MAJOR ADVANCES for JUNIOR FACULTY

Two of our Assistant Professors achieved one of the most important landmarks of their careers: Dr. Marion Pepper and Dr. Ram Savan were promoted to Associate Professor with tenure as of July 1, 2017. These well-deserved promotions reflect their extraordinary success in research, teaching and service. Dr. Pepper’s studies of Type II immune responses have yielded important new insights into immune responses during malaria and asthma. Dr. Savan’s research on mechanisms for regulating innate immune effectors has revealed novel roles for RNA binding proteins and non-coding RNAs in regulating immune genes that impact infection and autoimmunity. In another significant achievement, Assistant Professor Dr. Jakob von Moltke was awarded an NIH Director's New Innovator Award that supports exceptionally creative early career investigators who propose innovative, high-impact projects. Dr. von Moltke’s research investigates how parasitic worms (helminths) are sensed within the intestine. His goal is to use the worm infection model to define broader principles of chemosensing in the intestine, which may lead to the identification of novel therapeutic targets for treating helminth infection and allergic inflammation. We congratulate these faculty for their successes!

MESSAGE from THE CHAIR

The Department of Immunology continues to grow and thrive. Our primary faculty’s grant portfolios have significantly increased and our graduate program continues to be highly competitive with admissions applications increasing each year. We have also added four new affiliate faculty whose research programs are especially focused on translational research (see Highlights). Including these new faculty helps us build a strong, inclusive immunological community and creates a broader foundation for training students and postdoctoral fellows. While we have been very successful in competing for grants, we are hoping to increase philanthropy for the department, especially in ways that will enhance our training programs. Our Fund for Excellence supports programmatic activities for students and postdocs as well as graduate student recruiting expenses. Our newly endowed Dr. Richard Titus Fund for Graduate Student Support currently generates funds to support a student every other year; we are hoping to increase this fund to support a student fellowship each year. Please consider making your contribution today to make a difference in the future of science, immunology and lives of students.

HIGHLIGHTS and UPDATES

- Careers in Immunology Series: The fall event of this highly popular series provided students and postdocs with an opportunity to learn about different career paths and network with immunologists working in many fields. The event on Nov. 3 focused on careers in biotech and began with a panel discussion with alumni from our graduate program who have pursued careers in industry. The panel included Sean Tucker, PhD (00’), Chief Scientific Officer of Vaxart Inc.; Rebecca Brunette, PhD (12’), Sr. Scientist at Silverback Therapeutics; Sarah Warren, PhD (10’), Director of Adv. Applications – Immune Oncology at NanoString Technologies and Matt Buechler, PhD (14’) a Postdoctoral Researcher at Genentech. The event was attended by 21 trainees. A second panel is planned for April 2018.

YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS = FUTURE SCIENTISTS
GRADUATE PROGRAM UPDATE

- New Affiliate Faculty: Drs. Jarrod Dudakov, Anthony Rongvaux and Justin Taylor from the Fred Hutch Cancer Research Center have joined the department as Affiliate Assistant Professors, and Dr. Jane Buckner, President of Benaroya Research Institute, has joined as Affiliate Professor. We are excited about strong interactions with these faculty that will bring increased translational and human immunology-based programs to the department.
- Dr. Ed Clark was appointed Professor Emeritus of Immunology and Microbiology on Oct. 1. Congratulations Ed!
- Pizza and Perspectives (PnP): The PnP continued with Diversity Officer Dan Stetson and the department’s Diversity Committee planning a department wide cultural sensitivity event as well as smaller workshops focused on issues around inclusion, equity and access.
- The Russell and Rae Weiser Endowed Lecture was given this year by Dr. Akiko Iwasaki of Yale Medical School.

HIGHLIGHTS continued...

- Three Immunology graduate students defended their PhD degrees in 2017: Jeff Duggan (Hamerman Lab), Alexandra Grier (Scharenberg Lab), and Genita Metzler (Rawlings Lab). One MCB graduate student in an Immunology lab also defended her PhD degree: Michelle Brault (Oberst/Stetson Lab).
- Research in Progress (RIP) updates: Graduate students are now providing peer feedback for RIP talks online. This has resulted in a higher quality and quantity of scientific feedback for the presenters. Students also receive detailed feedback from an individual faculty reviewer. We also started a new “Trainee First” policy in which trainees are given the opportunity to ask the first questions at RIPs and seminars. This is working extremely well; faculty find that many of their questions are now asked first by students and postdocs!
- One MCB graduate student in an Immunology lab also defended her PhD degree: Michelle Brault (Oberst/Stetson Lab).

JUST FOR FUN—WE DID THIS

We showed our wild side and threw a 1st annual trick-or-treat for Halloween this year. The costumes were hilarious, and even Michael Davis (center below) dressed as the dreaded “Reviewer #3” and was rewarded with treats! Talk is already circulating about next year!

CIIID PARTNERS WITH UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL AND MEDICAL SCHOOL IN SHANGHAI, CHINA

The Center for Innate Immunity and Immune Disease (CIIID) announced an exciting partnership with Renji Hospital and Jiaotong University Medical School in Shanghai, China. The primary goal of the partnership is to establish a training program for students and postdocs to visit and train in the areas of innate immunity in viral and immune disease. CIIID Director, Dr. Michael Gale, Jr., and Associate Directors, Dr. Keith Elkon and Dr. Ed Clark (above left) and representatives from Renji and Jiaotong attended the signing ceremony. For more information, check out the latest CIIID events and research at http://ciiid.uw.edu.

2017 DEPARTMENT RETREAT

At the 28th Annual Retreat Dr. Ann Marshak Rothstein, from U. Mass. provided the keynote talk. We shared a day and a half of scientific presentations from faculty, postdocs and students as well as some fun social activities (retreat pictures on page three). We would like to thank our second year PhD students for organizing a first year/second year student camping trip the night prior to the retreat! Congratulations to retreat poster award winners:

Category – Entering 3rd year or below
- Joey Leal (Gerner Lab) - $250 graduate student best poster award (provided by the Sandra L. Clark Education Fund).
- Frank Soveg (Ram Lab) - $250 graduate student best poster award (provided by the Sandra L. Clark Education Fund).

Category – Entering 4th year or above
- Annelise Snyder (Oberst Lab) - $1,000 graduate student best poster award (provided by the Sandra L. Clark Education Fund).

Category - Postdoc
- Kelsey Roe (Clark Lab) - $1,000 postdoc best poster award (provided by the department).

ABOUT THE BANNER IMAGE

This image is a mouse lymph node, where T Cells (magenta dots) are visualized with confocal microscopy and created by Grad Student Joey Leal. The Gerner Lab utilizes cutting-edge microscopy tools, such as 2-photon intra-vital microscopy, multi-parameter whole-organ confocal microscopy and analytical Histo-Cytometry.