



The LSUHSC School of Medicine electronic news

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**Month: July 2018**

### **[Summer Student Program Poster Day Winners](#)**

[July 31, 2018 ~ ginalaborde](#)

Congratulations to all of the winners of the Summer Research Internship Program Poster Day!!! We would like to thank all of the participants, mentors, laboratory and office personnel, and the judges for a successful summer internship program!

#### **High school Category**

**1<sup>st</sup> place:**

**Manal Malik**

Haynes Academy for Advanced Studies  
Mentors: Drs. Tung-Sung (Sam) Tseng and Hui-Yi Lin  
Dept. of Behavioral and Community Health Sciences  
LSUHSC School of Public Health

**2<sup>nd</sup> place (tie):**

**Kyron Summers**

St. Augustine High School  
Mentor: Dr. Arnold Zea  
Dept. of Microbiology, Immunology, & Parasitology  
LSUHSC School of Medicine

**Ann Byerley**

Mandeville High School  
Mentor: Dr. Martin Ronis  
Dept. of Pharmacology and Experimental Therapeutics  
LSUHSC School of Medicine

**3<sup>rd</sup> place (tie):**

**Sara Saak**

Mt. Carmel Academy  
Mentors: Drs. Michael Norman and Pinki Prasad  
Human Development Center and Children's Hospital of New Orleans  
School of Allied Health and School of Medicine

**Melissa Berner**

St. Mary's Dominican High School  
Mentor: Dr. Scott Edwards  
Dept. of Physiology  
LSUHSC School of Medicine

**Undergraduate Category**

**1<sup>st</sup> place:**

**Ryan Hoffman**

Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, LA  
Mentor: Dr. Patricia Molina  
Dept. of Physiology  
LSUHSC School of Medicine

**2<sup>nd</sup> place (tie):**

**Laura Carrasquilla**

University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL  
Mentor: Dr. Jovanny Zabaleta  
Dept. of Pediatrics and Stanley S. Scott Cancer Center  
LSUHSC School of Medicine

**Jamal Jordan**

Howard University, Washington, D.C  
Mentor: Dr. Jason Gardner  
Dept. of Physiology  
LSUHSC School of Medicine

**3<sup>rd</sup> place (tie):**

**Marissa Duckett**

University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS  
Mentor: Dr. Edward Peters  
Dept. of Epidemiology  
LSUHSC School of Public Health

**Omar Alnajjar**

Xavier University of Louisiana, NO, LA  
Mentor: Dr. Arnold Zea  
Dept. of Microbiology, Immunology, & Parasitology  
LSUHSC School of Medicine

**NSF-Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REU) Program winners**

**1<sup>st</sup> place:**

**Laura Carrasquilla**

University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa, AL  
Mentor: Dr. Jovanny Zabaleta  
Dept. of Pediatrics and Stanley S. Scott Cancer Center  
LSUHSC School of Medicine

**2<sup>nd</sup> place:**

**Marissa Duckett**

University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS  
Mentor: Dr. Edward Peters  
Dept. of Epidemiology  
LSUHSC School of Public Health

**3<sup>rd</sup> place (tie):**

**Thor Henderson**

St. Olaf College Northfield, MN  
Mentor: Dr. Tiffany Wills

Dept. of Cell Biology and Anatomy  
LSUHSC School of Medicine

### **Aaliyah Pierre**

Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, LA  
Mentor: Dr. Rinku Majumder  
Dept. of Biochemistry  
LSUHSC School of Medicine

### **Research Discovers New Link Between Hypoxia and Thrombosis**

July 30, 2018 ~ ginalaborde

A team of researchers from LSU Health Science Center, New Orleans, School of Medicine and University of Massachusetts Medical School, led by Rinku Majumder, PhD, Associate Professor of Biochemistry at LSUHSC just published an article in the prestigious journal “Blood” (<https://doi.org/10.1182/blood-2018-04-841585>).

This group has shown by biochemical and genetic approaches that decrease in concentration of a body’s natural anticoagulant, Protein S, is responsible for increased thrombotic risk at low oxygen condition (hypoxia). The journal editorial board has come out with a commentary on this topic (<https://doi.org/10.1182/blood-2018-06-854976>) and observed-“This is an important contribution to our understanding of the molecular basis of the augmentation of thrombosis by hypoxia.” Hypoxia is common in many disease states, including cancer. However, hypoxia mediated potentiation of thrombotic episode due to down regulation of a body’s natural anticoagulant, Protein S is novel. This article is also selected as one of the featured articles on the cover page of the issue.



Other members of the research team include Dr. Vijaya S. Pilli, Mr. Arani Datta and Dr. Sadaf Afreen from LSUHSC and Ms. Donna Catalano and Dr. Gyongyi Szabo of UMass Medical Center.

### **Tsien Named New Orleans Magazine Top Female Achiever**

July 28, 2018 ~ ginalaborde

Each year New Orleans Magazine profiles women from the community who continue to make a difference. This year, Fern Tsien, Ph.D. (Department of Genetics) was honored to be named one of these women.

Dr. Tsien received this honor partly because of her research into the genetic causes of hearing loss in the Louisiana Acadians and Mexican Mayan populations. Her research has been presented to local, national and international audiences and may ultimately lead to unlocking new diagnostic tests or therapies for deafness caused by genetic mutations.

In addition to her research, Tsien provides extensive community outreach programs to regional schools. She serves as the co-director of the Science Youth Initiative (SYI) program, which works to engage local elementary and high school students in the sciences. Enlisting the help of medical students and public health graduate students, SYI works with schools to reinforce lessons through hands-on experiments. The SYI creates a wider exposure to science while raising standardized test scores in science.

She also provides programs for middle and high school students where they are provided the chance to spend a day at LSU doing STEM experiments with academics. The goal of SYI's work is to create a pipeline for the third part of the program which includes paid, eight-week summer internships for high school students, many of whom advance to college and science or health-related careers.

Congratulations Dr. Tsien!



### [Patricia Molina Receives RSA Award](#)

[July 28, 2018](#) ~ [ginalaborde](#)

Congratulations go out to Patricia Molina, M.D/Ph.D. (Department Chair, Physiology) for being awarded the 2018 Seixas Award from the Research Society for Alcohol (RSA). Dr. Molina received this award for her dedicated service to the RSA, her history of outstanding research, her dedication to training young scientists, and her administrative excellence.



### [Lefer To Lead International Heart Research Society Section](#)

[July 28, 2018](#) ~ [ginalaborde](#)

*Leslie Capo, Director of Information Services*

David Lefer, PhD, Director of LSU Health New Orleans' Cardiovascular Center of Excellence, was inaugurated as President-Elect of the International Society of Heart

Research – North American Section at its 37th Annual Conference in Halifax, Nova Scotia. He will serve a three-year term before assuming the presidency.

According to the Society, the mission of the International Society of Heart Research is to promote the discovery and dissemination of knowledge in the cardiovascular sciences on a worldwide basis through publications, congresses and other media. Membership has grown to include more than 3,000 members.

The Society has seven sections – North American, Australasian, Chinese, European, Indian, Japanese and Latin American.

Dr. Lefer, who is also a professor of pharmacology, has been working in the fields of myocardial protection and coronary physiology for more than 20 years. He is an internationally recognized leader in understanding the role of nitric oxide and other nitrogen oxide-metabolites in ischemia-reperfusion injury to the heart. His laboratory was among the first to demonstrate the profound loss of endothelial cell-derived nitric oxide from the coronary circulation following coronary artery occlusion and reperfusion. Lefer's laboratory was the first to report on the potent cardioprotective actions of nitric oxide in acute myocardial infarction and congestive heart failure. Several nitrite therapies are currently in clinical trials in the United States and Europe. In 2005, Lefer's laboratory began studying the potential cytoprotective actions of a second gaseous signaling molecule – hydrogen sulfide (H<sub>2</sub>S). Lefer's laboratory was also among the first to demonstrate that H<sub>2</sub>S helps prevent or limit damage in acute myocardial infarction and heart failure model systems.

### [Honors and Awards April](#)

[July 28, 2018](#) ~ [ginalaborde](#)

Lazartigues Trainees Receive Awards  
Medical Student Wins Research Day Award in Baton Rouge  
Avegno Secures Grant to Support Forensics Program  
Lazarus Wins NBME Award  
Dr. Moreno-Walton 1st Female Elected To Lead AAEM  
Medical Student Leadership Award  
Pediatric Endocrinology Division Hosts Annual Meeting  
Department of Pediatrics Hosts World-Renowned Speaker  
Research Discovers How Some Cancers Resist Treatment  
LSU SOM Members Receive State Commendation

### [Promotions and Tenure](#)

[July 26, 2018](#) ~ [ginalaborde](#)

Congratulations are in order for the following faculty of the School of Medicine who received promotions and/or tenure, effective July 1, 2018!

#### *Promoted to Professor:*

- Sunyoung Kim, Ph.D. (Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology)
- Thomas Lallier, Ph.D. (Department of Cell Biology and Anatomy)
- Guoshun Wang, DVM, Ph.D. (Department of Microbiology, Immunology, and Parasitology)
- Ping Wang, Ph.D. (Department of Pediatrics)
- Matthew Whim, Ph.D. (Department of Cell Biology and Anatomy)

#### *Promoted to Professor, Clinical:*

- Lee Engel, M.D., Ph.D. (Department of Medicine)
- Paul LeLorier, M.D. (Department of Medicine)

- Angela McLean, M.D. (Department of Medicine)
- Guy Orangio, M.D. (Department of Surgery)
- Dana Rivera, M.D. (Department of Pediatrics)
- Rohan Walvekar, M.D. (Department of Otolaryngology)

Promoted to Clinical Professor:

- Tracy LeGros, M.D., Ph.D. (Department of Medicine)
- Joseph LaRochelle, Pharm.D. (Department of Pediatrics)
- Heather Murphy-Lavoie, M.D. (Department of Medicine)

Promoted to Associate Professor, Research:

- Judy Crabtree, Ph.D. (Department of Genetics)

Promoted to Associate Professor, Clinical:

- Jameel Ahmed, M.D. (Department of Medicine)
- Jaime Alleyn, M.D. (Department of OB/GYN)
- Ritu Bhalla, M.D. (Department of Pathology)
- Charles Coleman, M.D. (Department of Psychiatry)
- Tracy Dewenter, M.D. (Department of Pathology)
- Stacey Holman, M.D. (Department of OB/GYN)
- Ryan Krlin, M.D. (Department of Urology)
- Frank Lau, M.D. (Department of Surgery)
- Rahul Mehta, M.D. (Department of Otolaryngology)
- Cori Morrison, M.D. (Department of Pediatrics)
- Mihran Naljayan, M.D. (Department of Medicine)
- Linda Keller Oge, M.D. (Department of Family Medicine)
- Amanda Phillips-Savoy, M.D. (Department of Family Medicine)
- Paula Seal, M.D., MPH (Department of Medicine)
- Jeffrey Surcouf, M.D. (Department of Pediatrics)
- Andrew Williams, M.D. (Department of Psychiatry)

Promoted to Clinical Associate Professor:

- Jose Calderon-Abbo, M.D. (Department of Psychiatry)
- Jeffrey Elder, M.D. (Department of Medicine)
- London Guidry, M.D. (Department of Surgery)
- Rochelle Head-Dunham, M.D. (Department of Psychiatry)
- Azeem Khan, M.D. (Department of Surgery)
- Michelle Moore, Psy.D. (Department of Psychiatry)

Promoted to Assistant Professor, Clinical:

- LaKedra Pam, M.D. (Department of OB/GYN)

Promoted to Clinical Assistant Professor:

- Stanislav Zhuk, M.D. (Department of Ophthalmology)

*Tenure Only:*

- Yaguang Xi, M.D., Ph.D. (Department of Genetics)

**Summer Research Program – Another Busy Summer!**

July 26, 2018 ~ ginalaborde

*Fern Tsien, Ph.D. (Department of Genetics)*

The Summer Research Internship Program provides research opportunities for LSU Health Sciences Center (LSUHSC) medical students, undergraduates from throughout the United States, and New Orleans area high school students. The program directors, Drs. Paula Gregory and Fern Tsien, match students with mentors in laboratories or clinics at LSUHSC, University Medical Center (UMC), and the Louisiana Cancer Research Center (LCRC). The Summer Research Internship Program allows students to cultivate their interest in pursuing careers in either basic or clinical sciences. During the program, students conduct their own research or work on part of an ongoing project. Support for this program comes from the Baptist Community Ministries, the Entergy Corporation, the LSUHSC Medical School Dean's Office, the National Cancer Institute (NCI) and the National Institute of General Medical Sciences (NIGMS) at the National Institutes of Health (NIH), and the Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REU) Program at the National Science Foundation (NSF).







This program provides the structure that students need to identify research career paths, strengthen their resumes for applications to institutions of higher learning, and facilitate future careers in the

basic and health sciences. Summer interns work under the tutelage of a faculty mentor, their staff, and trainees, including medical and graduate students, residents, post-doctoral fellows, and technicians. The program also provides professional development resources where experts present weekly seminars and workshops on laboratory safety, responsible conduct in research, patient confidentiality, record keeping, resume writing, and presentation skills. Faculty members from the various academic training programs also provide seminars on prerequisites and qualifications needed for acceptance into their programs of higher learning. Student interns also participate in networking activities such as the Sci-Fly Speed Mentoring Session and community engagement events, where they provide health education to Louisiana families.

The program culminates with a poster session where participants present what they learned to the New Orleans scientific community. Drs. Gregory and Tsien would like to extend their special appreciation to mentors, laboratory personnel, and administrative staff who help make the Summer Research Internship Program a success. This program has allowed students to become immersed in the clinical/research setting, meet peers and faculty in the health fields, strengthen resumes, and jumpstart future science careers.

### [Student Educational Trip to Guatemala](#)

[July 26, 2018 ~ ginalaborde](#)

*Saman Kamal (Class of 2021)*

At the end of May, four first-year LSUHSC medical students went to Antigua, Guatemala to gain clinical skills in a summer experience facilitated by Dr. Patricia Molina (Department Chair, Physiology). The trip was for us to experience the healthcare delivery system, learn the art of practicing medicine in a developing country, and refine our Spanish language abilities. I, along with Alex Molina, Rod Paulsen, and Jason Schroeder spent a week at the San Pedro Hospital, under the guidance of physicians from the

local medical school, including Drs. Guillermo Sanchez, Pedro Palacios, Pedro Ayau, Leonel Leon Pineda, and Dominique Jimenez.

When you walk down a cobblestone street in Antigua, Guatemala, it feels like you've stepped back in time. The quiet streets are lined with colorful stucco Spanish buildings, the air smells like fresh corn tortillas, and the street vendors sell freshly cut fruit. San Pedro Hospital is a bright yellow Baroque-style church and hospital. In addition to exam rooms, the hospital has a small surgery wing, labor & delivery ward, pharmacy, lab, and an endoscopy/ultrasound suite. Healthcare services are provided at no cost to the patients, many of whom travel hours from rural areas to be seen at San Pedro.



The clinic is staffed by a team of medical students from the Universidad de Francisco Marroquin (UFM), as part of

their internal medicine rotation. The students complete the entire history and physical exam for each patient, usually spending over 30 minutes with each person. They present their diagnosis and treatment plan to the supervising physician, who either agrees with their



treatment plan or steers the students in the right direction. If students are uncertain or need more clarification about a diagnosis, they will consult the literature. In fact, when we asked questions, the students would often explain the answer and send us a relevant peer-reviewed article with more information.

We met patients between the ages of 11 – 80, with problems varying from ear infections, cervical dysplasia, upper respiratory infections, diabetes, and hypertension. Our patients ranged from women presenting with back pain or right upper quadrant pain, to true Guatemalan ranchers from local cattle farms, to a schoolgirl who was injured at the playground. We were nervous at first, hesitant to speak to patients or examine them. We watched the students with trepidation, wondering if we'd ever be that confident in front of our patients. As our first day progressed, their courage rubbed off on us. By lunchtime, we had started taking histories from our patients. In fact, by Thursday, we went through a mock Step 2 CS exercise, during which we took patient histories, performed a physical exam, and wrote a note, entirely in Spanish. We had become comfortable with physical exam skills that scared us on Monday morning, like checking for a Murphy sign, performing a straight leg raise, or testing reflexes and sensation.

On our last day with UFM, Drs. Leon Pineda and Jimenez met us at an inpatient hospital, tucked away in the mountains outside of Antigua, for patients with neurological problems or developmental delay. Once inside, we each were assigned to one pediatric patient and one adult patient. Many of the pediatric patients suffered from cerebral palsy, often caused by neonatal meningitis infection. My patient was a 10-year-old boy, Angel, with severe microcephaly. He lay in a crib, silent, attached to a feeding tube and oxygen cannula. His head, covered in fuzzy black hair, was still soft as if he was a newborn. His limbs were under-developed, his hands clenched into permanent fists. According to his chart, after giving birth, his mother left Angel at the hospital in Guatemala City. A team of American neurosurgeons operated on Angel. Afterward, he was sent to the hospital, where he will stay for the rest of his life.

I had never taken a history or performed a physical exam with a patient who could not speak. I introduced myself to Angel, explained that I was a medical student from the U.S., and saw no response. I reached down to touch his chest; he immediately started shivering. I found his wrist, feeling his pulse under my fingers, letting Angel become accustomed to my voice and my touch. As the shivering slowed down, I asked him to follow my flashlight with his eyes. Surprisingly, Angel complied, although he could not abduct his left eye. Building up my confidence, I listened to his strong heart and his lungs. I tested his reflexes with a hammer, noting a response in both knees and his left elbow. I tickled the bottom of his feet, asked him to turn his head towards my voice, and performed other maneuvers under the guidance of Dr. Jimenez. As we wrapped up, I realized I had elicited a surprising amount of information, even though my patient couldn't speak. I was able to tell that Angel was recovering from his previous upper respiratory infection by the diminished crackles in his lung base, able to see that he still had sensation and reflexes in his tiny legs, count his chest rising and falling to find his respiratory rate, and assess his cranial nerve function by watching his eyes.

The free hospital was unlike any place I've ever seen, whether in the U.S. or abroad. For a child like Angel, it quite literally saved his life. We are very thankful to the faculty, students, and staff at UFM for allowing us to experience and learn from the patients at San Pedro and the inpatient hospital. We are also very grateful to LSUHSC and Dr. Patricia Molina for facilitating this learning experience.

### **[Camp Tiger 2018 – Another Successful Event!](#)**

[July 26, 2018 ~ ginalaborde](#)



*Jantzen Collette (School of Medicine, Class of 2021)*

130 kids with special needs from the New Orleans area were given the week of a lifetime as they made new friends and enjoyed many fun activities at the 33rd annual Camp Tiger.

Camp Tiger is a week-long summer day camp for children with any range of disability, provided completely free of charge to the families, and is hosted by the first-year medical school class. To ensure each camper is safe and has the most fun possible, each camper is paired with two counselors, one from the first-year class and one from the incoming class.



One of our campers touching the stingrays at the Audubon Aquarium

This past year the LSU School of Medicine Class of 2021 worked very hard planning and fundraising for Camp Tiger. Camp Tiger 2018 was one for the record books as the Class of 2021 raised a whopping \$188,000 at the annual Camp Tiger Benefit and Auction! The Camp Tiger Benefit and Auction was held on April 6th at Club XLIV in

Champion's Square and featured both a live and silent auction, with a special performance by the 610 Stompers and live entertainment from the Rockenbraughs. In addition, many restaurant vendors from the New Orleans area provided excellent local cuisine. A huge thank you goes out to this year's Auction Committee for all of their amazing work at accomplishing such an achievement. With a special thanks to Auction Chair, Hillary Connell for making this the most successful Camp Tiger Benefit and Auction in history.

This year at Camp Tiger, which took place this past May, nearly 450 campers and counselors explored many fun locations around the city and state, including the Audubon Zoo and Aquarium, Global Wildlife, KidSports, Laser Tag, and Mardi Gras World. The students also enjoyed a fun-filled day at the Camp Tiger Carnival, which was held on the dental school fields and included a petting zoo, fun jumps, dunk tank, therapy dogs, face painting, and many more fun activities.

One of the biggest challenges when planning Camp Tiger is finding venues that can both accommodate a group of our size and as well as the needs of our campers. Thank you to all of our amazing venues for everything they did to make Camp Tiger the best it could be for our campers, and to the Camp Tiger committee for all of their hard work this past year. Special thank you to Delaney Sheehan, Counselor Coordinator, and Madelinn Fink, Camp Tiger Secretary, for everything they have done to make Camp Tiger possible, it truly would not have gone as well as it did without you two.

One of the most important goals of Camp Tiger is to give our amazing campers a week to just be a kid, without the world viewing them as different, but as a person that just wants to make friends and have fun doing whatever it is they love doing. Those who know me, know how important this goal is to me, and I

personally cannot thank enough every single person involved in making Camp Tiger 2018 an absolute success and giving these amazing kids a week they loved and will talk about until next year's Camp Tiger.