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NPAW 2015 begins on Sept 21st

The 6th Annual Celebration of National Postdoc Appreciation Week (NPAW) will take place September 21-25, 2015. NPAW is meant to bring recognition to the important role postdocs play in research ongoing in the United States, celebrating the achievements and contributions of postdocs. Last year, over 300 NPAW events were held, but you will notice that West Virginia is a blank hole in this celebration. WVU postdocs should participate in this event. The National Postdoctoral Association



Scheduled events for NPAW 2014 (image obtained from the National Postdoctoral Association website)

(NPA) lists several activities that occurred during NPAW 2014. This event can be as simple as coffee hour or happy hour at a bar, or as complex as lectures on career development or financial planning. Does anyone want to plan an event for NPAW 2015? Please contact Karen Hayes (kehayes@hsc.wvu.edu). The NPA website has a "NPAW Toolkit" (<https://npamembers.site-ym.com/?NPAWToolkit>) to aid in the organization of an event.

Appointment of New PDA Officers

On June 26, 2016, an organizational Postdoctoral Association meeting was held to discuss postdoc interests and expectations for the upcoming year. Discussion included how we can make our association stronger, next year's tentative schedule, invited speakers and organization of a postdoc get together/picnic during the National Postdoctoral Association Week (NPAW). We also appointed officers for the upcoming year for President (Karen Hayes), Vice-President (Abhishek Vishnu), Communications Chair (Vishal Yadav) and Social Chair (Pasha Grachev). Congratulations, to the new officers!



New PDA Officers Left to Right: Vishal Yadav (VIYADAV@hsc.wvu.edu), Pasha Grachev (pagrachev@hsc.wvu.edu), Karen Hayes (kehayes@hsc.wvu.edu), Abhishek Vishnu (avishnu@hsc.wvu.edu)

Upcoming PDA Meetings and Events

- August 27th WVU Biomedical PDA meet and greet social, 8-11pm, Tin 202, High St, Morgantown.
- September 25th Dr. Amy Kuhn and Dr. Melanie Page from WVU Teaching and Learning Commons (TLC) to discuss the workshops and courses available to postdocs through the "Graduate Academy".
- October 23rd Joan Anson, MS, Director of Career Services in the Office of Student Affairs, University of Pittsburgh, will discuss the importance of maintaining up-to-date LinkedIn accounts.
- November 20th Winabeth Smith, Grants manager for MBRCC and Valerie LeMasters, Grants Processing Director for WVU to discuss postdoctoral fellowship and grant application process for postdocs.
- December 4th Kim Wright, Sr. Sales Representative, Thermo Fisher Scientific/Life Technologies to discuss opportunities for scientists in industry.

* All meetings (except "Meet and Greet" social) will be held in Room 301 Erma Byrd in the Biomedical Research Facility at noon. Lunch will be provided.

If you have suggestions for future meetings please contact Karen Hayes (kehayes@hsc.wvu.edu)



<http://www.wvu.edu/~kehayes/gradacademy.html>

TLCs mission is to "support, promote, and enhance teaching effectiveness at the University"

WVU Teaching and Learning Commons

Have you taken on the task of teaching and have no idea of how to prepare for it? Or would you like to learn how to teach effectively? WVU has an excellent resource to help guide you through the teaching process from understanding the technology in the modern classroom to instructional design. The goal of WVU Teaching and Learning Commons (TLC) is to

"provide teaching support and resources for faculty, graduate students, and postdoctoral fellows". TLC staff have developed a two-tiered program: iDesign, to aid you in instructional design and technology integration, and iTeach, to enhance teaching skills and core competencies to help individuals achieve career success. Postdocs can participate in the TLC's "Graduate

Academy" which provides workshops and courses to develop a range of core skills for their future careers. Visit the TLC's website for further information (<http://tlcommons.wvu.edu>). Drs. Amy Kuhn and Melanie Page will be attending the September 25th monthly PDA meeting to discuss the opportunities and services available through the TLC; mark your calendars.

Postdoctoral Travel Award

The Health Sciences Center Office of Research and Graduate Education announces the availability of travel awards for WVU-HSC postdoctoral fellows to present their work at a professional meeting. Applications will be considered for conference attendance during the fall 2015 (July 1 - Dec. 31, 2015) or spring 2016 (Jan. 1 - June 30, 2016) semesters. The application deadline for

the fall conferences is September 30, 2015; the deadline for spring conferences is March 31, 2016. Awards will be up to \$500, and may be made retroactively if the actual meeting takes place before the application dates. Fellows who have received a travel award from this Office in the last two years are not eligible to apply. Regular attendance at the monthly

Postdoc Association meeting will be taken into consideration as applications are screened. Submit a completed application (<http://www.hsc.wvu.edu/resoff/post-doctoral-association/news/postdoctoral-student-travel-award-opportunity-available/>)

to Dr. Jamal Mustafa via E-mail (sjmustafa@hsc.wvu.edu).



Accomplishments and Achievements

Awards and Achievements:

Hicham Labazi, PhD. (mentored by Dr. Jamal Mustafa) won first place for his poster presentation “The contribution of adenosine receptor subtypes to vascular tone in mouse pudendal artery” at 2015 Van Lier Con- vocation and Research Day; **Elizabeth B. Engler-Chiurazzi, PhD.** (mentored by Dr. James Simpkins) came in second with her poster “Adult Behavioral Consequences of Prenatal Nanomaterial Exposure”.

Karen Hayes, PhD. (mentored by Dr. Ivan Martinez) completed the “Leadership Development Institute” course offered by the Mountaineer Leadership Academy in the Spring of 2015.

Vishal Yadav, PhD. (mentored by Dr. Jamal Mustafa) won a travel award from American Society for Phar- macology and Experimental Therapeutics to attend the 2015 Experimental Biology Meeting at Boston, MA in March 2015.

In July 2015, **Elizabeth B. Engler-Chiurazzi, PhD.** (mentored by Dr. James Simpkins) won first place with her talk “Of mice and men: modeling human behavior with rodent analogues” at the WVU Center for Neuro- science Annual Retreat as part of their Neuroscience Idol competition.

Abhishek Vishnu, PhD. (mentored by Dr. Matthew Gurka) won two travel awards/tuition waivers from the University of Alabama at Birmingham to attend two short courses, “Statistical Genetics” and “Mathematical Sciences in Obesity Research”, in June and July 2015.

First Author Publications:

“Forward masking in the medial nucleus of the trapezoid body of the rat” **Gao F** and Berrebi AS; *Brain Struc- ture Funct.* 2015 Apr 29. [Epub ahead of print]

“Brachial-ankle pulse wave velocity is associated with coronary calcification among 1131 healthy middle-aged men” **Vishnu A**, et. al.; *Int J Cardiol.* 2015 Jun 15;189:67-72.

“Angiotensin II stimulation alters vasomotor response to adenosine in mouse mesenteric artery: Role for A and A adenosine receptors” **Yadav VR**, et. al.; *Br J Pharmacol.* 2015 Jul 30. [Epub ahead of print]

“Single-stranded DNA Aptamers Against Pathogens and Toxins: Identification and Biosensing Applications” **Hong KL** and Sooter LJ; *Biomed Res Int.*, 2015;419318. [Epub 2015 Jun 23]

“Hypothalamic prolactin regulation of luteinizing hormone secretion in the female rat” **Grachev P**, et.al.; *En- docrinology.* 2015 Aug;156(8):2880-92.

Announcements:

Congratulations to **Peng Wang, PhD.** who is a proud father of a baby boy born in April 2015.

If you have any accomplishments/achievements please contact Karen Hayes (kehayes@hsc.wvu.edu). Let's celebrate our successes!



“To accomplish great things, we must dream as well as act.”

— Anatole France

Time to Party, Postdocs!!!

Are you tired of staring at the same four walls in your laboratory? Feeling isolated? Need some human interaction? Come out and join us. The WVU-Biomedical Postdoctoral Association (PDA) has appointed a Social Chair, Dr. Pasha Grachev, to develop the PDA social events so that postdocs can meet each other, discuss science (or not), and generally get out of the lab. He has planned a meet and greet

social from 8-11 pm, August 27th at Tin 202, a bar and restaurant on High Street, Morgantown that offers “unique hand-crafted cocktails and distinctive fresh fare”. Good food and great conversation, it should be a great evening for all who attend. In addition, Pasha will be planning a family picnic at Cooper's Rock for mid October. The picnic is going to be a fun potluck with games and activities.



“Just work till midnight, you need to relax too”

http://vadlo.com/Research_Cartoons/Just-work-till-midnight-you-need-to-relax-too.gif



http://www.npacomunity.org/resource/resmgr/2015_AM/NPA-2015ConferenceLOGO-

PDA's Vice-President Attends 2015 National PDA Meeting

As a postdoctoral fellow in Dr. Ivan Martinez's laboratory in the Mary Babb Randolph Cancer Center and a representative of West Virginia Postdoctoral Association (PDA); Karen Hayes, PhD, attended the 2015 National Postdoctoral Association (NPA) meeting at the University of Maryland in Baltimore in March 2015. The funds provided by the West Virginia PDA allowed her to be one of the 230 new attendees. She participated in several workshops concerning issues relevant to today's postdoctoral

scholars as well as attended seminars, networking events, and the new career connection event in which she met with representatives from several different companies. The overarching message of the NPA meeting and workshops was upbeat yet realistic, acknowledging that not all postdoctoral scholars want to or are able to pursue a career in academia. Several workshops addressed the professional training needed to obtain positions in academia, industry, and government. In

addition, numerous workshops focused on the necessary steps needed to successfully find and obtain a desired position such as informational interviews and networking. Fortunately for those that were unable to attend the meeting, most of the workshops and sessions are posted online at the NPA's website (<https://npamembers.site-ym.com/?2015AMPres>). Karen gave a summary of her experience at the WVU-Biomed PDA meeting in March 2015.

Featured Postdoc: Phoebe Stapleton, PhD.



"First get a clear notion of what you desire to accomplish and then in all probability you will succeed in doing it."
— Henry Maudslay

If anyone knows Dr. Phoebe Stapleton and her accomplishments they would understand why she was chosen as the first featured postdoc for the "Postdoc Pulse". She received her PhD at West Virginia University in Exercise Physiology specializing in microvascular physiology in 2010 at which time she chose to stay at WVU and joined Dr. Tim Nurkiewicz's laboratory. This controversial career move was based on her ability to utilize NIOSH's facilities; a unique asset of Morgantown.

She has recently completed her postdoctoral fellowship focused in cardiovascular toxicology. During her postdoc, she has excelled by publishing six first-author articles and received numerous awards for her work in microvascular nanotoxicology. These awards include the Ruth L. Kirschstein Na-

tional Research Service Awards (F32) from National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS) in 2013; won first place at WVU's 2014 Annual E.J. Van Liere Memorial Convocation and HSC Research Day for her poster presentation. At the 2013 Society of Toxicology (SOT) annual meeting, Phoebe was awarded both the "Women in Toxicology" Postdoctoral Fellow Achievement Award and the "Best Publication" from the SOT's Postdoctoral Assembly for her 2013 article in *Am J Obstet Gynecol*. Most recently, she has received a coveted K99-R00 award from the National Institute for Environmental Health and Safety (NIEHS), the first at WVU.

Phoebe is actively giving back to the scientific community. She has been an ad hoc reviewer for several journals and served on the

Frontiers in Vascular Physiology editorial board. She previously served as the postdoctoral representative for Allegheny-Erie regional chapter (A-E-SOT) and Women in Toxicology specialty section of the SOT and now serves as the President of the A-E-SOT. In addition, she always takes the time to proffer advice and assist other WVU postdocs.

Dr. Phoebe Stapleton has recently accepted a position as a Research Assistant Professor at West Virginia University. Her research aims are to evaluate the microvascular responses and functional vascular alterations associated with xenobiotic exposures in non-traditional models. Phoebe attributes her success during her postdoc to first defining her career goals and always keeping those goals in focus.

Postdoc Pearls of Wisdom: Balancing Work and Family

Written by Elizabeth B. Engler-Chiurazzi— Hello, my name is Liz and I am a workaholic. I work two jobs that I love. I am a mom of an adorable, active toddler and a scientist. As a working parent, juggling these roles can be a challenge, especially at the post-doc stage, when demands on my time are many and the bar for success is lofty. Over the past two years, with a little creativity and a lot of experimentation, I think I have found a good balance. Here is a list of a few things I have found helpful.

Be efficient where possible

In my life, efficiency is key. While at work, I make sure I am as efficient as possible. I save work where I need focus and attention to detail for the office and get to those tasks early in the day when I am at my peak mental ability. That way, if I need to finish a few minor to-do items like emails or tweaking my LinkedIn profile, I can easily do those at home while watching TV. As well, I multitask some of our chores with a little bit of fun, turning things we have to do into a game my daughter and I can play together. For instance, while I fold laundry in the closet, we play Hide-and-Go-Seek amongst the clothing. Certainly we also do fun things that don't involve chores, like yoga or going

to the playground. But games like this sure do work wonders for keeping a toddler entertained while you get something done.

When you can't do it all, prioritize

There are definitely times, like grant deadlines, experimental time points, etc. when I have had to extend my 'work hours'. In these situations, even though I would like to, I can't be involved in everything my child does. So, I prioritize a few cherished activities and ensure that I am mentally/emotionally present to enjoy those with my daughter. For example, I always put her to bed, a routine that takes about an hour. We enjoy a cartoon, play games (which actually cleans up her room!), read a book, brush teeth, and crawl into bed. In this way, I spend quality time making happy memories together so that when I do have to work, I can focus on my deadlines without feeling guilt that I am not involved with my child.

It is okay to take short-cuts

When I began this post-doc, I gave myself permission not to be 'super-mom'. That meant giving up the image of a mom who bakes cookies all the time, hand crafts Pinterest-worthy, kid-friendly D.I.Y. art projects, and keeps a spotless home while also

expecting myself to be the heels and pencil-skirt wearing, professional rockstar who puts in 80 hour work-weeks. And from time to time that might mean taking a short-cut here and there. For instance, there is nothing wrong with buying a store-cooked rotisserie chicken and pre-made biscuits if it means putting dinner on the table in a stress-free way.

Communication (and appreciation) is key

My husband Don is a big reason why I can be a successful working mom. But he also works and his career is also important. So we make sure that we are clear about what we both need to be effective in our professional and personal lives. Each week we have a meeting where we talk about upcoming events, work projects and schedules, and anything else that needs to be done to keep the household running smoothly. As well, open communication with your P.I. regarding family-related issues such as child care, doctor appointments, etc. is absolutely crucial. Keeping them informed is a big part of a successful working relationship.

These are only a few, big picture ideas that have worked for me and my family, so to the other post-doc parents out there, what works for you?



“Life is like riding a bicycle. To keep your balance, you must keep moving.” — Albert Einstein

<http://b-i.forbesimg.com/work-in-progress/files/2013/07/Work-Life-Balance-Sign-post-by-Stuart-Miles.jpg>

LinkedIn: an Important Tool for Networking

Written by Abhishek Vishnu— “Are you ready to move on to a new job? Or just looking to build professional network and connections across your scientific discipline? Have you tried LinkedIn but think you don't make the best out of it? WVU-Biomed PDA is here to help!

LinkedIn is an online networking platform and has become a de facto tool for professional network-

ing. LinkedIn has 93 million users in the US. Apart from businesses, LinkedIn is increasingly being used by academicians for networking and job search. In addition to the most popular free account, LinkedIn offers options to subscribe for premium features including initiating direct connection with recruiters.

PDA is organizing a seminar on

the efficient and effective use of LinkedIn for networking and job search **on October 23, 2015 at noon in Room 301 Erma Byrd in the Biomedical Research Facility**. **Joan Anson, MS Ed, Director of Career Services at University of Pittsburgh's Graduate School of Public Health will give a talk on using LinkedIn for a job search.** Save the date!



<http://images1.houstonpress.com/imager/u/original/6391429/1217linkedin.jpg>

Contact Us:

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Thank you Elizabeth B. Engler-Chiurazzi and Pasha Grachev for proofreading the "Postdoc Pulse".

Please contact Karen Hayes if you have any questions or concerns about this publication

West Virginia University Biomedical Post-Doctoral Association

The mission of the West Virginia University Biomedical Post-Doctoral Association is to empower our post-doctoral scholars through enhancing career development, supporting mentor-mentee relationships, and fostering independent growth during this valuable training.

Our membership is open to all STEM postdoctoral trainees at the West Virginia University and NIOSH.

Join the WVU-Biomed PDA



The WVU-Biomed Postdoctoral Association is a dynamic organization. We are constantly changing ourselves to meet the needs of WVU Postdocs. We are expanding our membership to include NIOSH postdocs and STEM postdocs outside of the Health Science Center. As a member of the WVU-Biomed PDA, you can attend monthly meetings focused on a wide range of topics, join in social events, obtain a free individual

affiliate membership to the National Postdoctoral Associations as part of WVU's Institutional membership, and develop professional networks with other postdocs that will last long beyond your time at WVU. We are only growing stronger every year. Join us and be a part of our exciting new year. To join contact Dr. Jamal Mustafa via E-mail (sjmustafa@hsc.wvu.edu).

What did you think of the "Postdoc Pulse"?

This newsletter is the inaugural publication of the West Virginia University Biomedical Postdoctoral Association's (WVU-Biomed PDA) "Postdoc Pulse". The newsletter arose from not only a need to disseminate information about the WVU-Biomed PDA but also to celebrate the accomplishments of WVU postdocs. Postdocs play an important role in the ongoing research at WVU and bring prestige in the scientific community to WVU with their accomplishments.

In addition, the sharing of information among postdoc will only aid in others struggling through

similar situations. Postdocs shouldn't have to re-invent the wheel every time they take on a new task such as grant submission, teaching, or loan deferments; so let's help each other succeed.

What did you think of the first newsletter? Was it helpful? Would you take the time to read a second one? What would you change? I welcome your feedback, send me an email (kehayes@hsc.wvu.edu). Also, if you would like to help in the publishing of the "Postdoc Pulse" by submitting articles, helping with the assembly, or just editing the newsletter send me an

email to the above address. The newsletter is currently scheduled to be published quarterly (this can be increase to monthly with enough interest and assistance). Thank you.

