Program and founded the Genetic Counseling Program in 1989. While Barton and Blackburn have been leading the GSBS since July 1, 2012, in dual deanship roles, each continues to teach and lead scientific research labs.

GSBS faculty members **Sharon Dent, Ph.D.; Elizabeth Grimm, Ph.D.; Raghu Kalluri, M.D., Ph.D.; William Plunkett, Ph.D.;** and **Anil Sood, M.D.**, were elected Fellows of the American Association for the Advancement of Science—an international, non-profit organization dedicated to advancing science around the world.

Lovell Jones, Ph.D., has been selected as one of the top African-American scientists in the U.S. by the HistoryMakers, a non-profit research and educational organization that records and preserves the oral histories of noted African Americans. Jones is a professor of Health Disparities Research at The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center. He is also the director of the Dorothy I. Height Center for Health Equity and Evaluation Research, a collaborative partnership of MD Anderson and the University of Houston.

Steve Massey, Ph.D., (The Elizabeth Morford Professor and Research Director in the Ruiz Department of Ophthalmology and Visual Sciences at the UTHealth Medical School) received the prestigious Brian Boycott Prize for achievement in retinal neuroscience. This distinction was awarded at the 11th Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology (FASEB) meeting on Retinal Neurobiology and Visual Processing in late July 2012 in Steamboat Springs, Colo. The prize is awarded to those researchers that have made a significant contribution to the understanding of the retina and its role in vision processing.

Dianna Milewicz, M.D., Ph.D., was named Chair-elect of Graduate Research, Education and Training (GREAT) Group—Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) Steering Committee, M.D./Ph.D. Section. The objective of this group is the promotion of quality Ph.D. and postdoctoral education in biomedical science. Milewicz was also honored by BioHouston at its upcoming Fourth Annual Lunch Celebrating Women in Science on Nov. 14, 2012. BioHouston is the hub where academic and research institutions connect with life science companies and service providers to build successful companies and products that save and improve lives. Milewicz is affiliated with the Program in Human and Molecular Genetics, the program in Cell and Regulatory Biology and the M.D./Ph.D. Program.

Henry Strobel, Ph.D. was honored for his semi-retirement on Sept. 18, 2012, at a reception at the UT-Medical School. Strobel is affiliated with the Program in Biochemistry and Molecular Biology. He serves as the GSBS ombudsman.

Faculty emerita Margaret L. Kripke, Ph.D. was appointed to the position of chief scientific officer of the Cancer Prevention and Research Institute of Texas (CPRIT) on Dec. 10, 2012. Her duties will be to oversee the Institute's Research portfolio which has funded the majority of the Institute's \$300 million in annual grant awards and is the second largest funding source for cancer-related research in the U.S. Kripke retired from The UT-MD Anderson Cancer Center in 2007.



GSBS Faculty President Kevin Morano, Ph.D., (pictured left with Deans Barton and Blackburn) was awarded the 2012-2013 Paul E. Darlington Mentor Award for GSBS Faculty. This award recognizes excellent mentoring through recognition of outstanding mentors. Morano is an associate professor affiliated with the Biochemistry and Molecular Biology; Cell and Regulatory Biology; and Microbiology and Molecular Genetics Programs. He has been the GSBS faculty president since 2011 and mentored nine graduate students.



From the left: GSBS Professor Sharon Dent, Ph.D., and Dean Michelle Barton, Ph.D., stand with GSBS students Zeynep Coban, Kadir Akdemir and Aundrietta De Van Duncan at Coban and Akdemir's wedding in Turkey. The group celebrated the couple's nuptials in the summer of 2012.

Science and Serendipity: A Valentine's story from the lab

by Tracey Barnett

Every day students from the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences work on projects in hopes of making great scientific discoveries in their labs. Sometimes their discoveries lead to more than advancements in research – sometimes they lead to love as in the case of newlyweds Kadir Akdemir and Zeynep Coban.

Akdemir and Coban had a grand wedding in their home country of Turkey in the summer of 2012, but they first met at GSBS while working in the lab of Dean Michelle Barton, Ph.D., in 2010.

"We were colleagues before we started dating," said Coban. "At that time, I was a rotation student in Dr. Barton's lab, where Kadir was a third-year graduate student."

"During my application process to GSBS, I was searching through the names in different labs in order to contact somebody to have more information about the school," said Coban. "One of the first names I came across was Kadir's. Also, since it is a Turkish name, it caught my attention immediately. I e-mailed to him with a lot of questions about the school and the program. He wrote me back, answering all of my questions. This was our first contact, but we met in person at school during the week of orientation."

The couple has worked together in the lab for nearly two years. Then in 2012 they decided to get engaged.

"It was a simple but very personal proposal," said Akdemir. It was March, the night of the supermoon (an occurrence when the full moon is closer to the Earth than any other time).

"I love the full moon nights so I decided to use that opportunity and told my (our) story while we were walking outside and staring to the moon somewhere near Rice Village."

And while getting married while in graduate school may not be an opportune time for some, Akdemir and Coban knew it was right for them.

“As graduate students in the same lab/school, we decided to start our married life while pursuing our degrees so that we can support each other and share the academic/non-academic duties when either of us needed some help. At the end of the day we understand what we both are going through and wanted to share it instead of try to tackle it individually,” said Akdemir.

While studying at GSBS, they enlisted the help of their families to plan their wedding in Turkey which included a few guests from GSBS: fellow lab mate Aundrietta De Van Duncan, Professor Sharon Dent, Ph.D.; and Dean Barton.

“Since we have all of our families and most of our friends in Turkey, we wanted to be all together with them at this special event,” said Coban.

“We were so lucky to have wonderful families, dealing with every detail about the wedding. Since we were both very busy and far away, they took charge of everything, especially my younger brother (Omer)—it was a good experience for his coming wedding—and my youngest uncle (Sahin),” said Akdemir.

“The only difficulty that we had was about my wedding dress,” added Coban. “My dress was tailored from scratch in just two weeks after we went back to Turkey.” Also during this time, Dean Barton visited with GSBS alumnus Mustafa Ozen, M.D., Ph.D., an associate professor at Yeditepe University in Istanbul. But once the dress was done, and the sightseeing was through, the party was ready to begin.

“We had two nights for our wedding. The first one called “Henna night” took place in Izmir. At this night, I had a traditional costume. Our friends and family members sang traditional songs and danced, surrounding me. It was emotional, meanwhile, so entertaining,” said Coban. “The second wedding, a modern one, was performed in Yalova, which is Kadir’s hometown. We had so much fun with our friends and families.”

“I was honored to be able to experience their wedding,” said De Van Duncan. “I will be forever grateful to them and their families. It was truly a once in a lifetime experience. It was a blast!”

“We are so grateful to our advisor Dr. Michelle Barton, Dr. Sharon Dent and our dear friend and fellow graduate student Aundrietta Duncan for attending our wedding and sharing this wonderful experience with us,” said Akdemir and Coban. “Our families and we felt so honored and happy to have them in Turkey. Their presence made our wedding an unforgettable memory for us.”

Akdemir and Coban returned to GSBS after their nuptials as they continue to pursue their career goal of becoming independent researchers having postdoctoral positions in well-established labs.

“We have a strong perception that our postdoctoral training will make us fulfilled enough for the next step: setting our own lab,” said Akdemir and Coban. “If we can obtain a chance to have our own lab in the future, our lab will be determined to put a great amount of effort into understanding mechanisms of cancer by integrating different experimental and computational methods. We have a strong belief in this kind of integrative approach to solve various biological problems.”



Student News

Eight students received the 2012 Medical School Dean's Research Scholarship Awards. The awards are given to GSBS students who have achieved distinction in biomedical research. Each student receives a \$2,500 scholarship. This year awardees were:

Kimberly Busiek
Charles Darkoh
Julia Hill
Callie Kwartler

Christopher Conner
Jessica Galloway-Pena
(Ana) Ale Klauer
Jacob Verghese

Ariana Andrei, Anastasia 'Stacy' Eriksson and Marcello Mulas were awarded first place in the Society for Neuroscience's (SfN) Brain Awareness Video Contest. Their winning video, *The Carrot*, follows a girl studying Italian and shows the interworkings of her brain by using sock-puppets to represent different regions of the organ. Andrei is a Ph.D. student studying neuroscience; Eriksson is an undergraduate student interested in neuroscience; and Mulas is Level 1 Research Fellow at UTHealth Medical School.

Nandini Rambahal received a travel award to present her cancer research at the Biophysical Society's 57th Annual Meeting in Philadelphia in February. Rambahal is affiliated with the Biochemistry and Molecular Biology Program and her advisor is Alemayehu Gorfe, Ph.D.

Stuart Red, his advisor, Anne Sereno, Ph.D., and other scientists from the UTHealth Neuroscience Program published a study that developed an app to measure head injuries in soccer players.

David Savage, a fourth-year M.D., Ph.D. student, was elected the American Medical Association Speaker of the Governing Council for the AMA Medical Student Section. There are eight members of the Governing Council who work with the AMA staff to lead

the 50,000-member student section of the AMA. As speaker, Savage will work with AMA staff and the vice speaker to plan and run the national meeting in Chicago in June 2013.

Antonio Tito received the Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology's MARC Travel Award to attend the Genetics Society of America Conference at Washington D.C. Tito is affiliated with the Neuroscience Program and his advisor is Sheng Zhang, Ph.D.

A Spooktacular Sight



GSBS students from the Microbiology and Molecular Genetics Program dressed up as the characters of *Alice in Wonderland* for the GSBS 2013 Halloween Friday Afternoon Club on October 26, 2012. To see all the photos from this event, please visit the GSBS Facebook page.

Student Awards

AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS

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 \$1,150,000 to present more than 80 renewable scholarships which currently are \$5,000 each. The recipients for 2012-2013 are:



Students

Howard Rosoff
Sarah Klein
Nathan Ihle
Christa Manton
Drew Deniger
Connie Larsson
Adam Yock

Advisors

Dr. Dean Lee
Dr. Juan Fueyo
Dr. Garth Powis
Dr. Joya Chandra
Dr. Laurence Cooper
Dr. Guillermina Lozano
Dr. Laurence Court

(not pictured) Kaitlin Gutierrez
Tamara Laskowski
Jacquelyn Reuther

Dr. Ellen Richie
Dr. Brian Davis
Dr. Ann Killary

Student Awards

THE R. W. (BILL) BUTCHER AWARD

Established in 1997, the R. W. (Bill) Butcher Endowed Fund provides an annual award of \$2,500 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 challenge. This year's recipient is:

Student

Hillary Caruso

Advisor

Dr. Laurence Cooper



THE CITY FEDERATION OF WOMEN'S CLUBS ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP IN THE BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES

Established in 2005, this \$2,500 scholarship rewards an exceptional GSBS student who is working in an area vital to the biomedical sciences and of particular current significance in that year's national research perspective. For 2012-2013 The City Federation of Women's Clubs Scholarship focus is biomedical imaging. This year's recipient is:

Student

Feifei Xiao

Advisor

Dr. Ralf Krahe



ISAIAH J. FIDLER GRADUATE FELLOWSHIP IN CANCER METASTASIS

This Fellowship is provided by the graduate program in Cancer Metastasis Research: From Bench to Bedside. It provides a \$3,000 supplement to the GSBS graduate assistantship and may be renewed for up to three years. It is awarded to a pre-candidacy Ph.D. student whose research is related to cancer metastasis. The renewed recipient for 2012-2013 is:

Student

Frank Lowery

Advisor

Dr. Dihua Yu



GIGLI FAMILY ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP

This \$1,000 endowed scholarship was created by Dr. Irma Gigli, 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. The year's recipient:

Student

Thuy Le

Advisor

Dr. Michael Blackburn



FLOYD HAAR, M.D., ENDOWED MEMORIAL RESEARCH AWARD IN MEMORY OF FRED A HAAR

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 recipient for this year is:

Student

Blake Johnson

Advisor

Dr. Joya Chandra



THE RUSSELL AND DIANA HAWKINS FAMILY FOUNDATION DISCOVERY FELLOWSHIPS

The Discovery Fellowships provide full stipends to exceptional doctoral GSBS students and may be renewed for up to three years. These Fellowships recognize students whose research is innovative in specifically selected, rapidly emerging fields of research. The recipients for this year are:

Student

Jacy Crosby

Rajasha Rupaimoole

Advisor

Dr. Eric Boerwinkle

Dr. Anil Sood



Student Awards



THE JACQUELINE T. HECHT FOUNDING DIRECTOR SCHOLARSHIP

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 award outstanding current students in the Genetic Counseling program. The recipient for 2012-2013:

Student
Shannon Mulligan

Advisor
Ms. Claire Singletary

ROSALIE B. HITE FELLOWSHIP

In 1946 Houston citizen Rosalie B. Hite left her entire estate to establish a fellowship program for cancer research. In 2012-2013 this award is for \$28,400 and includes stipend, tuition and fees, plus a single travel allowance up to \$850 for each student to present his or her research at a national meeting. The recipients are:

Student

Lawrence Bronk
Nahir Cortes Santiago
Julianna Bronk
John Eley
Jacquelyn Reuther
Maitri Shah
Wei-Lei Yang

Advisor

Dr. Renata Pasqualini
Dr. Candelaria Gomez-Manzano
Dr. Wadih Arap
Dr. Rebecca Howell
Dr. Ann Killary
Dr. George Calin
Dr. Hui-Kuan Lin



THE T. C. HSU ENDOWED MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

To remember Dr. Hsu and his remarkable research, 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 and serves to acknowledge the stellar research accomplishments of graduate students focusing on Dr. Hsu's areas of research: genetics and cell biology. This award is \$7,000 and 2012-2013 recipient is:

Student
Xian Zhang

Advisor
Dr. Hui-Kuan Lin



WILLIAM W. AND PEARL WALLIS KNOX FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP

Established in 2007, this is the fifth year to award a scholarship from the Knox Foundation whose interests are research in the areas of AIDS and other infectious diseases in humans. This \$2,500 award is presented to:

Student
Jessica Galloway-Pena

Advisor
Dr. Barbara Murray



MARILYN & FREDERICK R. LUMMIS, JR., M.D., FELLOWSHIP IN THE BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES

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. The 2012-2013 recipient:

Student
Alexandra Marshall

Advisor
Dr. Ambro van Hoof

THE THOMAS STULL MATNEY, PH.D., SCHOLARSHIP IN ENVIRONMENTAL GENETICS OR CANCER GENETICS

This one time scholarship of \$4,000 honors the memory of one of GSBS' early associate deans and faculty members, Tom Matney. Dr. Matney was interested in many things with a particular love for the two important areas of research: Environmental Genetics (Epigenetics) and Cancer Genetics. This award will be made to a top student in either of these areas. The 2012-2013 recipient:

Student

Selina Vattathil

Advisor

Dr. Paul Scheet



DEE S. & 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. In 2006, the Ralph H. and Ruth J. McCullough Foundation made an additional generous gift in support of this award. Through the endowment, an award of \$1,000 is provided to the winning presenter in the graduate student category at the Annual Neuroscience Scientific Poster Session, and an additional \$500 allotment is given for travel to a scientific meeting. This year the recipient is:

Student

Brittany Parker

Advisor

Dr. Wei Zhang



PRESIDENTS' RESEARCH SCHOLARS

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 and are shown here, left to right:

Students

Callie Kwartler
Deepavali Chakravarti
Jessica Galloway-Pena
Christopher Conner

Advisors

Dr. Dianna Milewicz
Dr. Elsa Flores
Dr. Barbara Murray
Dr. Nitin Tandon



THE FADINE JACKSON ROQUEMORE SCHOLARSHIP IN CANCER RESEARCH

Established in 2012 by a longtime supporter of GSBS graduate students, this \$3,250 scholarship encourages and rewards a very promising graduate doctoral student. The recipient for 2012-2013:

Student

Jessica Ann Chacon

Advisor

Dr. Laszlo Radvanyi



SAM TAUB AND BEATRICE BURTON FELLOWSHIP IN VISION DISEASE

Mary Wright and her sister, Joanna Ross, established this \$2,000 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 the potential therapies. The 2012-2013 recipient is:

Student

Jennifer Churchill

Advisor

Dr. Stephen Daiger



Student Awards



TZU CHI FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE

The Tzu Chi Foundation provides this \$1,000 Scholarship to recognize and assist outstanding GSBS doctoral students. Successful applicants will be able to 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. This year's recipients are:

Student

Tamara Laskowski
Brittany Parker

Advisor

Dr. Brian Davis
Dr. Wei Zhang



PRESIDENT JAMES T. WILLERSON ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIPS IN GENETIC COUNSELING

This scholarship was established in honor of former UHealth President James T. Willerson, who was a longtime supporter of the GSBS. The endowment provides a \$1,000 scholarship for genetic counseling. This year's recipient is:

Student

Stephanie Thompson

Advisor

Ms. Claire Singletary



NANCY BEAMER WILLERSON ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIPS IN GENETIC COUNSELING

This scholarship was established in honor of Nancy Beamer Willerson, a longtime supporter of the GSBS. The endowment provides a \$1,000 scholarship for genetic counseling. The recipient for 2012-2013 is:

Student

Katherine Dempsey

Advisor

Ms. Claire Singletary



ROBERTA M. & JEAN M. WORSHAM ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP IN THE BEHAVIORAL AND NEUROSCIENCES

This endowed scholarship of \$1,500 fosters exceptional students working in the fields of the behavioral sciences or neurosciences particularly in the areas of addiction or obsessive/compulsive behavior. The recipient for 2012-2013 is:

Student

Sarah Eagleman

Advisor

Dr. Valentin Dragoi



THE WEI YU FAMILY ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIP

This endowed scholarship of \$1,200 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. The first recipient of this award is:

Student

Janai Krishnamurthy

Advisor

Dr. Laurence Cooper

Jonathan Berrou, Ph.D., (2012/O'Neil) the first alumnus of The University of Texas at Brownsville and Texas Southmost College's Minority Biomedical Research Support Research Initiative for Scientific Enhancement Program, to earn a doctoral degree, spoke to students at the Brownville campus on Sept. 14, 2012. Berrou is a post-doctoral fellow conducting research on the mechanisms that regulate potassium secretion in kidneys at The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston.

Violeta Chávez, Ph.D., (2009/Garsin) a biology instructor at El Paso Community College's Transmountain Campus (EPCC), along with faculty at EPCC and New Mexico State University, received a Transforming Undergraduate Education in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics Grant from the National Science Foundation. The grant (\$161,367 for NMSU and \$63,269 EPCC) will provide funding through the summer of 2014. With this funding, Chávez and her EPCC colleague Melinda Camarillo, plan to integrate mathematics and biology concepts into their courses especially in the biology lab.

Duane Compton, Ph.D., (1988/Saunders) was named one of 10 new members of the inaugural class of the Academy of Faculty Master Educators at Geisel School of Medicine at Dartmouth College. Compton and others were recognized for their accomplishments in teaching and mentoring.

Auinash Kalsotra, Ph.D., (2005/Strobel) has accepted a faculty position at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

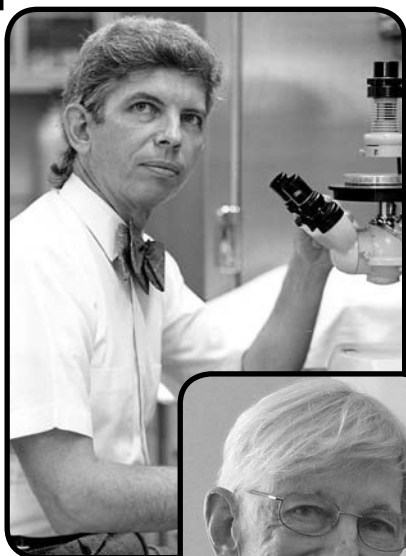
John Kopchick, Ph.D., (1980/Arlinghaus) was named a 2012 National Academy of Inventors Charter Fellow. Kopchick is a professor of Molecular Biology and the Goll-Ohio Eminent Scholar at the Department of Biomedical Sciences at Ohio University's Heritage College of Osteopathic Medicine. He holds 16 U.S. patents, one foreign patent and has seven patents pending. Kopchick was honored by the School as a distinguished alumnus in 2006.

The International Frontiers in Reproduction Research (FIR) course co-founded by GSBS alumnus **Mike McClure, Ph.D.**, (Hnilica/1970) enters its 15th year at the Marine Biological Laboratory in Woods Hole, Maine. The course selected 20 promising young basic and physician scientists to participate six-week career development program in January with scholarships covering nearly all of the trainee expenses. More than 300 young scientists have benefited from this course and are now FIR alumni.

Susan Ritter, M.D., Ph.D., (Marshall/2005) and her husband welcomed a baby girl to the family on January 9: Emily Peyton (7lb., 2 oz.).

Andrei Rodin, Ph.D., (1999/Li) became the Susumu Ohno Chair in Theoretical Biology in the Department of Diabetes and Metabolic Diseases Research at the Beckman Research Institute at City of Hope Comprehensive Cancer Center in Duarte, Calif.

Visit with an Icon of Cancer Research and Education



The Graduate School hosted a visit with Alfred G. Knudson, Jr., M.D., Ph.D., renowned geneticist and cancer researcher, and GSBS dean, 1970-1976, on March 5.

Born in Los Angeles in 1922, Knudson received his B.S. from the California Institute of Technology in 1944, his M.D. from Columbia University in 1947 and his Ph.D. from Caltech in 1956.

Knudson has received numerous awards including the Albert Lasker Clinical Medical Research Award (1998), the Kyoto Prize in Life Sciences (2004) and the American Association for Cancer Research (AACR) Award for Lifetime Achievement in Cancer Research (2005). He is also a member

of several scientific organizations and was appointed to the National Academy of Sciences.

Knudson is best known for his "two-hit" theory of cancer causation which explained the relationship between the hereditary and non-hereditary forms of a cancer and predicted the existence of tumor-suppressor genes that can suppress cancer cell.

Events focused on his visit included a dedication ceremony of a granite and glass plaque honoring the winners of The Alfred G. Knudson, Jr., Outstanding Dissertation Award located over Knudson's original GSBS desk in the GSBS Administrative Offices' hallway.

In Memoriam



Frances Arrighi, Ph.D., (1924 - 2012): During the formative years of GSBS, Arrighi was a member of the Section of Cytology, MD Anderson Hospital and Tumor Institute. In that capacity, she contributed to the education of several of the first GSBS students. Soon after the establishment of the Graduate School in 1963, she began to teach a course on cell culture formal techniques; later, she co-sponsored and sponsored MS and PhD candidates. She continued to have a keen interest in the activities and the success of the Graduate School throughout her retirement.

— Larry Deaven, Ph.D. (Stubblefield/1969)

Ginny Graham Hutchins, Ph.D., (1971 - 2012): GSBS alumna was an an associate professor of biology at Fort Lewis College in Durango, Colo. She studied pharmacology and graduated from GSBS in 2001. Her advisor was Victoria Knutson, Ph.D. Hutchins died from a form of brain cancer called glioblastoma.



Glenn Tholen Housholder, Ph.D., (1925 - 2013): Housholder received her bachelor's degree in chemistry from the University of Houston and a Ph.D. in pharmacology in 1970 from GSBS. She completed her graduate research at MD Anderson Cancer Center under the mentorship of Ti Li Loo, Ph.D. She joined the faculty at the Dental Branch in November 1970 as one of only three women teaching in the basic sciences curriculum, and in pharmacology, for which she received several teaching excellence awards. She was an associate member of the faculty at GSBS from 1971 until 1989 where she mentored graduate students and served on the curriculum committee. She retired from the Dental Branch in 1998 as Professor Emerita.

— Peggy O'Neill, Ph.D. (Romsdahl/1974)

Talk2GSBS

Do you have a question about GSBS, but you don't know who to ask? Do you have a complaint? A compliment? Please send your questions or comments to **Talk2GSBS**. Emails sent to this address will be forwarded to the relevant GSBS Dean, Associate Dean or staff person for rapid response and resolution.

Send it to Talk2GSBS@uth.tmc.edu

Introducing our newest GSBS staff members...



Stephanie Allen, Admissions Coordinator

Allen has been with the UT Health system since 2010. As an admissions coordinator, her main responsibilities include: processing applications, maintaining credential files and applicant databases, and addressing and responding to inquiries from applicants about GSBS academic programs.

Heidi Balentine, Recruitment Coordinator

Balentine is responsible for coordinating recruitment activities; developing and managing recruitment materials, events and interview weekends; and distributing admission information to prospective students. She is also staff support for Recruiting Council.



Andrew Bean, Ph.D., Associate Dean of Graduate Education

Bean joined the GSBS staff in 2012 as an associate dean and continues to teach as an associate professor with the Neuroscience Program at the UTHealth Medical School. His responsibilities include GSBS recruitment and incoming student advising. Bean's research interests include endocytosis, the process in which a substance gains entry into a cell without passing through the cell membrane, and protein sorting.

Ashley Hood, Ph.D., Program Manager, Center for Clinical and Translational Sciences

Hood is a GSBS alumna who earned her doctorate in Neuroscience. She has returned to GSBS to manage the Center for Clinical and Translational Research Training Grant for graduate students across UTHealth. Concurrently, she coordinates the Cullen Trust for Higher Education Physician/Scientist Fellowship Program and Annual Translational Research Symposium & M.D./Ph.D. Workshop, which is a collaboration with GSBS, the UT Medical School at Houston and Baylor College of Medicine.



Elisabet Lau, Administrative Services Officer II

Lau transferred to GSBS from the Institute of Molecular Medicine. She has been with UTHealth for 17 years. Lau handles the financial processes for GSBS along with overseeing the coordination of student appointments, students' benefits, sponsorship forms, scholarships, fellowships, training grant supplements and transferring students to departments and between institutions.



Sabina Martinez, Administrative Coordinator

Martinez transferred to GSBS from University Administration – Office of International Affairs. She has been with UT Health for 25 years. She is the administrative coordinator in the Division of Finance at GSBS and handles the financial reconciliation processes for the school, ensures accurate funding information in the student database, provides administrative support to the financial officers and coordinates the UTHSC and MDACC Administrative Workshops sponsored by GSBS.



William Mattox, Ph.D., Associate Dean of Graduate Education

Mattox is an associate dean and is an associate professor with the Genes and Development Program. His responsibilities include overseeing student and faculty awards as well as faculty membership. Mattox's research interests include alternative RNA splicing, sex determination and disease models.



Stephanie Watowich, Ph.D., Associate Dean of Graduate Education

Watowich joined GSBS as an associate dean while retaining her position as associate professor of Immunology at MD Anderson. She has been with MD Anderson for 17 years, during which time she has been an active member of the GSBS faculty. Her primary responsibilities are to oversee graduate admissions, recruiting and outreach activities.



Retirement Announcements



Tom Goka, Ph.D. — After serving 28 years at The University of Texas Health Science Center, Goka retired at the end of September, and was honored with a reception on Sept. 27, 2012.

During his tenure, Goka was a GSBS assistant professor, an adjunct assistant professor at the School of Public Health and the assistant dean for Outreach and Minority Affairs at the Graduate School, a post he held for 22 years.

In his role as assistant dean, Goka managed GSBS outreach programs such as Project Grad's Biology Academy, which is designed to benefit Houston-area high school students who are at risk for not completing high school, but are likely to qualify for AP (advanced placement) Biology, and the National Youth Leadership Forum in Medicine.

Goka has received several accolades over his tenure including: Dean's Teaching Excellence Award (UTHealth, sponsored by the Graduate School, 1984-1990); Master Teacher Award (1988-1989); and President's Award for Faculty Mentor of Women (sponsored by Committee on the Status of Women, 1997).

A graduate of GSBS, Goka received his M.S. in molecular pathology in 1974 and his Ph.D. in Human and Molecular Genetics in 1978. His advisor was Rodney Howell, Ph.D.



Heidi Porter — Porter was the senior executive assistant for the Office of GSBS Deans and served more than 31 years with UTHealth. Before joining GSBS in 1999, Porter worked in the Pharmacology Department, now called Integrative Biology & Pharmacology, where she assisted noted pharmacologists G. Alan Robison, Ph.D., and George Stancel, Ph.D. She was also a member of UTHealth's University Classified Staff Council, a group that advises the President and the Executive Council on matters of importance to classified employees of The University of Texas Houston Health Science Center. She retired on January 31.

Benefits of a Charitable Gift Annuity with The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston include:

- Safety and stability from market downturns.
- Income for life with a payout rate often higher than CDs and other fixed-income investments.
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Immediate-Payment Gift Annuity Rates as of 1/2013

Questions? Call 713.500.9865

Age	Rate (One Life)	Rate (Two Lives)
60	4.8%	4.3%
65	5.3%	4.7%
70	5.8%	5.2%
75	6.5%	5.7%
80	7.5%	6.3%
85	8.4%	7.4%
90	9.8%	8.8%

Special Thanks and Gratitude

August 9, 2012 - March 15, 2013

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Scientists oft times have the
greatest faith in a higher power.
The more they dig into, establish
facts and figures, the more they
marvel at the mystery of it all.

— Malcolm Forbes

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- Are tax deductible.
- May be accomplished through an estate plan or will.
- May be matched by a corporation to enhance the value of your gift.
- May be used for memorial gifts to honor a favorite faculty, family member or friend. A notice will be sent to inform the family of the honor (not the amount) of your gift, and you will be acknowledged individually.
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Deadline for news to be included in the next newsletter is July 1, 2013

Message from the Alumni

Hello Alumni,

Catching up and spring news: the Alumni Reunion featured Steve Patierno, Ph.D., (1985/Costa) as our Distinguished Alumnus for 2012-2013. Giving a terrific keynote talk, Dr. Patierno referenced his path to becoming deputy director of Duke University's Cancer Center, voiced steps necessary to solve major environmental health concerns, and downplayed his own research which, incidentally, resulted in identifying a particular protein's anti-cancer activity that is now subject of 10 U.S. patents.



Mollianne McGahren Murray, Ph.D., was elected new vice president and Chris Singh, Ph.D., (2011/Jagannath) and Melissa Adams-Singh, Ph.D., (2008/Carpenter) became two new Alumni Association Steering Committee members. Welcome!

Thank you to outgoing president, Sol Bobst, Ph.D., for his many efforts to expand GSBS' horizons through online population mapping services to decide where we might host the next satellite reunion or sponsor recruitment activities. Dr. Bobst increased the scope of the Alumni Career Day and led a second Mocktails seminar—all the while serving as an active E-Mentor to our current students. I look to other current members as well, Jackie Peltier Horn, Ph.D.; Steve Lott, Ph.D.; Joy Marshall, Ph.D.; and BethLynn Maxwell, Ph.D., for a great year ahead. Special thanks to Ben Thomas, Ph.D., who decided that after 11 years he'd had enough fun being a past president and active Steering Committee member. He will rotate to Advisory Committee status.

As new president of the Alumni Association, I've challenged myself with the goal of finding missing GSBS Alumni so that they too will be included in plans for next year's 50th Anniversary celebration—more about that in the next newsletter!

Very best wishes,



Dianne Hammond, Ph.D. (1989)
GSBS Alumni Association President
2012-2013