Dear VMD-PhD Alumni,

Greetings from the Penn VMD-PhD program! As usual, the Fall has been very busy. The annual Combined Degree Retreat was held in August at Villanova University and included a keynote address by Dr. George Daley from Harvard, as well as student posters, and student talks. In September we held the annual Penn Vet Student Research BBQ at the Biopond and a good time was had by all. We are entering a new admissions cycle and have received a record number of applications this year. Admissions interviews will be held on January 22, 2015. In late August we welcomed two new VMD-PhD students into the program and their information is included here.

We have also included some alumni and current student updates, promotions, publications, and life events in this letter. We are proud of our alumni and current students. Finally, the annual Dinner Party at my home for current students and local alumni will be on Saturday, December 6 at 5PM. We wish you the best as 2014 comes to a close.

Wishing you the best,
Michael Atchison, Ph.D.
Director, VMD-PhD Program

Alumni are Online!
Check out:
http://www.vet.upenn.edu/education/academics-and-training/vmd-phd-program/vmd-phd-alumni-profiles
Find your profile, and send us feedback!
Incoming VMD-PHD Students: Ian Penkala and Gregory Sousa

Ian Penkala (Year 1)

Ian graduated from the University of Pennsylvania in May 2013. Ian’s most recent research experience was in the laboratory of Dr. Montserrat Anguera. There he studied long noncoding RNA in pluripotency and trophoblast development. He previously worked in the laboratories of Drs. Matthew Lazzara and Kendra Bence. In Dr. Lazzara’s lab he investigated EGFR signaling in primary non-small cell lung cancer tissue, and in Dr. Bence’s lab he studied protein-tyrosine phosphatases in obesity and cancer. Ian is an avid runner, was a member of the UPenn running club as an undergraduate, and has run in competitive races. In the coming academic year, Ian will take Veterinary curriculum Core courses Gross Anatomy, Cellular and Biochemical Foundations of Disease, Histology, Developmental Biology, Neuroscience, Immunology, Physiology, Introduction to Clinical Veterinary Medicine I, II, III, Nutrition, Wildlife Medicine I, II, and Introduction to Radiology. Ian is in the Cell and Molecular Biology Graduate Group (Cell Biology and Physiology subtrack) and in the coming year will complete a Graduate Seminar Course entitled Topics in Molecular Medicine. He will perform a Laboratory Rotation in the summer, and will participate in a graduate independent study.

Gregory Sousa (Year 1)

Gregory graduated from Bates College in May 2009. Gregory’s most recent research experience was working as a research assistant in the lab of Dr. Nancy Kleckner at Bates College. He studied the impact of gut distention on components of the feeding central pattern generator in the brain of the pond snail, *Helisoma trivolvis*. While an undergraduate, he worked in The Jackson Laboratory with Dr. Simon W.M. John to investigate the molecular factors underlying glaucomatous neurodegeneration and assessed neuroprotective treatment in the DBA/2J mouse. His numerous research experiences also led to being co-author of several papers in the Journal of Clinical Investigation, and General and Comparative Endocrinology journals. In the coming academic year, Gregory will take Veterinary curriculum Core courses Gross Anatomy, Cellular and Biochemical Foundations of Disease, Histology, Developmental Biology, Neuroscience, Immunology, Physiology, Introduction to Clinical Veterinary Medicine I, II, III, Nutrition, Wildlife Medicine I, II, and Introduction to Radiology. Gregory is in the Neurosciences Graduate Group and in the coming year will complete a Graduate Seminar Course entitled Topics in Molecular Medicine. He will perform a Laboratory Rotation in the summer, and will participate in a graduate independent study.

http://www.vet.upenn.edu/education/academics-and-training/vmd-phd-program
Recent Student Thesis Defenses

Student: Brittany Gregory  
**Date:** November 15, 2013  
**Title:** Natural variation in the histone demethylase, KDM4C, influences cell proliferation through the regulation of specific genes.  
**Mentor:** Vivian Cheung  
**Graduate Group:** CAMB GGR

Student: Catherine Brinkley  
**Date:** November 18, 2013  
**Title:** Fringe Benefits: quantitative and qualitative study of urban form on farmland functions.  
**Mentor:** Tom Daniels  
**Graduate Group:** City and Regional Planning (School of Design)

Student: Laurel Redding  
**Date:** January 30, 2014  
**Title:** Antibiotic use in dairy cattle on small farms in rural Peru.  
**Mentor:** Sean Hennessy  
**Graduate Group:** Epi/Biostats

Student: Steve Artim  
**Date:** April 30, 2014  
**Title:** Regulation and Kinase Activity of the TRK Family of Receptor Tyrosine Kinases  
**Mentor:** Mark Lemmon  
**Graduate Group:** BMB

Student: Irene Bukh  
**Date:** June 20, 2014  
**Title:** Blood and Guts: Consequences of Adenovirus Vector Vaccination on T Cell Activation and SIV Susceptibility in Rhesus Macaques  
**Mentor:** Michael Betts  
**Graduate Group:** CAMB MVP

http://www.vet.upenn.edu/education/academics-and-training/vmd-phd-program
Current Student Awards, Accomplishments, and Honors

Congratulations go out to all of our students listed below:

Laurel Redding
Laurel won the prestigious Biomedical Graduate Studies Saul Weingrad award for best PhD thesis this year.

Penn Vet Student Research Day Award Winners, March 11, 2014

Rebecca Evans
First place in the Penn Vet Student Research Day, Oral presentation:
CD4 T Cells Impair CD8 T Cell Surveillance in a Genetic Mouse Model of Pancreatic Cancer.

Erika Lin-Hendel
Second Place Penn Vet Student Research Day, Oral presentation:
Mitochondrial Manipulations Interfere with Interneuron Migration

Steve Artim
Third Place Penn Vet Student Research Day, Oral presentation:
Differences in Autophosphorylation of the Trk Family of Receptor Tyrosine Kinases

Pierce Nathanson
Third Place Penn Vet Student Research Day, Poster presentation:
The Role of miRNAs in TDP-43 Autoregulation

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Alumni Awards, Accomplishments, and Honors

Stephanie Murphy
Stephanie is now Director of the Division of Comparative Medicine, Office of Research Infrastructure Programs, Division of Program Coordination, Planning, and Strategic Initiatives, Office of the Director, National Institutes of Health.
She is responsible for programs that provide funding for the development of access to critical animal models, which offer essential clues to a broad range of human disorders such as Parkinson’s disease, diabetes, multiple sclerosis, and AIDS. She provides scientific leadership for strengthening and enhancing a critical part of the biomedical research continuum, providing support for animal models that build the bridge between basic science and human medicine, with discoveries in one species enhancing understanding of another. She provides funding for pre- and post-doctoral training and career development for veterinary scientists who provide unique expertise to translational biomedical research, and establishes collaborations between DCM-supported grantees and grantees funded by the NIH Institutes and Centers. Her office sets scientific priorities through the development of long-term strategic plans and execution of funding decisions, and manages the direction of operations and activities through the implementation of NIH policies and resource allocation.
Telephone: 301-451-7818
FAX: 301-480-3819
Email: stephanie.murphy@nih.gov

Jessica Bertout
New Position: Jessica began a new job on July 1, 2014 as a senior scientist and in-house veterinarian for Presage Biosciences in Seattle, WA.

Bruce Smith
Bruce has a new publication:


And he adds the following note:
In addition, and yes, completely true and arguably relevant, I am one of the founding members of the Auburn University Brewing Science Program. The program leads to a post-graduate certificate in Brewing Science and Operations and the opportunity to sit for the Institute of Brewing and Distilling’s Brewmaster Certification Examination. The inaugural class of 20 students was admitted for the Fall 2014 semester. I teach in both Brewing Science 1 and Brewing Science 2, courses that cover the science of brewing in detail. Almost all of the course material is delivered via the web and therefore students anywhere can be admitted to the program. Details of the program are on the web at http://www.humsci.auburn.edu/brewing/

http://www.vet.upenn.edu/education/academics-and-training/vmd-phd-program
Kim Blackwell
Avrana was awarded another research grant from NIH under the collaborative research in computational neuroscience program, with French partners. The grant is for four years and was funded by NIDA.

She has a few new primary research papers and she edited a book:


And she also edited the book:
Progress in Molecular Biology and Translational Science

Todd Strochlic
New Paper:


And, Todd and his wife, Jennifer Chachkes (V'04), are very excited to announce the birth of their daughter, Hallie Beatrice Strochlic born on Sept. 23, 2014. They are all doing well!

Rich Miselis and Pat McManus
A message from Rich and Pat is below:
Yo Mike,
Pat (McManus) and I are in Ione, WA tonight - rode 80 miles on our bikes today to get here from Sandpoint, ID. Have 270 miles to go on the WACANID bike ride - Washington-Canada-Idaho. Weather is spectacular, fellow riders are wonderful and wildlife/scenery are terrific. Give our regards to all

http://www.vet.upenn.edu/education/academics-and-training/vmd-phd-program
Mary Robinson
Mary has been promoted! She is now the Director for the Penn Vet Equine Pharmacology Laboratory and the Acting Director for the Pennsylvania Equine Toxicology and Research Laboratory in West Chester, PA.
Website: http://www.vet.upenn.edu/research/research-laboratories/research-laboratory/equine-pharmacology-laboratory

As Director of the Penn Vet lab (Co-director since Dr. Soma’s retirement in July 2013 and full director since July 2014), she is responsible for the pharmacological research done at New Bolton Center with their herd of research horses. As Acting Director of PETRL (since April 2014), she is responsible for the forensic drug testing laboratory and analytical research program at PETRL, which is a State-owned laboratory and is located on WCU campus in West Chester PA. The Penn Vet Research contract was renewed in July 2014 for another 2.5 years, and supports the 19 Penn personnel that work at these laboratories.

Mary has a publication accepted by the Journal of Veterinary Pharmacology and Therapeutics entitled: Pharmacokinetics and pharmacodynamics of dermorphin in the horse.

Spencer Shelly
Spencer and Jen’s son Bennett is already 5 months and it has been an incredibly busy summer/fall. About a year ago Jen was promoted to Assistant Professor at Delaware Valley College. She also won the school wide student nominated teaching award last Spring semester.

Melissa Sanchez
Melissa has been promoted too! Melissa interviewed for an Assistant Professor of Anatomic Pathology (CE track) position at Penn Vet and was promoted earlier last year.

We want to know....
New position, promotion, patent, publication, etc.? Please share your news!
vmstp@vet.upenn.edu

http://www.vet.upenn.edu/education/academics-and-training/vmd-phd-program
Student Publications
2013-2014


Brinkley, C. Decoupled: successful planning policies in countries that have reduced per capita GHG emissions with continued economic growth. Environment and Planning C (in press)


Gregory BL and Cheung VG. Natural variation in the histone demethylase, KDM4C, influences expression levels of specific genes including those that affect cell growth. Genome Res. 2014 Jan; 24(1):52-63. PMCID: PMC3875861


Upcoming Events

VMD-PhD Christmas Party
Make sure to save the date for the annual VMD-PhD Christmas party to be held at Dr. Atchison’s home on Saturday, December 6th at 5pm. Please RSVP by emailing: atchison@vet.upenn.edu
All current students and alumni are invited.

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