Jefferson Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences

JeffPOST

The Newsletter of the Jefferson Postdoctoral Association
2011-2012
Volume 6, Issue 1

Special Points of Interest:

- 6th Annual Postdoctoral Research Symposium
- Career After Postdoc
- 2011 JPA Survey
- National Postdoc Association
- Postdoctoral Publications
- Social Events

JeffPOST

Editors:
Anna Gumpert, PhD
Asha Srinivasan, PhD
Assistant Editor:
Lisa Kozlowski, PhD
Comments/Suggestions
jpa@jefferson.edu

Inside this issue:

6th Annual Postdoctoral Research Symposium

By Anna Gumpert and Yi Luo (PRS Co-Chairs, 2011)

In continuation of a five-year long tradition, the Jefferson Postdoctoral Association (JPA) in collaboration with the JGSBS Office of Postdoctoral Affairs (OPA) organized and hosted the sixth annual Postdoctoral Research Symposium (PRS) on June 21, 2011. As in previous years, the 2011 PRS offered a great opportunity for Jefferson's postdoctoral fellows to showcase their latest research and scientific discoveries. During the poster session, thirty-seven postdocs presented and discussed their wide spectrum of multidisciplinary biomedical research with faculty, postdocs, students and guests. Returning this year for the second time, the popular "Early Discoveries" section gave postdocs either new to Jefferson or starting new projects the chance to participate, discuss and hopefully gain knowledge and encouragement for their new endeavors. We were excited that the number of these participants doubled from last year. In the spirit of competition, the poster presentations were judged by Jefferson faculty members.

Dr. Sharon Milgram gives her keynote address

Great participation and attendance at the poster session during PRS 2011

Editorial

By Anna Gumpert (Vice-President for Communications, 2011)

Dear Postdocs,

Welcome to the 2011-2012 edition of **Jeff***POST*, the annual newsletter of the Jefferson Postdoctoral Association (JPA)! It is the joint effort between postdoctoral volunteers, JPA board members, and the Associate Dean for Postdoctoral Affairs and Recruitment, Dr. Lisa Kozlowski, that make the continuous production of this publication for the Jefferson community possible and presentable. Our goal is to communicate information relevant to postdoctoral life in general but also specifically here at Thomas Jefferson University. In this issue we bring you information about our professional development endeavors and an interview with an alumna. We also feature achievements of our fellows and highlight postdoctoral social events.

From new to already established postdocs, please join in and share with us a variety of activities here in Jefferson. We wish our fellow postdocs an even more exceptional new year!

JeffPOST

President's Corner: Jefferson Postdoctoral Association

By Pragati Katiyar (President, 2011)

The goal of the Jefferson Postdoctoral Association (JPA) is to provide a warm community feeling to all the new postdoctoral fellows coming from diverse backgrounds and geographic locations. I am honored to have been a part of this wonderful endeavor where I had the chance to help JPA serve its mission of enriching the postdoctoral experience beyond the confines of the lab bench.

All JPA officers work hard to fulfill this mission by organizing the monthly Technical Skills Seminar Series (TSSS) (see page 3) that keeps our researchers up-to-date on new techniques. We also hold monthly Open Meetings that address a variety of issues as well as provide information on topics, such as banking, immigration, activities around Philly and much more. The JPA also supports postdoctoral networking via social events like coffee hours, bowling outings, a winter party and trips to nearby attractions.

Additionally, the JPA along with the Office of Postdoctoral Affairs (OPA) organizes the annual Postdoctoral Fellowship Application Program (PFAP). PFAP is a grant writing workshop where postdocs learn not only grant writing skills but also the logistics of how to work within the timeline of their funding agency with the help of Jefferson's Office of Research Administration (ORA).

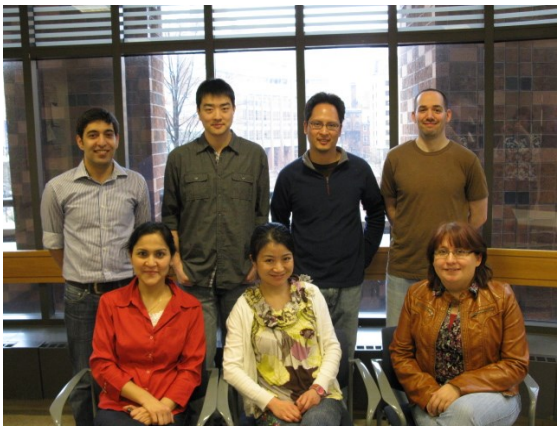
Here at Jefferson we also provide our postdocs with an opportunity to present their research at our annual Postdoctoral Research Symposium (PRS) (see pages 1 and 16). At PRS, best posters and distinguished mentors are given due recognition. I would like to congratulate all the winners and anticipate more cutting-edge posters coming forward at next year's PRS.

Last but not least, I would like to thank the JPA and OPA for their continuing efforts to make Jefferson a better place for all the postdoctoral fellows. My heartfelt thanks also goes to all my fellow postdocs who gave us their voice by filling out the online surveys and who participated in all these events with their open heart and mind. I encourage all postdocs to join the JPA and get involved in at least one of the many events.

Our working together towards a common goal can be a critical part of your personal as well as career development. As of November 2011, I have resigned from my postdoc position at Jefferson and thus the JPA as well in order to move on to a permanent position. I wish the new JPA President, Matthew Wampole, as well as all Jefferson postdocs another year full of bright and successful days.

Sincerely Yours,
Pragati Katiyar, PhD
President, JPA (2011)

JPA Executive Board, 2011/2012



Office of Postdoctoral Affairs and Jefferson Postdoctoral Association
M-60 Jefferson Alumni Hall, 1020 Locust St., Philadelphia, PA 19107

5% discount at Saladworks with Jefferson ID.
Located at:
224 S. 11th Street

Medical Repatriation and Evacuation Insurance

Medical insurance benefits for international postdocs include evacuation and repatriation from International SOS. International postdocs will receive an email from International SOS about one week after checking in with the International Office, stating that they are enrolled in the program. No additional fee needs to be paid.
For more information on the amount of coverage, please visit **Office of International Affairs (OIA) in JAH M-70 or go to internationalsos.com/visitorusa**

JeffPOST

Technical Skills Seminar Series (TSSS)

By Christopher Willis (Vice-President for Career Development, 2011-2012)

The biomedical research environment for scientists is as fast paced as ever. With the increasing pressure to publish in order to obtain funding in academia, science is evolving at a rate never seen before. This tempo has led to new journals, with the amount of accessible data at a level no researcher can keep up with. Furthermore, the recent trend of a systems approach to multidisciplinary research can make it difficult for those not as familiar with other fields and techniques to stay informed.

In order to address the wide variety of research disciplines, the Jefferson Postdoctoral Association puts on a monthly Technical Skills Seminar Series (TSSS). We invite scientists from a variety of backgrounds and current fields to bring attendees up to speed on the latest innovations and technologies in science. The seminars serve as a teaching tool that can improve one's research, but also inform about ways to potentially save invaluable time when conducting one's experiments. A wide range of topics are addressed with an emphasis on techniques that postdocs who responded to our last career and technical skills topics survey were interested in. In addition, we try to bring in speakers who present material that the average laboratory on campus could easily incorporate.

The talks are informal and questions are welcomed during the seminars where lunch is also provided to the attendees. A recent topic included cloning strategies for creating complex constructs and plasmids. Another talk, titled "Solutions and Tools for Any Transfection Challenge," covered various methods of transfecting cell lines that are difficult to manipulate. We also invite speakers from Jefferson's core facilities to share the services offered and give examples of past experiments they have helped perform. For example, Dr. James Keen represented the bioimaging facility on campus and gave a presentation to over 50 attendees including graduate students, postdocs, faculty, research assistants and technicians. With the increasing popularity of this forum, we look forward to another year of informative seminars.

For any questions or if you would like to request a technical skills topic, please contact us at jpa@jefferson.edu.

Two Heads Are Better Than One: Collaboration in Science

By Maggie Huang

I am Zheng Huang (Maggie), a former postdoctoral research fellow who worked in Dr. Walter Koch's lab in the Center for Translational Research in the Department of Medicine. During my tenure at Jefferson, I had precious opportunities to collaborate with investigators from both inside and outside of Jefferson. "Two heads are better than one"- this old saying holds especially true for the ever-changing world of biomedical research. Ever since I started at Jefferson in 2008, I collaborated with scientists from Ohio, Michigan, and our very own Philadelphia. Either I helped answer questions of others by using our established technology and knowledge, or I benefited from the expertise and guidance of colleagues to advance my own projects and know-how. These experiences force one to become a good team player but also allow for creation of a sense of communal support.

More importantly, collaborating between different labs provides opportunities to share resources, brings scientists in related fields closer, and leads to formulation of novel ideas. Additionally, it is a growing trend for several labs with common research interests to team up in order to acquire funding, without the necessity to be in the same institution or even in the same city. However, most of my experiences in collaboration came from within our own laboratory. It is a somewhat unusual kind of collaboration in a sense that translational medicine is truly multidisciplinary. It has the advantage of being a conduit between basic research and clinical application. For my projects, my background in molecular and cellular biology is crucial to my research as I investigate molecular mechanisms and explore possible signal transduction pathways.

However, another essential component of translational research is whole animal models and their relation to human diseases. My work will never be complete without the support of researchers whose strength is to create cardiovascular disease models as well as helping with interpretation of physiological data. I can only imagine that this kind of collaboration will become more widespread as translational research moves to the forefront of biomedical investigations.

In addition to collaborations with peers from other institutions, the members of our lab participate in collaborations with industry projects, such as testing potential drug compounds using our models, thus using different tools and perspectives to investigate and corroborate findings and conclusions. Without a doubt, bringing together the strengths of both academia and industry has a potential benefit of expediting the delivery of effective medicines to clinical practices.

JeffPOST

A Trek to Mount Everest Base Camp

By Asha Srinivasan (Vice-President of Communications, 2012)

As the saying goes - "A hundred divine epochs would not suffice to describe the marvels of the Himalayas" indeed is true but for readers who have not seen nor been to Himalayas. But it comes personified for those who have been, lived and had a glimpse of these great mountains on the planet. They are indeed amazingly Royal, Resplendent and Revered mountains. I am sure we are all awed by the raw power of the nature in its surreal environment, where mankind is dwarfed by such gigantic mountains. This is one of my richest, most powerful personal experiences narrated, to the most spectacular horizons on our planet Earth – trek to the Mount Everest base camp (EBC).

On the 5th morning June 2008, my friend from England and I arrived at Lukla (9000 feet), a small village at the foot of the Himalayas. After getting the trekking permit, we started walking through the icy, boulder-choked river, Dudh Kosi, to the village - Phakding (9,186 feet). Beautiful scenery surrounded us in which I soon got absorbed. The mountain ranges were festooned with green and carpeted with flowers. Bright splashes of colour against a green background seemed to inhibit some beautiful portrait. Almost all the people were engaged in some sort of activity which had a rhythm and tranquillity. Men driving cattle, women fetching water from the river and occasionally children appearing to wave at you.

Going ahead, crossing a wobbly bridge hanging high over a river, we halted that night in a small hamlet, perched on a sheer hillside that plunged precipitously to a glacier-melted river – Monjo (9,235 feet). The next morning we headed to Khumjung (12,475 feet) via Namchee-Bazaar (11,300 feet). By noon, we reached Namchee-Bazzar. Strings of Buddhist prayer flags hung all around the hillsides with ancient Buddhist chortens and stones carved with Buddhist invocation prayers "*Om mani padme hum.*" We resumed our trek after acclimatization at Khumjung.

Next morning, we started walking to Tengboche (12,687 feet). Pleasant walk, chirping birds and crystal clear gushing waters, evergreen forests, colourful flowers and rich vegetation; every facet of nature is indeed created very beautifully. We felt totally unburdened, unhurried and profoundly in harmony. I began to feel the first symptoms of altitude sickness. It was an extremely strenuous trek. I walked in an indolent pace which gave my body the time to adapt to the increasingly thin air.

Tengboche in the Everest trail stands on a high knife-edge cliff. The world's second highest Buddhist monastery is here. The walls of the monastery are brightly painted with Buddha's life and teachings. We attended the blissful evening services at the monastery. As dawn washed the darkness from the sky, at above 10,000 feet stood the beautiful Mount Ama Dablam amongst the clouds with a huge boulder covered sumptuously with snow and delicately poised at the top and still higher at 7000 feet, Mount Everest – the goddess mother of the earth, stood herself thrust upon ice at 29,035 feet. Mount Everest looked so huge. Can there be anything so colossal covering unfathomable area on the planet that almost touches the sun? It looked impossible for anybody to be there at such a height! This was my first glimpse of Mount Everest, although I was 10 miles away from EBC.

Walking higher up, we reached Periche, a wind-battered hamlet (14,098 feet). It was getting harder to breathe as we went higher and higher, thinner air, more exertion on the heart. I was already battling for my breath. Mountain climbing is never easy after 10,000 feet. We reached Dingboche (14,950 feet) hours later completely drenched from heavy rain. We rested in a log house filled with noxious dust which added to my sickness that seemed to continue relentlessly. The health

JeffPOST

A Trek to Mount Everest Base Camp (continued)

issue was a vexing obstacle to our ascent. Since both of us were not acclimatized for high altitude habitat, our fastest pace was still equivalent to a crawl. Physical conditioning is a crucial component of high-altitude mountain climbing. I realised that there were many other equally important physical conditioning, none of which can be practiced in the gym. Nevertheless, I took as a challenge to face it. The vegetation changes from Dingboche which is arid with barren lands. The last traces of greenery were becoming extinct. The route climbed up over unsettled rocks and finally reached the Khumbu glacier.

The Khumbu glacier is a 12 mile sheet of ice that flows down from the south face of Mount Everest. Melted water sluiced furiously down innumerable surfaces and below our feet creating ghostly noises. Landslides are very frequent in these regions. After about 2 hours of climbing over the glacier rocks, we finally were at the trail on top of the glaciers. This trail was overflowing with the memorials of people who had died on Everest. That evening, we reached a village called Lobuje (16,463 feet). At a distance we could see some small fragile log cabins almost ready to fall off. With the ceiling of the log cabins almost stroking our heads, we had our Tibetan bread with yak's cheese and tea made with yak's milk.

We started walking to Gorek Shep (17,900 feet), the last point in the Everest trail. It took 6 hours for us to reach Gorek Shep. Never try to speed hike at altitudes between 16,000 – 17,000 feet. My body suffered severely from lack of oxygen accompanied by extreme physical fatigue. I could feel my lungs deflating.

At a distance, I could see the foot of Mount Everest. We meandered through a vertical maze of stalagmites on one side and treacherous fall on the other with occasional landslides. I began to feel sick which was followed by shuddering waves of nausea. I sat down abruptly. There was no time for me to foray back and forth to say better luck next time. Whatever acclimatization was to take place had to be propelled into my body then and there. Scientifically, it is well documented that the human body tries enormously to confront altitude sickness in every possible way. The oxygen carrying capacity in the blood increases remarkably, in turn making you respire harder and all these, only to keep your "bewildered brain" functioning.

I forced myself over the glaciers and eventually was there just above Everest Base Camp at 19,000 feet. "Hurray!!!!! Eventually made it and still alive." I had no words to spell out my ecstasy. The entire region was spotlessly packed with ice and snow. Little did I know that the ecstasy would be short lived. All of a sudden, we saw a huge chunk of snow detaching, as if ready to devour anything, gaining speed towards us. Damn! It was an avalanche. It was not a question of "hit or miss" but an instinct that seemed to sense the threat of loss of life. Fear knows no geographical boundaries. I was terribly terrified thinking that my life was going to END there. Yelling and screaming, we all ran for our lives.

Still alive today, I realise that "Death has an unusual way of reshuffling one's priorities." That experience was enough to curdle my blood. That was the longest night I had in the shivering cold that made me sweat. After that near death experience, the next day's plan was to trek to Kala Pattar (18,208 feet) to capture the celestial height of Mount Everest as sun rose. I stood in patience for the clouds to clear at the summit, to see Mount Everest unravel her quintessential beauty.

Mount Everest is an unbelievable sight to see eye to eye and further up people on top of Mount Everest – an amazing lifetime achievement. Mount Everest is an embodiment of all the physical forces in the world. What a tremendous force would have been required to create a mountain like Everest – truly a self-revealing experience**.**

JeffPOST

Jefferson Postdoctoral Publications 2011

"Publish or Perish" is a phrase we as scientists are familiar with. Presentations and publications are the way to measure our progress and develop into an independent scientist. For a few of us, the first author publication is a breeze: do the experiments, write and publish! Others go through the agony of being rejected. It is the persistence and perseverance of a true scientist to accept the criticism, learn from it, and succeed in the end. Congratulations to all Jefferson postdocs who experienced the joy of first author publications in 2011. We present here a sampling of the research achievements of TJU postdocs, as determined by manuscripts in which they were first author **(Bold print).**

Below is the list of publications during 2011 and early 2012:

Ahmad, F., Boulaftali, Y., Greene, T.K., Ouellette, T.D., Poncz, M., Feske, S., and Bergmeier, W. Relative contributions of stromal interaction molecule 1 and CalDAG-GEFI to calcium-dependent platelet activation and thrombosis. J Thromb Haemost. 2011 Oct;9(10):2077-86.

Barker, B.L., and Benovic, J.L. G protein-coupled receptor kinase 5 phosphorylation of hip regulates internalization of the chemokine receptor CXCR4. Biochemistry. 2011 Aug 16;50(32):6933-41.

Castorino, J.J., Deborde, S., Deora, A., Schreiner, R., Gallagher-Colombo, S.M., Rodriguez-Boulan, E., and Philp, N.J. Basolateral sorting signals regulating tissue-specific polarity of heteromeric monocarboxylate transporters in epithelia. Traffic. 2011 Apr;12(4):483-98.

Castorino, J.J., Gallagher-Colombo, S.M., Levin, A.V., Fitzgerald, P.G., Polishook, J., Kloeckener-Gruissem, B., Ostertag, E., and Philp, N.J. Juvenile cataract-associated mutation of solute carrier SLC16A12 impairs trafficking of the protein to the plasma membrane. Invest Ophthalmol Vis Sci. 2011 Aug 29;52(9):6774-84.

Cheng, H., Kari, G., Dicker, A.P., Rodeck, U., Koch, W.J., and Force, T. A novel preclinical strategy for identifying cardiotoxic kinase inhibitors and mechanisms of cardiotoxicity. Circ Res. 2011 Dec 9;109(12):1401-9.

Cheng, H., Woodgett, J., Maamari, M., and Force, T. Targeting GSK-3 family members in the heart: a very sharp double-edged sword. J Mol Cell Cardiol. 2011 Oct;51(4):607-13.

Chevalier-Larsen, E.S., and Merry, D.E. Testosterone treatment fails to accelerate disease in a transgenic mouse model of spinal and bulbar muscular atrophy. Dis Model Mech. 2012 Jan;5(1):141-5. Epub 2011 Oct 4.

Gogate, S.S., Nasser, R., Shapiro, I.M., and Risbud, M.V. Hypoxic regulation of beta-1,3-glucuronyltransferase 1 expression in nucleus pulposus cells of the rat intervertebral disc: role of hypoxia-inducible factor proteins. Arthritis Rheum. 2011 Jul;63(7):1950-60.

Goyal, A., Pal, N., Concannon, M., Paul, M., Doran, M., Poluzzi, C., Sekiguchi, K., Whitelock, J.M., Neill, T., and Iozzo, R.V. Endorepellin, the angiostatic module of perlecan, interacts with both the alpha2beta1 integrin and vascular endothelial growth factor receptor 2 (VEGFR2): a dual receptor antagonism. J Biol Chem. 2011 Jul 22;286(29):25947-62.

Guan, X., Rubin, E., and Anni, H. An optimized method for the measurement of acetaldehyde by high-performance liquid chromatography. Alcohol Clin Exp Res. 2012 Mar;36(3):398-405.

Hewavitharana, T., and Wedegaertner, P.B. Non-canonical signaling and localizations of heterotrimeric G proteins. Cell Signal. 2012 Jan;24(1):25-34.

Huang, Z.M., Gold, J.I., and Koch, W.J. G protein-coupled receptor kinases in normal and failing myocardium. Front Biosci. 2011 Jun 1;16:3047-60.

Jing, Y., Liu, L.Z., Jiang, Y., Zhu, Y., Guo, N.L., Barnett, J., Rojanasakul, Y., Agani, F., and Jiang, B.H. Cadmium increases HIF-1 and VEGF expression through ROS, ERK, and AKT signaling pathways and induces malignant transformation of human bronchial epithelial cells. Toxicol Sci. 2012 Jan;125(1):10-19. Epub 2011 Oct 9.

Johnston, D.M., Sedkov, Y., Petruk, S., Riley, K.M., Fujioka, M., Jaynes, J.B., and Mazo, A. Ecdysone- and NO-mediated gene regulation by competing EcR/Usp and E75A nuclear receptors during Drosophila development. Mol Cell. 2011 Oct 7;44(1):51-61.

Lahoud, G., Goto-Ito, S., Yoshida, K., Ito, T., Yokoyama, S., and Hou, Y.M. Differentiating analogous tRNA methyltransferases by fragments of the methyl donor. RNA. 2011 Jul;17(7):1236-46.

Lal, H., Zhou, J., Ahmad, F., Zaka, R., Vagnozzi, R.J., Decaul, M., Woodgett, J., Gao, E., and Force, T. Glycogen synthase kinase-3alpha limits ischemic injury, cardiac rupture, post-myocardial infarction remodeling and death. Circulation. 2012 Jan 3;125(1):65-75. Epub 2011 Nov 15.

Langelier, M.F., Planck, J.L., Roy, S., and Pascal, J.M. Crystal structures of poly(ADP-ribose) polymerase-1 (PARP-1) zinc fingers bound to DNA: structural and functional insights into DNA

Jefferson Career Development Center Provides:

- Individual Career Consultations
- Resume and Cover Letter Review
- On-campus Job Fairs
- Mock Interviews

Contact: Dayna Levy, Career.development@jefferson.edu or call 3-5805

Wellness@Work

Life can be difficult:

- Stress at Work
- Family & Marital Worries
- Parenting Issues
- Loss of Loved One
- Financial Worries
- Drug /Alcohol Concerns
- Controlling Anger

Contact FirstCall at 1-800-382-2377
Confidential services available on a one-on-one basis.

(A Jefferson employee/ postdoc benefit)
www.firstcalleap.org

JeffPOST

Jefferson Postdoctoral Publications 2011 (Continued)

-dependent PARP-1 activity. J Biol Chem. 2011 Mar 25;286(12):10690-701.

Langelier, M.F., Planck, J.L., Servent, K.M., and Pascal, J.M. Purification of human PARP-1 and PARP-1 domains from Escherichia coli for structural and biochemical analysis. Methods Mol Biol. 2011;780:209-26.

Li, H., Nourbakhsh, B., Cullimore, M., Zhang, G.X., and Rostami, A. IL-9 is important for T-cell activation and differentiation in autoimmune inflammation of the central nervous system. Eur J Immunol. 2011 Aug;41(8):2197-206.

Li, H., Nourbakhsh, B., Safavi, F., Li, K., Xu, H., Cullimore, M., Zhou, F., Zhang, G., and Rostami, A. Kit (W-sh) mice develop earlier and more severe experimental autoimmune encephalomyelitis due to absence of immune suppression. J Immunol. 2011 Jul 1;187(1):274-82.

Li, X., Mikhalkova, D., Gao, E., Zhang, J., Myers, V., Zincarelli, C., Lei, Y., Song, J., Koch, W.J., Peppel, K., Cheung, J.Y., Feldman, A.M., and Chan, T.O. Myocardial injury after ischemia-reperfusion in mice deficient in Akt2 is associated with increased cardiac macrophage density. Am J Physiol Heart Circ Physiol. 2011 Nov;301 (5):H1932-40.

Londin E.R., Keller M.A., D'Andrea M.R., Delgrosso K., Ertel A., Surrey S., and Fortina P. Whole-exome sequencing of DNA from peripheral blood mononuclear cells (PBMC) and EBV-transformed lymphocytes from the same donor. BMC Genomics. 2011 Sep 26;12:464-475.

Martinez Cantarin M.P., Keith S.W., Deloach S., Huan Y., and Falkner B. Relationship of adipokines with insulin sensitivity in African Americans. Am J Med Sci. 2011 Sep;342(3):192-7.

Montie, H.L., Pestell, R.G., and Merry, D.E. SIRT1 modulates aggregation and toxicity through deacetylation of the androgen receptor in cell models of SBMA. J Neurosci. 2011 Nov 30;31 (48):17425-36.

Peck A.R., Witkiewicz A.K., Liu C., Stringer G.A., Klimowicz A.C., Pequignot E., Freydin B., Tran T.H., Yang N., Rosenberg A.L., Hooke J.A., Kovatich A.J., Nevalainen M.T., Shriver C.D., Hyslop T., Sauter G., Rimm D.L., Magliocco A.M., Rui H. Loss of nuclear localized and tyrosine phosphorylated Stat5 in breast cancer predicts poor clinical outcome and increased risk of antiestrogen therapy failure. J Clin Oncol. 2011 Jun 20;29(18):2448-58.

Sheldon, A.L., Zhang, J., Fei, H., and Levitan, I.B. SLOB, a SLOWPOKE channel binding protein, regulates insulin pathway signaling and metabolism in Drosophila. PLoS One. 2011;6(8):e23343-23356.

Shen, S., and Manser, T. Direct reduction of antigen receptor expression in polyclonal B cell populations developing in vivo results in light chain receptor editing. J Immunol. 2012 Jan 1;188(1):47-56. Epub 2011 Nov 30.

Shimono, K., Tung, W.E., Macolino, C., Chi, A.H., Didizian, J.H., Mundy, C., Chandraratna, R.A., Mishina, Y., Enomoto-Iwamoto, M., Pacifici, M., and Iwamoto, M. Potent inhibition of heterotopic ossification by nuclear retinoic acid receptor-gamma agonists. Nat Med. 2011 Apr;17(4):454-60.

Singh, J., Maxwell, P.J.4th., and Rattan, S. Immunocytochemical evidence for PDBu-induced activation of RhoA/ROCK in human internal anal sphincter smooth muscle cells. Am J Physiol Gastrointest Liver Physiol. 2011 Aug;301(2):G317-25.

Snook, A.E., Magee, M.S., and Waldman, S.A. GUCY2C-targeted cancer immunotherapy: past, present and future. Immunol Res. 2011 Dec;51(2-3):161-9.

Vuyyuru, R., Liu, H., Manser, T., and Alugupalli, K.R. Characteristics of Borrelia hermsii infection in human hematopoietic stem cell-engrafted mice mirror those of human relapsing fever. Proc Natl Acad Sci U S A. 2011 Dec 20;108(51):20707-12.

Vuyyuru, R., Patton, J., and Manser, T. Human immune system mice: current potential and limitations for translational research on human antibody responses. Immunol Res. 2011 Dec;51(2-3):257-66.

Wermuth, P.J., Addya, S., and Jimenez, S.A. Effect of protein kinase C delta (PKC-delta) inhibition on the transcriptome of normal and systemic sclerosis human dermal fibroblasts in vitro. PLoS One. 2011;6(11):e27110-27128

Zhang, J., Zhang, H., Li, J., Rosenberg, S., Zhang, E.C., Zhou, X., Qin, F., and Farabaugh, M. RIP1-mediated regulation of lymphocyte survival and death responses. Immunol Res. 2011 Dec;51(2-3):227-36.

Scott Memorial Library

- Interlibrary Loan via ILLiad
- Multimedia Resource for Researchers
- Training Sessions for RefWorks
- Jefferson Digital Commons
- Orientation for Grant Writing

And more….

For more information: Contact available staff at Scott Memorial Library

Commuter Services Office Offers:

- Tax-Free Benefits for Transportation Expenses
- Discount Parking for All Employees including Postdocs at Jefferson

Visit Commuter Services within the

Jefferson Bookstore
1009 Chestnut Street
or
www.jefferson.edu/cso

JeffPOST

Postdoctoral Travel Awards 2011

Postdoctoral Travel Fellowships are being provided by the Dean's Office and the Office of Postdoctoral Affairs of the Jefferson Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences. They provide great support for fellows to reduce the cost of attending scientific meetings/ symposia and encourage them to have an active role in presenting their research and networking with other scientists. The deadlines for the fellowships occur 3 times in a year; Feb1, June1 and Oct1. Eligible postdocs are encouraged to apply. The following postdocs were awarded travel grants in the year 2011:

Dr. Erica Chevalier-Larsen, Laboratory of Dr. Diane Merry; *Society for Neuroscience Meeting, 2011*
Dr. John Eisenbrey, Laboratory of Dr. Flemming Forsberg; *American Institute of Ultrasound in Medicine's Annual Meeting, 2011*
Dr. Michael Gormley, Laboratory of Dr. Andrew Quong; *AACR 102nd Annual Meeting, 2011*
Dr. Vuyyuru Raja Sekhar Reddy, Laboratory of Dr. Timothy Manser; *Third International Workshop on Humanized Mice, 2011*
Dr. Michiko Sekiya, Laboratory of Dr. Koichi Iijima; *Alzheimer's Association International Conference on Alzheimer's Disease, 2011*
Dr. Dalip Sethi, Laboratory of Dr. Eric Wickstrom; *Gordon Research Conference on "Nucleosides, Nucleotides & Oligonucleotides," 2011*
Dr. Yongping Shao, Laboratory of Dr. Andrew Aplin; *AACR 102nd Annual Meeting, 2011*
Dr. Amanda Sheldon, Laboratory of Dr. Irwin Levitan; *Society for Neuroscience Meeting, 2011*
Dr. Michele Weiss, Laboratory of Dr. Andrew Aplin; *XXIst International Pigment Cell Conference, 2011*
Dr. Miao Zhang, Laboratory of Dr. Jifang Zhang; *Biophysical Society 55th Annual Meeting, 2011*

Capitalizing on Your Strengths and Strengths of Others

By Lisa Kozlowski (Associate Dean, Postdoctoral Affairs and Recruitment)

If you've ever attended one of my career presentations, read my article in last year's JeffPost, or met with me for career counseling, you know that when I talk about the different steps of a job search the first step is always self-assessment. Self-assessment should include looking at your own capabilities closely, including skills on and off the bench. However, it is not only looking at what you are good at, but also what you are passionate about.

It can also include other types of self-assessment, such as learning about how you and others work best. One popular way to do this is to take the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) assessment. To help with this, I invited our 2011 PRS keynote speaker, Dr. Sharon Milgram, to stay an extra day and give a morning-long workshop the day after PRS. The workshop was titled, "Using the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator for Self-Awareness and Group Learning." Dr. Milgram had presented this workshop many times from small, individual labs at the NIH to a group as large as all of the attendees at the National Postdoc Association annual meeting. Being a scientist herself, Dr. Milgram had a unique perspective on how this information can help in a laboratory setting.

The MBTI, which has been used widely since 1975, has nothing to do with skill, ability, intelligence, or mental health. It does not predict success or performance. What the MBTI does do is help people understand their own and others' personality preferences to enhance learning, improve individual and team performance, develop leadership skills, and reduce conflict. Who doesn't aspire to do all of this? Dr. Milgram used examples from the classroom, workplace, laboratory, and from life, to help attendees focus on developing an action plan.

Two of the most well-known "types" within the MBTI are extravert and introvert. The assessment allows you to see which of these and 3 other dichotomies, sensing/intuition, thinking/feeling, and judging/perceiving, are automatic or favored by you, although everyone uses every preference. The dichotomies help you understand how you and others gather information and make decisions and where you get your energy from. It will help you learn how to capitalize on your strengths and the strengths of others and how to supplement those areas that do not come easily to you.

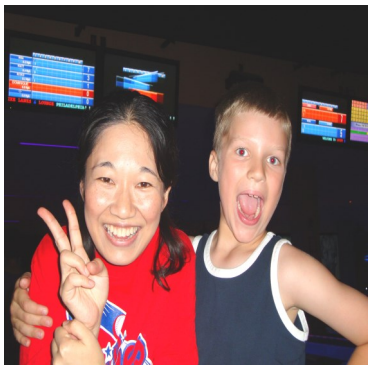
If you are interested in learning more about this assessment as well as how to take it, you should contact Dayna Levy, Director, Jefferson's Career Development Center, career.development@jefferson.edu. Additionally, the Career Development Center, as well as I, can help with job search strategies, resume and cover letter review, and interviewing skills and practice. Please feel free to contact us to set up an appointment.

JeffPOST

Social Corner

By Dominique Comer (Vice-President of Social Affairs, 2012) and Yi Luo (Vice-President of Social Affairs, 2011)

2011 was a fun-filled year for the Jefferson Postdoc Association (JPA)! The fun kicked off with our 2011 Winter Bash. Last year's theme was Valentine's Day, so we encouraged people to bring their partners to join the party. During the Bash, we played fun games such as the "Newlywed Game" with lab partners as couples and "The Price Is Right" with valentine -themed items. More than 100 postdocs, graduate students, their partners and families attended the event. The raffle prizes were well-received and the food was great as well as the venue. Our summer event in 2011 was held at Lucky Strike bowling alley, where we welcomed new postdocs and mingled with family and friends.



For National Postdoc Appreciation Week in September, we "Experienced the Wonder of Aqueous Yeast Byproducts" and raffled off a number of prizes. One of our favorite postdoc events was the International Potluck Lunch, where postdocs brought in foods from their cultures to share. It was a great way to not only share your culture with others, but also show off your culinary skills!

We at the JPA are proud of the great diversity that is represented by the postdocs. We took advantage of learning about different cultures with a number of our social events. At the Blocktober festival, we walked down to South Street and sampled a variety of German foods. Some of us even got our picture taken for "The Philadelphia Inquirer"!

To celebrate Diwali, we went to the International House in University City, where we enjoyed delicious food and a number of performances. In October, we also attended the Night Market in Chinatown, where we enjoyed live band performances, a dragon dance and some of the best food trucks in Philly!

In December, postdocs went out for a day-trip to the King of Prussia mall and watched a movie and of course did a bit of shopping for the holiday season.

Throughout the year, postdocs were able to take a break during the day and stop by the JGSBS Grad Student and Postdoc Lounge in 469 JAH for our coffee hours and bingo. And don't forget our happy hours after work with Penn postdocs on the 1st Friday of the month. We can't wait for more social events in the coming year.

JeffPOST

National Postdoctoral Association (NPA)

By Matthew Wampole (President, 2011-2012)

The NPA was established to promote improvements to the postdoctoral situation in the United States. It is a collaborative group of postdoctoral scientists and institution administrators from around the country who work tirelessly to bring about changes that would benefit postdocs. As Thomas Jefferson University is a Sustaining Member Institution of the NPA, all postdocs are eligible to join as an Affiliate Member and take part in making a difference in the postdoctoral experience nationally. Each year, Lisa Kozlowski and a JPA Executive Board member attend the annual meeting and present a poster highlighting the Jefferson Postdoc community.

Visit the NPA at: www.nationalpostdoc.org

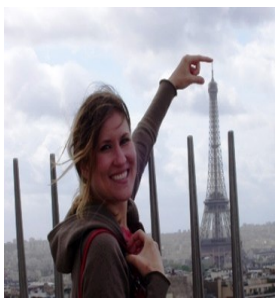
"The Well Travelled Postdoc"

By Heather Montie

During my tenure as a postdoctoral fellow, I have had the privilege of traveling around Europe, not to mention the many exciting places I've visited within the states. You may be asking how I have managed that, since we all know a postdoc salary does not afford such luxuries. A wild ride on the Chinatown bus to New York City is a more routine postdoc venture from Jefferson. The way I've been able to extend my journeys across the "pond," as my Irish postdoc friends would say, is that I'm "just working." As postdocs, we're pretty good at that, working, and working, and working. We sometimes need to remind ourselves we have to take the time to enjoy life. So why not couple work with pleasure? The trips I have made to Europe have been for scientific conferences at which I have presented my research. I have learned a lot at these meetings, have made great networking contacts and formed collaborations and friendships that will last throughout my career.

But I've also been able to enjoy a croissant and a glass of Bordeaux, while admiring the Eiffel Tower in the distance, at a sidewalk café. I've learned to surf in the Mediterranean (albeit not with much success). Hiking through the French Alps was a mid-afternoon break from lectures. And I could view the Leaning Tower of Pisa in the distance from my cottage porch atop a mountain in Tuscany. I would have never dreamed I would be lucky enough to enjoy such extravagant trips! However, that is one of the perks of science; it is a field that crosses continents.

I took advantage of the fact that I was already traveling to Europe and extended my stay a few days before and after each conference I have attended. Yes, I actually used some of my vacation time! Since my flights were already paid for by travel fellowships, I was able to economically travel around and see some amazing sights. So, the next time you are in the lab at midnight and are thinking you are in need of a vacation, investigate some scientific conferences in your field that are being held abroad, or even within the U.S. for that matter.



Get yourself a postdoc travel award, either from Jefferson or the conference organizing committee, and go out and see the world! And don't feel bad, because you are also enhancing your scientific training in the process.

Jefferson Wellness Center Provides:

- Reiki Sessions
- Adult & Kids (6-12 yrs) Swimming Lessons
- Ballroom, Salsa & Hip Hop Dance Lessons
- Tennis Lessons
- Massage Therapy
- Yoga - Sunrise & Sunset Yoga
- Learn to Knit or Crochet - 8 week program
- Personal Training
- Weight Training

Contact: Activities Office in JAH Room B100 for more information on any of the above programs or call 3-5513

JeffPOST

Postdoctoral Survey 2011

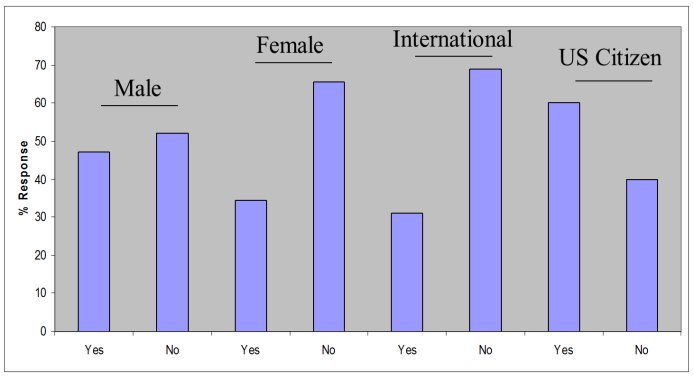
By Chris So (President, 2010) and Lisa Kozlowski (Associate Dean of Postdoctoral Affairs)

In order to serve the postdoctoral community best, an annual survey is conducted every February to understand the needs and desires of postdocs here at Jefferson. Previously, both the Jefferson Postdoctoral Association (JPA) and the Office of Postdoctoral Affairs (OPA) have used results from this survey as inspiration for various successful endeavors. Each year, the survey data is also reported to the Dean of the JGSBS in order to help the school gauge and enhance the postdoctoral experience at Jefferson. The creation of travel awards, for postdocs who lack funds to travel to conferences, and mentoring awards, to recognize excellence in faculty postdoctoral mentorship, are amongst these key enterprises stemming from survey results. Specifically for the travel awards, the survey data was brought to the attention of the JGSBS Dean who decided to provide funding for them.

This year, ~50% of postdocs completed the survey. Sixty percent of the respondents were male and 90% of the total respondents were within the first three years of their postdoctoral fellowships. The ethnic diversity of respondents reflected that of the Jefferson postdoc community, with the majority (~74%) being of international origins.

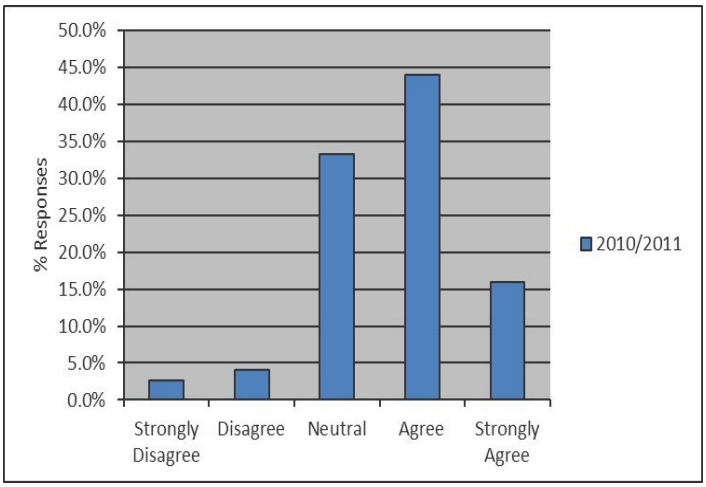
In regards to benefits available, one of the major concerns was the limited number of vacation days, which may handicap those that need to travel abroad to visit their families. Previously, the OPA worked with the administration to allow postdocs to "carry over" up to 1 week of unused vacation days from a previous year. This means that a postdoc can have up to 3 weeks of allowable vacation days at one time. This may ameliorate travel concerns voiced in previous surveys by international postdocs. Another key concern is the establishment of a higher minimum required salary. This is an ongoing initiative of both the OPA and the JGSBS.

Concerning postdocs applying for fellowships, there seems to be a disparity in regards to international versus domestic postdocs. Please note that the JPA and OPA can help you with this endeavor through the Postdoctoral Fellowship Application Program (PFAP). This program is designed to help postdocs through the fellowship application process with seminars on finding funding and grantsmanship.



Postdocs applying for fellowships. Approximately 60% of international postdocs have not applied for fellowships when compared with 40% US origin postdocs.

Everyone agrees that a key to success is proper mentoring during postdoctoral training. The JPA and OPA have been gauging the satisfaction of Jefferson postdocs in regards to their mentoring over the years. We are very pleased that it appears that the satisfaction among Jefferson postdocs towards the mentoring they receive from their PIs has trended upwards over the years.



Postdoctoral mentoring results for 2010/2011. About 60% (strongly agree + agree) agreed that they have received adequate mentoring in their current postdoctoral position.

The JPA and OPA are aiming to further improve mentoring by establishing the concept of a committee of career mentors for postdoctoral fellows. This committee, made up of experts within your field of career interests, would be directed to give pertinent career advice towards professional success. This would be potentially implemented in addition to what has already been established towards improved mentoring, such as the Distinguished Mentor Award, given to individual faculty members for excellence in postdoctoral mentoring (see page 12).

In this survey, we also gathered some valuable information on how to improve JPA social events. Approximately 63% of postdocs are interested in family-friendly events and ~81% are interested in off-campus events. Proposed events within this survey included a beer tasting; a novel idea that we embraced and held as part of last year's National Postdoctoral Appreciation Week.

In closing, we would like to thank those of you who took the time to take this survey. This survey gives us invaluable information on how to best serve Jefferson postdocs and how to improve your training here at Jefferson.

**Please contact the JPA at jpa@jefferson.edu if you have any questions or suggestions or would like to sign up for any of the programs outlined here. **

JeffPOST

Friend of the JPA Award

Dr. James Keen, who is currently Professor in the Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology here at Jefferson, served as Dean of the Jefferson College of Graduate Studies. He made substantial contributions to the development of the postdoctoral community here at Jefferson.

2011 Distinguished Mentor Award Nominees

Distinguished Mentor Nominees with Dr. Lisa Kozlowski, TJU's Associate Dean for Postdoctoral Affairs and Recruitment, (left to right) Drs. Philip Wedegartner, Andrew Aplin, Rajanikanth Vadigepalli, and Giovanni Pitari. Other nominees not pictured are Dr. Manuel L. Covarrubias & Dr. Eric Wickstrom.

And the Distinguished Mentor Award goes to:

Gyorgy Hajnoczky, M.D., Ph.D.

Dr. Hajnoczky with his postdocs, Dr. Shamim Naghdi and Dr. Veronica Eisner

Dr. Hajnoczky and Dr. Lisa Kozlowski, Associate Dean for Postdoctoral Affairs and Recruitment

We would also like to express our gratitude to all of the faculty for their continuing commitment to training future scientists. We also encourage those postdocs with great mentors to nominate them for next year's DMA!

Upcoming Events for 2012

October 23
Tickets for
Terror Behind The Walls
8pm at Eastern State Penitentiary
Contact:
Activities Office
in JAH Room B100 for more information or call 3-7743
To Purchase Tickets
Visit:
Jefferson Bookstore
1009 Chestnut Street

October 25
HR Benefits Fair
7.30am – 4.30pm
First Floor JAH

October 26-28
SCUBA Diving Certification
Contact:
Justin Holman
215-503-9095

November 1
HR Benefits Briefing for Postdocs
1pm 207 JAH

November 8
JPA Open Meeting
Scott Library
1pm 202 BLSB

December 11
Technical Skills Seminar Series
Sigma
1pm 207 JAH

JeffPOST

How to Succeed in Mentoring: Conversations with 2011 Distinguished Mentor Award Nominees and Winner *by Erica Chevalier-Larsen (Former Secretary, 2012)*

Not all of us will end up as PIs. Many of us will go on to work in industry, education, government, and a host of other venues. But regardless of where our careers may take us, it's likely that we will all end up training someone. Mentoring is a skill that is required in a wide range of possible career trajectories. It's therefore a shame that there is no class on how to be a great mentor. Each year the Jefferson Postdoc Association solicits nominations for the Distinguished Mentor Award. I talked with last year's Distinguished Mentor winner, Gyorgy Hajnoczky, and several of the other nominees about how they've developed their mentoring styles, what mindset a good mentor needs, and what pitfalls all mentors need to avoid.

Q: How would you characterize your mentoring style?

Some of the mentors described their styles as parental. People can be "more productive because of the way you support them," says Dr. Wickstrom. In fact, he went so far as to rent and furnish an apartment for an incoming foreign postdoc to minimize the shock of moving, thus allowing the postdoc to begin working productively sooner. Dr. Hajnoczky also characterizes himself as having a more parental style: being interactive and available at all times. But others characterize their relationship with their mentees as collegial. The goal, says Dr. Wedegaertner, is to develop your mentee into a peer, eventually working together "to get a good exchange of ideas." According to Dr. Vadigepalli, such interactions will lead one's research in "unexpected and exciting directions."

Q: What were the influences that you drew on to develop your mentoring style?

It's not surprising that all of the mentors cite their own mentors as strong influences on their development. "You learn what you want to emulate and what you want to avoid," says Dr. Wickstrom. However, they were also heavily influenced by watching more experienced colleagues. In addition to scientists he knows personally, Dr. Covarrubias draws inspiration from reading about the lives of great scientists. Dr. Wedegaertner reads "Dear Labby," an advice column published by The American Society for Cell Biology. And Dr. Hajnoczky actually took a course in mentoring as part of a Burroughs Wellcome Fund transitional award. But Drs. Wickstrom and Wedegaertner both agree that a fair amount of instinct and introspection are also required. "You have to develop a style that fits your personality, while still pushing yourself to work outside your comfort zone," says Dr. Wedegaertner.

Q: What is the most important thing for a mentor to keep in mind?

While there are clearly many different paths to being an effective mentor, clear communication is essential to success. You have to "honestly lay out consequences and options. In the end you are benefitting the person more [even if you are telling them something negative]," says Dr. Covarrubias. Dr. Vadigepalli agrees that goals and expectations must be clearly laid out and adds that those goals need to be established and driven by the mentee. Dr. Wickstrom cautions that the mentor must also constantly keep his goal in mind: "The job is to teach people to think so they can achieve independence; not to give orders or explicit directions." The mentor's attitude can influence and guide the mentee. "Let your enthusiasm for science be clear," urges Dr. Hajnoczky, "students will see your fascination." To Dr. Wedegaertner, patience and empathy, as well as the ability to set aside one's ego, are critical. "Don't believe that you can solve every problem and understand that no one's personality is exactly like yours," he advises. Finally, Dr. Hajnoczky suggests taking the time, when a mentee first joins the lab, to assess each person for gaps in knowledge and then work to fill in those gaps. "Everyone has them," he says, "but if you make an effort to help them, they can blossom...if not, their brilliance may be lost."

Q: What is the hardest challenge that a mentor faces and what can be done about it?

Both Drs. Wedegaertner and Hajnoczky acknowledge that having patience with a mentee when results are not forthcoming can be difficult. This can be particularly challenging at the beginning of a mentor's career, when pressure is high to obtain funding and produce publications. Their advice in the face of these challenges is to refrain from being overly critical and to find the right number of students and postdocs for the effort you can invest in them. Dr. Vadigepalli believes that dealing with frustration in a mentee who is not progressing is difficult for both mentor and mentee, but that focusing on the goal, and remembering that there are multiple ways in which to answer a question can combat that frustration. For Dr. Wickstrom, it is most difficult to acknowledge that some people do not have the talent to be independent: "Those people have to be encouraged in another direction."

Q: Are you still in contact with previous mentees?

In all cases, the answer to this question was a resounding "yes." Although it is a lot of work, being a mentor can also be extremely rewarding. Updates on marriages, career advancement, and children are frequent. "Those things are wonderful," says Dr. Vadigepalli, "and make me feel good."

JeffPOST

In Pursuit of a Career After PostDoc...

By Chris Willis (Vice-President for Career Development, 2011-2012)

Katie McClendon, PhD
Former Postdoc and Research Assistant Professor at Thomas Jefferson University

Tenure at Jefferson:

I started as a postdoc in December 2007, and then became a Research Instructor in April 2010. I worked in the laboratory of Dr. Erik Knudsen for my entire post-grad career. (Editor's note: Katie has left TJU recently for a position as a medical writer. This interview was taken during her last position at TJU.)

Decision to Pursue a Certificate Program in Clinical Trials:

I think most scientists, especially in a field like cancer biology, are interested in learning how to effectively translate their bench research to the clinic. However, as a PhD scientist in an academic setting, taking that step can be quite challenging. In reality, a clinical trial must be led by a practicing clinician, one who most likely does not have a lot of spare time to devote to writing the clinical trial protocol and preparing the protocol for institutional review and approval. Additionally, if you are using an investigational new drug, someone will have to be the liaison for communicating with the pharmaceutical company for protocol approval, drug, and funding. When considering all of this, I decided that if I could learn to write clinical trial protocols and develop a basic understanding of the process through which a concept for a clinical trial becomes an approved clinical trial protocol, then I would be in a much better position to translate the concepts of my bench research to a clinical setting. I didn't actually find out about the "Certificate Program in Clinical Research and Trials" until a graduate student in the laboratory told me about a "Drug Development" course that she was taking. I thought that the course sounded interesting, and while we were looking through similar courses available through JGSBS, we found the Certificate Program webpage. When I looked through the courses listed in the "Clinical Research and Trials" program, I realized that this program was exactly what I needed. Additionally, the majority of the courses were held in the evenings, and the entire program could be completed in one year. Thus, I could complete the program quickly and without interrupting my full-time job as a researcher. When I pitched the idea to my mentor, he was completely supportive; however, there was definitely a tiny hint of skepticism as to how much this program would actually benefit my research. Considering that our first investigator-initiated clinical trial was institutionally approved and began enrolling patients last summer, I think we can both say that it has been beneficial.

Job Search Strategies:

My job search strategies have opened up a little since becoming involved in designing and writing clinical trials. Back when I was searching for a postdoc position, I was obviously looking only for a bench research position. Now my interests and experiences have expanded to include more specialized positions such as a science/medical writer for clinical trials. At this point, I'm really open to the idea of either type of job. On one hand, most of my experience is with preclinical bench research, which I enjoy and still devote the majority of my time. On the other hand, I have now participated in designing and preparing two clinical trials at TJU (one currently enrolling and one submitted for institutional approval), and I have equally enjoyed these projects. So, as I move forward and consider new opportunities, I am keeping myself open to both translational bench research positions and science/medical writer positions for clinical trials. This takes a bit more work because I have to prepare resumes that either focus on my research skills and techniques, or that focus on my writing and communication skills in the context of preclinical data analysis and preparation of clinical trial documents. I was also recently advised by colleagues to take advantage of job recruiting agencies, especially when considering finding positions in pharmaceutical companies that do not always post available positions online.

Interview Process for Junior Faculty Position:

There actually wasn't an interview process for my faculty position. After several years as a postdoc at TJU, I transitioned to TJU's non-tenure promotion track to become an Instructor then a Research Assistant Professor. All of my clinical research activities are performed in addition to my full-time bench research responsibilities.

Postdoc Experience or Activities at TJU that Helped you Move into the Junior Faculty Position:

In addition to the Certificate Program in Clinical Research and Trials, I think that the most important factor that has contributed to my involvement in both basic science and clinical research is the growing collaboration between researchers and clinicians at TJU. When I first showed interest in writing clinical trials, my faculty mentor (Dr. Knudsen) contacted Dr. Matt Carabasi (Director of Clinical Investigations) and Dr. Kevin Kelly (Associate Director of Translational Research) to discuss how to best go about getting an investigator-initiated clinical trial started at TJU. Soon afterwards I was introduced to the fantastic people in the Clinical Research Management Office (CRMO), and I was put in contact with Dr. Susan Littman, who would become the primary medical oncologist and principal investigator for our first clinical trial. The CRMO was incredibly helpful in walking me through all of the requirements for getting FDA and institutional approval for a clinical trial, and Dr. Littman was always eager to both discuss the concepts behind the clinical trial and work with me to prepare the final trial protocol. In fact, everyone that I have come in contact with at TJU throughout the entire clinical trial process has been exceedingly helpful and supportive.

Additionally, I was Co-Chair of the Jefferson Postdoctoral Research Symposium (PRS) for two years. In the last year, I organized a special plenary session focused on Clinical Research/ Trials at TJU that provided information to audience members on everything from preparing a trial protocol to receiving FDA and

JeffPOST

In Pursuit of a Career After PostDoc... (continued)

institutional approval to acquiring financial support for clinical research. Again, the CRMO and several clinicians at TJU were incredibly supportive and eager to participate in the session. My hopes for the session were to encourage other basic researchers at TJU to get involved in clinical research, to introduce those individuals (clinicians and the CRMO) who have been so helpful in the clinical trial process, and to inform basic scientists on how to actually get involved in clinical research. Since the symposium and the approval of my first clinical trial, I was happy to learn that Drs. Knudsen and Kelly have established a Kimmel Cancer Center (KCC) Investigator-Initiated Clinical Research Support Program, which provides funding for the development of new clinical trials initiated from research carried out within the KCC. I think this program is an excellent example of the ongoing support and collaborative nature of both researchers and clinicians at TJU that I have been fortunate enough to experience during my time here.

Difference Between your Postdoc and Junior Faculty Position:

The main difference for me between being a postdoc and being a junior faculty member is an increased sense of independence, confidence, and responsibility. Throughout my postdoc I had developed the independence and confidence needed to not only direct my own studies but to also direct the studies of graduate students and technicians in the laboratory, and to approach other investigators when I felt that collaborations were needed or would benefit a project. One greater sense of responsibility that comes with a junior faculty position is that you are now writing research grants as a principal investigator, and you now serve as a mentor for students and postdocs.

Best and Worst Part of your Job:

The absolute best part of my job is my involvement in clinical research. It is incredibly satisfying to be able to generate ideas from preclinical bench research and then actually translate those ideas to the clinical setting. As a cancer biologist, I don't think there is much more I could ask for in my research. The worst part of my job, and likely any researcher's job, is the constant need for more funding. Some investigators enjoy the grant writing process, but I am not one of them.

Important Skills Required for your Job:

Aside from my bench research skills/techniques and the skills learned from the Certificate Program in Clinical Research and Trials, my most important skills at this level are the ability to multi-task, organize, and on-the-spot problem solve. At any given time, I have 2-3 projects for which I'm actively performing experiments, a manuscript and/or grant that is being written or revised, and more recently at least one clinical trial protocol at some stage of development. All of these projects involve numerous collaborators, meetings, and a seemingly never-ending flow of emails and phone calls. Thus, multi-tasking and organization are essential. Additionally, you can't work on multiple projects involving numerous people without running into problems, and I don't just mean experimental problems. Over the last couple of years, I have really learned the importance of effective communication skills and the ability to mediate interactions between collaborators. Sometimes effectively working with multiple people requires more skills than even the most complicated scientific experiment.

Advice for TJU Postdocs:

Decide early what really interests you, whether it is traditional academic bench research or something that would be considered an "alternative career." In reality, an academic postdoc only prepares you to be an academic principal investigator. So, if that's not your ambition, then you need to decide what you want to become and then start looking for ways to gain additional skills needed to reach that goal. Do not hesitate to ask for help from your mentor, your peers, and the Office of Postdoctoral Affairs; they are there to help you. Simply talking to the right person may open the door to great possibilities that you would have otherwise never known about.

Overall Review of Career Path:

I first came to TJU as a postdoc in the Department of Cancer Biology after receiving my graduate degree in Biochemistry. After 2 years of performing basic science and preclinical bench research as a postdoc, I became interested in clinical research and learned about the JGSBS Certificate Program in Clinical Research and Trials. This program was completed during my third year as a postdoc, after which I was promoted to Research Instructor. I then immediately put my new skills to use in writing a Phase II clinical trial for liver cancer that began enrolling patients last year. Since becoming an Instructor, I have been both working as a bench scientist and participating in writing clinical trials. As a result, this year I was awarded my first grant as an independent investigator to fund my current preclinical studies, and I participated in preparing a second clinical trial that is currently awaiting institutional approval. I was then promoted to Research Assistant Professor.

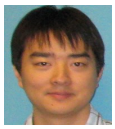
Plans for the Next Five Years:

I'm looking to move out of the traditional academic research setting. I have realized that grant writing is not something that I want to be tied to, so I'll most likely be looking for a position in a pharmaceutical company. I'd love to continue working on translational cancer research, especially the transition from preclinical concepts to clinical trials. I'm open to preclinical research positions as well as science/medical writer positions, and I think that my experiences here at TJU have really provided me with a great array of skills to be successful in either setting. I'm greatly appreciative of all of the support I've received throughout my time here. I take comfort in knowing that the same support and encouragement will be available to me as I move forward.

JeffPOST

6th Annual Postdoctoral Research Symposium

By Anna Gumpert and Yi Luo (PRS Co-Chairs, 2011)



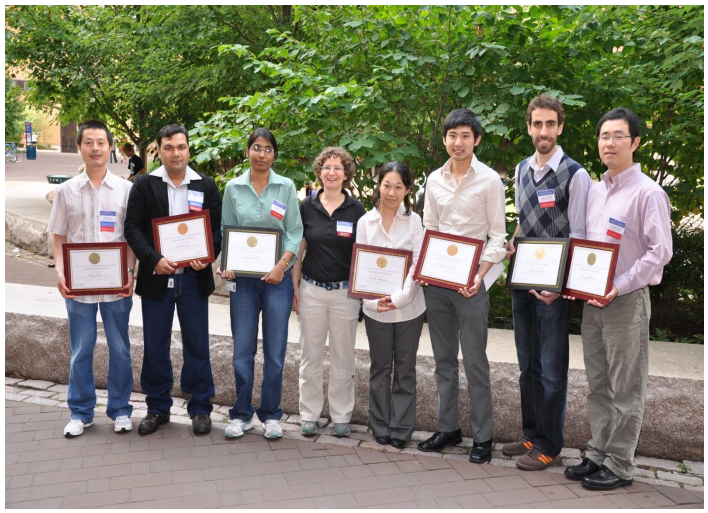
Cont'd from page 1

The 2011 keynote address was given by Sharon Milgram, PhD, a senior investigator from the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute and an adjunct investigator at the National Human Genome Research Institute at the National Institutes of Health (NIH). Her keynote address, "Sorting Nexin 27: A novel sorting nexin with roles in the formation and regulation of epithelial cells," was appreciated and enjoyed by the faculty, postdocs and students from many different research departments at Jefferson. In addition to the keynote address, as the director of the Office of Intramural Training and Education at the NIH, Dr. Milgram also presented a career talk, "Planning for Career Satisfaction and Success," specifically designed for postdocs and students.

Following the keynote address, the 2011 Distinguished Mentor Award (DMA) was presented to Dr. Gyorgy Hajnoczky for his excellent mentorship. The DMA was established by the JPA and OPA in 2007 as a way to recognize and commend TJU faculty that have gone above and beyond to provide great postdoctoral mentorship. Six other faculty members were nominated for the 2011 DMA and are listed on page 12. We greatly appreciate the effort that these faculty members put towards postdoctoral mentoring, and we urge those of you with great mentors to nominate them for next year's DMA.

Immediately following the DMA presentation, the PRS awards for best poster presentations were presented by Dr. Lisa Kozlowski, Associate Dean for Postdoctoral Affairs and Recruitment, and PRS 2011 Co-Chairs, Drs. Anna Gumpert and Yi Luo. The exciting event concluded with a reception where postdocs, faculty, and students could mingle, discuss science, or just relax.

2011 Postdoctoral Research Symposium Winners - Congratulations



From left to right: Yaping Yan, Mehboob Ali, Anindita Dutta, Sharon Milgram (keynote speaker), Reiko Sakaguchi, Jeffrey Adijanto, Marco Tretorola, Yongping Shao

And the AWARDs go to:

Outstanding Poster Presenters

Dr. Jeffrey Adijanto, from the laboratory of Dr. Nancy Philp
Dr. Mehboob Ali, from the laboratory of Dr. Giovanni Pitari
Dr. Reiko Sakaguchi, from the laboratory of Dr. Ya-Ming Hou
Dr. Yongping Shao, from the laboratory of Dr. Andrew Aplin
Dr. Yaping Yan, from the laboratory of Dr. Guang-Xian Zhang

Outstanding Poster Presenters, Early Discoveries

Dr. Anindita Dutta, from the laboratory of Dr. Lucia Languino
Dr. Marco Tretorola, from the laboratory of Dr. Lucia Languino