



The GSChronicles

June 2008

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Upcoming Events

July

- 1-2 New Student Orientation/Activities
- 4 Independence Day
- 7-8 Writing from a Reader's Perspective
- 14 GSC Meeting
- 17-18 GPP Retreat- Rocky Gap

August

- TBD GPP BBQ - FAES House

November

- 14 Graduate Student Research Symposium

Announcements

▪ GSC Meeting:

The next GSC meeting will be held on Monday, **July 14th at 5PM** in the Grad Student Lounge, Building 10 Rm 6S235.

▪ GSC "Activity Pass"

Typically, each event the GSC hosts (including the Halloween Party, Holiday Party, and retreat activities) costs participating students between \$5 and \$15 at the event. As an alternative, the GSC is offering an "activity pass" for interested students to pay a once-a-year nominal fee of \$20 to attend all of these events throughout that year. The pass will not be required to attend events, but will prove much cheaper than paying for each event separately. The pass can be purchased at any GSC meeting. *Thank you to the many students who have already purchased GSC Activity Passes!* Contact a co-chair or Stephanie Guzik (guziks@nhlbi.nih.gov) for more information or to purchase a pass.

▪ Graduate Student Retreat:

Each year, the GPP hosts the graduate students for an off-campus retreat to focus on science,

networking, and career development. This year's retreat is scheduled for **July 17-18th at Rocky Gap Resort** in Cumberland, MD. This year's retreat will feature a "Roadmap" theme, where some sessions will be geared toward certain points in the path to a PhD, including Planning a Project, Managing Committees, and Deciding to do a Post-Doc. If you signed up for the retreat this year, look for emails shortly with the schedule, planned speakers, and evening activity information!

▪ Upcoming Social Activities:

Every week on **Friday at 5:30PM**, a group of graduate students and postdocs meets for Ultimate Frisbee on the south end of campus (near lot 41B) outside the perimeter fence. Feel free to join them, or contact Megan Cleland for more information. New Student Orientation this year will feature an outing and ice cream social. In addition, look for emails about bowling and hiking soon!

▪ Pathways:

Pathways is a monthly meeting where career options and development are discussed, usually from the perspective of someone outside of basic research. The next Pathways discussion will be held **June 30th from 9-11AM** where **Sharon Milgram will discuss Giving Job Talks**. Look for information later on future Pathways meetings.

▪ GS3:

The **Graduate Student Seminar Series (GS3)** is a monthly meeting where students present their work to fellow graduate students. These meetings are great practice for talks, conferences, retreats, a dissertation defense, etc. Students meet on the third Thursday of the month at lunchtime with two speakers, each giving 20-minute talks. If you would like to present your research to your fellow grad students, please email Roseanne Zhao (zhaof@mail.nih.gov) to schedule a date. The next GS3 will be held on **June 19th with Kim Baxter speaking**.

▪ Biophysics and Structural Biology Group: **The Biophysics and Structural Biology Graduate Student Interest Group**

has been meeting bimonthly. The first meeting of the month focuses on learning a new laboratory technique, whereas the second meeting of the month is used to discuss a paper that uses the technique. If you are interested in attending or have any questions, contact Matt Berberich (berberichm@mail.nih.gov).

▪ **SNIG:**

The **Systems Neuroscience Interest Group for Graduate Students** is a group of students interested in systems/ cognitive/ clinical neuroscience. The group meets once a month to discuss the latest topics of systems neuroscience and listen to a talk from a member of the group. Often these talks are rehearsals of thesis proposals, defenses, conference posters, etc. Sometimes they have someone give a tutorial. An informational email is sent out once a week. From time to time there will be lunches with renowned outside speakers from the NIH Neuroscience series. Please contact Lei Qin (qinl@ninds.nih.gov) or Kara Lindstrom (lindstrk@mail.nih.gov) if you would like to join the group.

▪ **Campus Area Listservs:**

The GSC has started listservs that will link students in various parts of campus. These listservs will be used to schedule group lunches, outings, and post questions to people on your area of the main campus. The buildings on campus have been split up by their general location in the East, West or Middle regions. These listservs will be populated by GPP and you will have an option to opt-out if necessary.

▪ **Volunteering with Clinical Center Patients:**

The Clinical Center on campus just started the Patient Ambassador program. Volunteers for the program will be placed in a variety of positions, including taking patients to radiology, surgery, or handling medical records. Volunteers are asked to commit to 200 total hours of service – 4 hours a week for one year. If you're interested in learning more or applying to become a volunteer, visit www.cc.nih.gov/about/ambassadors/.

Special Notices

Due to the increase in good news being sent for recognition in the GSChronicles, we have added this new section. Please continue to send your recent achievements and personal announcements to share with the graduate student community. We congratulate all of the students in this section and wish them the best!

Happy Birthday to: Cathy Kolf (June 2nd) and Tony Barnitz (June 12th).

Upcoming Birthdays: Andrius Masedunskas (July 8th), Chris Greil (July 14th), and Alexandria Bortnick (July 19th).



Chris Greil from the University of Montana – Rocky Mountain Labs and **Sean Donohue** from the Karolinska program defended their theses. We wish them luck and continued success.

Angelo Kolokithas, a member of the University of Montana - Rocky Mountain Labs Program, recently celebrated the birth of his son Evan Liam Kolokithas! Evan was born on the afternoon of May 5th. He weighed 7lb 10oz and was 20 inches long.



Jodi Gilman of the Brown University Program and **Tony Barnitz** of the UPenn Program recently announced their engagement. They met through their active participation in GSC meetings and social activities.

Kim Baxter from the Johns Hopkins Program is celebrating her recent engagement to Phil Decker. They originally met in the lab, and in true scientist style, Phil proposed via amino acid sequence in a "homologue" of the protein Kim studies.

Mohammad Zulfiqur Hossain from the Molecular Medicine Program at University of Maryland recently published a first-author paper. He is doing his dissertation in Dr. Jyoti Misra Sen's lab at the NIA.

Hossain MZ, Yu Q, Xu M, Sen JM.
ICAT expression disrupts {beta}-catenin-TCF interactions and impairs survival of thymocytes and activated mature T cells.
Int Immunol. 2008 May 28.

Please **send your publications, awards, graduation and birthday announcements** to Stephanie Guzik (guziks@nhlbi.nih.gov) for recognition. Also send your **requests for nominations** for students to be included in the **Graduate Student Spotlight**.

Graduate Student Spotlight:



This month's Spotlight is on **Matthew Berberich**. Matt was born in Smithtown, NY, but he considers Shelton, CT as his hometown. He introduces Shelton as "your typical suburbia" with an exceptional claim to fame as the home of the Whiffle Ball. Shelton even has its own Whiffle Ball factory! It was here that Matt was inspired to pursue science by his enthusiastic AP Biology teacher, David Presutto.

Matt learned early on that science changes, and the questions you try to answer today will most likely not be the questions you try to answer in 5 years. This allows you to constantly learn new ideas and techniques, so your work never gets stale and monotonous. Matt enjoys being part of a community that is striving to answer complex questions of how life "works." He also finds exciting the possibility that he might be the first to discover something that no one else knew before.

This inspiration led Matt to do his undergraduate work at the University of Connecticut, where he majored in Physiology/Neurobiology and Psychology. His first real exposure to research looked at what cues rats use in their environment when determining where a reward was located (textile cues, local cues, or distal cues). After graduating, he got a job as a lab technician at the Keck Biotech Resource Lab at Yale University. It was a core lab, and that is where he learned all about mass spectrometry and the field of proteomics. He decided to make the jump to graduate school to learn more about the biology of the projects people were doing, and gain experience in the application of mass spec to answering biological questions, as opposed to methods development.

Now Matt is finishing up his 2nd year in the NYU-NIH GPP program in Structural Biology. He performs research in collaboration with Dr. Sandy Markey in NIMH and Dr. Andres Buonanno in

NICHD. Matt uses mass spectrometry and proteomics to better understand Neuregulin/ErbB signaling in neurons. Matt combines his expertise in his field with participation in the Graduate Student Council as the coordinator of the Biophysics and Structural Biology Graduate Student Interest Group. You have probably noticed the emails about the well-organized, thoughtfully planned meetings for this group!

Outside of the NIH, Matt tries to take advantage of all the things that DC has to offer. On the weekends, he likes to bike on the great trails in the area. He enjoys going to concerts featuring bands like Radiohead, REM, Dave Matthews Band, and Linkin Park, comedy shows given by Chris Rock and Bill Maher, and sporting events with the Nationals and Capitals. As you can tell, Matt enjoys listening to music, especially alternative and rock. His favorite movies include the *Lord of the Rings* trilogy, *Star Wars*, *American Beauty*, *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind*, *Pleasantville*, and many others. He is also a big fan of *Calvin and Hobbes*—he has the entire collection! Matt does an exemplary job of balancing life inside and out of the lab. He reminds us that science can (and will) be frustrating, so it's important to have activities outside of work that will allow you to clear your head and re-focus your efforts.

Matt has an interesting story to share with us. He explains that it isn't very funny, but it is at least educational. A few years ago, he left work early with what he thought was food poisoning. It lasted a couple of days, and on the third day he was in so much pain that he was curled up on the floor. His mother thought he was exaggerating, but he convinced her to take him to the health clinic. Matt told the doctor the relative location of the pain, and the doctor instructed him to jump up and down. The jumping was painful, which led the doctor to diagnose appendicitis. In fact, Matt's appendix had already burst! Now when anyone complains of stomach pain, he tells them to jump up and down, and if it really hurts, they should go to the hospital. He also has guilt points for the rest of his life with his mom, who now knows that when he says he's in pain, he really means it!

This story sheds some light on Matt's favorite quote, which is by Jim Horning: "Good judgment comes from experience. Experience comes from bad judgment." Judge for yourself whether you should go with Matt's judgment—personally, I would definitely take the science advice, but I'm undecided about the appendicitis instructions!

Tip of the Month:

Showers and lockers on NIH main campus
Are you thinking of riding your bike to work or of adding a jogging break to your daily routine? Here's a handy, comprehensive list of the shower and locker facilities on campus for your exercising convenience:

http://does.ors.od.nih.gov/fitness/shower_locker.htm. There is also a map of them here: <http://www.ors.od.nih.gov/orf/parking/showermap.cfm>.

GSC Meeting Overview

- Orientation for new students will be held in June and July. Lunches will be held from 12-1PM and ice cream socials will be held in the evening at the Grad Student Lounge on 6/16 and 7/1.
- GPP Summer BBQ will be held in August when all new students are on campus. It will be held at the FAES house, and mentors will be invited to attend.
- GPP will plan a trip for students and OITE staff to see the DC Nationals play during the summer. Details to come later.
- The cleanliness of the lounge and non-students using the space have become points of concern. A sign will be posted shortly. Please clean up after yourself.
- Megan Cleland won the t-shirt contest for the retreat shirt. Her design will be used on the back of the shirts given out at this year's GPP retreat.
- Due to slow response, the building listservs will be populated by GPP and students can then opt-out of the list if they'd like.
- Website pictures of GSC members are being discussed. Concerns include the security of the site and maintenance of updated records. No official decisions have been made.
- Social Committee will be hosting events during the summer for new students to meet current students. Please plan to attend.
- Next GSC blood drive will be planned sometime in July. Manna Food Packing was a huge success!
- The GPP Retreat is coming up soon, please look for emails regarding the schedule and transportation.
- Thesis talks have recently been scheduled for graduating students. GSC will work on advertising these talks to a larger audience to increase awareness on campus and to make sure the event is well-attended by graduate students.

Graduate Student Entertainment

Biochemistry Jokes

Q: How do you eat DNA?

A: With a replication fork.

Q: A gang of mutations were caught red handed during mutagenesis. When confronted, all of them confessed except one. Why?

A: He was a silent mutation.

A fellow accidentally ingested some alpha-L-glucose and discovered that he had no ill effects. Apparently he was ambidextrose.

Biochemistry Definitions

Amphipathic - the ability to hike both ways

Antibody - Against everyone

Apical Membrane - That green bumpy stuff on the outside of a dill

Beta-sheet - Linen you only bring out for company
Detergents - What women do when telling a guy to take a hike

Deoxycholate - Countin' the oxen

Diglyceride - What you scream out when trying to kill a glyceride

Prokaryote - In favor of take-out food

Redox - Rusty cattle

Propane - Sadoomasochistic tendencies

Micellar - Where I stayed when the tornado hit

Palmitoyl - What your hands secrete when you're nervous

Polar Head Group - Inuit psychiatrists

(Courtesy of

<http://www.poundthehelix.ca/Misc.htm>)

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Grad Student Spotlight

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