



Physiology News

January – March 2019 · Volume 2 · Issue 1

A message from the Chair

The first trimester of 2019 has come and gone faster than we all anticipated! It has been a busy, but joyful spring for most of us. We started the year with witnessing one of our own wed in Cinderella style! Our trainees and faculty excelled at conferences in Aspen, Colorado (Winter Brain); Ventura, California (Alcohol Gordon Conference); Orlando, Florida (Experimental Biology). Not only were these important scientific opportunities but they also provided ample time for bonding and becoming a stronger team. We had a lot of changes this first part of the year. For several of our faculty, they engaged in new activities and responsibilities. Dr. Basha directed Nurse Physiology for the first time, and Dr. Gardner successfully led the Medical Physiology course also for the first time. Both are huge accomplishments and humbling experiences as they grappled with student issues and testing challenges. I am sure they feel empowered to have succeeded in their tasks. Dr. Harrison-Bernard hosted her first PREP symposium and showcased the 1st cohort of trainees in the program. Dr. Souza-Smith recruited her first graduate student, Dr. Simon will graduate her first MS student, and Drs. Edwards and Gilpin have accepted 3 new students into our program. Dr. Siggins partnered with Dr. Avegno in leading PAR and with Dr. De Souza in leading journal club. Dr. Yue received notification that her proposed session for EB 2019 was well received, and Dr. Primeaux started her time as member of the APS Career Opportunities Committee. Finally, yesterday we submitted the CARC renewal. So keep your fingers crossed!



Overall, nothing but success and prosperity in Physiology! We have an amazing support research and administrative staff that believe in what we do. We could not accomplish much without them! In closing, let's keep our goal of EXCELLENCE in everything we do at the forefront! We are the strongest team on campus!

Wishing you nothing but health, success, and happiness!
Patricia

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Recognition

Dr. Lisa Harrison-Bernard received the 2019 Faculty Assembly Outstanding Mentor Award.

Dr. Scott Edwards and **Adrienne McGinn** received \$1000 travel awards to the 2019 PANAM Congress for Physiological Sciences in Havana, Cuba.

Dr. Danielle Levitt received a Martin Frank Diversity Travel Award from the APS to attend Experimental Biology.



Krystal Belmonte received the Trainee Recognition Award from the Physiological Omics group at Experimental Biology.

Katie Adler received the Robert Gunn Student Travel & Poster Award from the Cell & Molecular Physiology Section at Experimental Biology.



Dr. Lucas Albrechet-Souza received a fellowship award from the Interdisciplinary Research Training Institute on Hispanic Drug Abuse (IRTI) at the University of Southern California.

Dr. Elizabeth Avegno was selected as a Gordis award finalist for the 2019 RSA meeting.

Jarrold Harman was selected as 1/10 individuals from the US for an international fellowship through the Association for Research in Vision and Ophthalmology (ARVO). He was also selected as the recipient of a travel award (all expenses) to attend a Mass Spectrometry & Proteomics workshop sponsored through IDeA Networks of Biomedical Research Excellence

held at the University of Arkansas School of Medicine in Little Rock April 3rd-5th.

New Faces



Dr. Christian Montanari joined the department as a Postdoctoral Fellow in the laboratory of **Dr. Nick Gilpin**. Dr. Montanari received his PhD from Sapienza University of Rome in Italy. His research focuses on neuronal ensembles involved in nicotine and alcohol co-abuse.

Dr. Patrick McTernan received his B.S. in Microbiology from Louisiana State University (LSU) and his Ph.D. in Biochemistry and Molecular Biology from the University of Georgia. Dr. McTernan's past research experience includes understanding Bacterial and Archaeal metabolism and ecology. He joined the Molina lab as a Postdoctoral Fellow and will be working in the Comprehensive Alcohol Research Center.



Bryant Autin received his BS in Microbiology from Nicholls State University and his MS at LSUHSC-NO. Bryant's past research experience includes determining the prevalence of HPV-90 in high risk populations in the Greater New Orleans area. He will be working in the Comprehensive Alcohol Research Center as a research associate.



Alex Johnson received her Bachelor of Science degree in Biology (minor in Psychology) from Texas State University in 2014. She joins us from the Tulane National Primate Research Center, where she developed her behavioral





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neuroscience expertise. Alex will be working on the NIAAA medications development contract as well as CARC behavior & neurobiology aims as a Research Associate.

Graduate Student Milestones

IDP graduate student **Hannah Kramer** performed a research rotation in Dr. Edwards' lab, investigating sex differences in LSD-induced ERK phosphorylation in *Drosophila melanogaster* brain.

On March 21-22, **Adrienne McGinn** interviewed at the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) in Baltimore, MD. She has been offered a postdoctoral position in the Neurobiology of Addiction Section of the Intramural Research Program of NIDA working with Dr. George Koob.



Katie Adler successfully defended her Master's thesis titled "Alcohol-induced increases in class IIA histone deacetylases impair muscle stem cell differentiation."

Dr. Van Ninh successfully defended her dissertation entitled "Prenatal alcohol exposure and the cardiac collagen matrix: It's a stretch."

Publications

Basha ME, Kellogg-Spadt S, Burrows LJ, Wallach AS, Nazar AM, and Whitmore KE. Thermal and mechanical pain thresholds of women with provoked localized vulvodynia: A pilot study. *J Am Osteopath Assoc* 119(3): 164-172, 2019.

Fucich EA, **Mayeux JP**, **McGinn MA**, **Gilpin NW**, **Edwards S**, and **Molina PE**. A novel role

for the endocannabinoid system in ameliorating motivation for alcohol drinking and negative behavioral affect after traumatic brain injury in rats. *Journal of Neurotrauma*. 2019 Mar 6. [Epub ahead of print]

Presentations

Dr. Patricia Molina was invited to give the Dean's Lecture at the Yale School of Public Health (New Haven, CT, January 23, 2019). Her talk was titled "Alcohol, Aging and HIV: Dissecting Mechanisms Driving Enhanced Comorbidities." She also presented a talk titled "Systemic effects of alcohol: Cross-talk between multiple organs" at the Gordon Research Conference on Alcohol-Induced End Organ Diseases (Ventura, CA, March, 2019). She chaired a symposium with **Dr. Flavia Souza-Smith** (co-chair) at Experimental Biology (April, 2019) titled "Updating the History of Insulin; Novel Insights into Regulation of Release, Delivery, and Functions."

Dr. Jeffrey Gidday presented a talk titled "Refining and Defining the Epigenetic Dose Response" at the 5th International Symposium of Conditioning Medicine in Shanghai, China (November 2018; abstract published in March, 2019).

Dr. Marcus Weera gave a symposium talk at the Winter Conference on Brain Research, Snowmass, CO, titled "Central Amygdala CRF Signaling in a Rat Model of Traumatic Stress" (January, 2019).

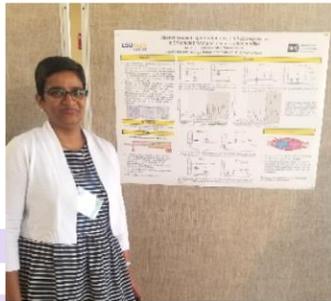
Jarrod Harman presented a poster titled "Using Tandem-Mass-Tags to Quantify Sex-Dependent Retinal Proteome Phenotypes Identified by Electroretinography" at the annual meeting of the Association for Ocular Pharmacology and Therapeutics (AOPT) in New Orleans, LA (March 2019).



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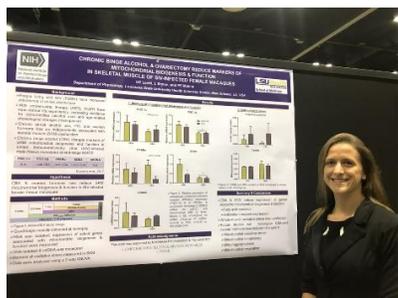
Dr. Stefany Primeaux presented a poster titled “Hazardous alcohol drinking in persons living with HIV is associated with a higher incidence of dysglycemia following glucose challenge” at the Gordon Research Conference on Alcohol-Induced End-Organ Diseases (March, 2019). She also presented a poster titled “Differential effects of continuous versus intermittent dietary fat intake on markers of serotonin signaling in the circumvallate papillae of the tongue” and co-chaired a symposium titled “Sex-specific differences in obesity-induced hypertension” at Experimental Biology (April, 2019).

Dr. Liz Simon presented a poster at the Gordon Research Conference



(pictured) on Alcohol-Induced End-Organ Diseases (March, 2019) titled “Alcohol-mediated impairment of muscle miR-206 expression in SIV-infected macaques: Sex as an effect modifier.” She also presented a poster titled “Circulating muscle-enriched microRNA expression correlates with myogenic gene expression in chronic alcohol administered SIV-infected macaques” at Experimental Biology (April, 2019).

Dr. Danielle Levitt presented a poster at the Gordon Research Seminar and Conference on Alcohol-Induced End-Organ Diseases (March, 2019) titled “Glucose-insulin dynamics in SIV-infected female rhesus macaques: Impact of alcohol and ovarian hormone loss.” She also presented a poster titled “Chronic binge alcohol and ovariectomy



reduce markers of mitochondrial biogenesis and function in skeletal muscle of SIV-infected female macaques” at Experimental Biology (April, 2018; pictured).

Dr. Jason Gardner presented his talk “Impact of Estrogen on Left Ventricular Remodeling and Function” at the Experimental Biology session on Hormonal Influences on Tissue Remodeling sponsored by the Endocrinology and Metabolism Section of the APS (April, 2019).

Dr. Flavia Souza-Smith presented her talk titled “Gonadal Hormone Loss and Obesity-Induced Lymphatic Leakage: Epigenetic Mechanisms” at the Microcirculatory Society Session (Emerging Topics: Adaptation of Microvessels and Lymphatics) at Experimental Biology (April, 2019).

Krystal Belmonte was selected to present a talk titled “Cerebral Methylome Analysis in a Model of Intergenerational Adaptive Epigenetics” for the Physiological Omics Group at Experimental Biology (April, 2019). She also presented a poster for this work.

Katie Adler presented a poster titled “Alcohol-Mediated Dysregulation of Histone Deacetylases Decreases Myoblast Differentiation in SIV-Infected Male Rhesus Macaques” at Experimental Biology (April, 2018).

Professional Service

Professional Service

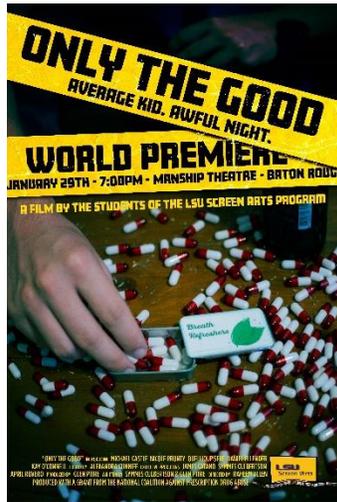
Dr. Patricia Molina organized the GRC Power Hour™ at the Gordon Research Conference on Alcohol-Induced End Organ Diseases in Ventura, CA (March, 2019). The GRC Power Hour is designed to address challenges women face in science and issues of diversity and inclusion. The program supports the professional growth of all members of our communities by providing an open forum for discussion and mentoring.



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On January 29th in Baton Rouge, Dr. Scott Edwards participated in a discussion panel following the premier of the film Only the Good (film poster pictured, right), which explored the impact of recreational drug abuse on college campuses.



Notable Events

Dr. Maureen Basha has a toiletry collection box outside her door (MEB 7223) for those interested in donating unopened toiletries for the AWIS drive for the Rebuild Center.

The Department of Physiology and the Comprehensive Alcohol HIV/AIDS Research Center were well represented at the Gordon Research Conference on Alcohol-Induced End Organ Diseases in Ventura, CA in March, 2019. Below: Group picture with all Gordon attendees.



Above: **Zachary Stielper, Dr. Elizabeth Avegno, Muhammad Farooq and Dr. Lucas Albrechet-Souza** participated in the Peer Advocate Liaison (PAL) Program– Students Resources Fair at LSUHSC-NO (February 12, 2019).

The LSUHSC Team Up alcohol use disorder interprofessional education (IPE) case exercise & assessment took place on January 28th and encompassed 508 students across 11 programs. Along with other CARC investigators, **Dr. Scott Edwards** is currently writing up the results for publication.



Sarah Ford Mozingo graduated with her Master's degree in Psychology from Southeastern Louisiana University in December 2018. (Pictured, left).

In a shocking upset for the ages, **Dr. Scott Edwards** edged out **Dr. Elizabeth Avegno** 107-101 in the championship game of The Mental Hygienists fantasy football league.



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Drs. Liz Simon and Danielle Levitt attended Keystone Symposia: Mitochondrial Biology in Heart and Skeletal Muscle in Keystone, CO, January, 2019. (Pictured, left).



Dr. Van Ninh got married (above)!



Kim Edwards fire poi dancing (above)!

Health

