

Cell and Molecular Physiology

NEWSLETTER

Volume 1, Issue 4

June 2008

Mark your calendars for August 15, 2008, when the department will hold the 12th annual Research Day. This year's event will focus on the theme of **"Human Neurological Disorders: From Autism to Alzheimer's."** The invited speakers will be **Sangram Sisodia, MD, and Dr. Joe Piven, MD.**

RESEARCH DAY 2008

Friday, August 15

Dr. Piven is the Sarah Graham Kenan Professor of Psychiatry, Pediatrics, and Psychology, and Director

of the Neurodevelopmental Disorders Research Center at UNC Chapel Hill. His research is focused on the pathogenesis of autism including neural mechanisms, genetic basis and neuropsychological and behavioral phenotypes. His talk will address how early neurodevelopmental disorders contribute to neurological problems and lead to behavioral abnormalities as seen in children with Autism spectrum disorders. Using state-of-the-art brain imaging methods to gain insight into early developmental changes may be helpful in designing cognitive and/or therapeutic interventions to combat Autism.



Joe Piven



Sangram Sisodia

Dr. Sisodia is the Thomas A. Reynolds Sr. Family Professor of Neurosciences at the University of Chicago. He is a leading expert on the molecular and cell biology of Alzheimer's disease pathology. He has been at the forefront of learning how the familial Alzheimer's disease (FAD) genes, including the amyloid precursor protein and the presenilins, function normally, and how they contribute to Alzheimer's disease pathogenesis. Recently, Dr. Sisodia's studies have shown that in mice, exercise has a remarkable ability to protect against Alzheimer's disease pathology by favorably changing gene activity in the brain.

Registration information will be available on the department website as of July 15th.

Grants, Publications and Awards

Kenan Professor **Kay Lund, PhD**, received an NIH/NIDDK R21 grant, to begin July 1, 2008.

Assistant Professor **Ben Philpot, PhD**, and postdoctoral fellow **Adam Roberts, PhD**, were awarded a NARSAD Young Investigator grant for their study of the effects of NMDA receptor hypofunction on synaptic function.

Assistant Professor **John Rawls, PhD**, is the recipient of the Pew Scholars Award 2008 for the amount of \$240,000 over a period of 4 years.



Nate Sowa

Nate Sowa, an MD/PhD graduate student in the **Zylka lab**, received an NIH Individual NRSA (F30, for MD/PhD students) after his first submission. The Zylka lab identified a secreted phosphatase that is expressed in nociceptive (pain-sensing) neurons, and the goal of Nate's grant is to study the molecular mechanism of action for this new phosphatase.

Tzima lab publishes new findings in the Journal of Cell Biology, showing that an adaptor protein called Shc orchestrates the response of endothelial cells to stress caused by turbulent blood flow: **Liu Y, Sweet DT, Irani-Tehrani M, Maeda N, Tzima E. 2008. J. Cell Biol. online**

Graduate student **Shiliang Wang (Pomp lab)** has been



S. Wang

selected as a Nutrition Research Institute Graduate Student Scholar. He will be funded for two years, participate in collaborative efforts between the Pomp lab and the Institute, and enhance his training in the use of nutrigenomic and metabolomic approaches to address research questions in nutrition.



Garvin

Maren Professorship Candidate Seminar
"Transport of Nitric Oxide by Aquaporin-1"
Jeffrey L. Garvin, PhD
Henry Ford Hospital, Oakland University
July 15 at 4:00 in G202 MBRB

Summer 2008 Research In Progress Seminars (RIPS)

JULY 14	Brooke Haddock (Davis lab) Lucia Seminario Vidal (Lazarowski lab)
JULY 21	Maile Henson (Philpot lab) Mike Kerber (Cheney lab) Xinshuo Wang (Snider lab)
JULY 28	Sushmita Jha (Ting lab) Mahita Kadmiel (Caron lab)
AUG 4	Vicki Newton (Lund lab) Ivana Semova (Rawls lab)

MONDAYS
at noon
in 124
Taylor Hall

GRADUATE PROGRAM NEWS

Alicia Blaker (Mack lab) will present her public thesis defense on Friday, July 11 at 1:30 pm in G202 MBRB. Reception afterward in 5200 MBRB, hosted by the Graduate Committee.

New students join dissertation labs...



Gray Camp



Rylan Larsen



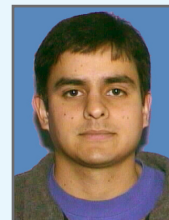
Maggie McCormick



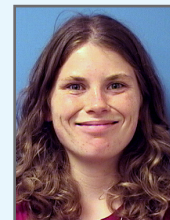
Brett Rollins



Chris Schmitt



Brooks Scull



Meagen Voss

The department welcomes new graduate students to their dissertation labs. From the genetics curriculum, Gray Camp has joined the lab of Dr. John Rawls and Chris Schmitt has joined the lab of Dr. Suk-Won Jin. Meagen Voss, who comes to us from the curriculum in neurobiology, joined Mark Zylka's lab. First-year physiology students have also determined where they will conduct their dissertation research. Rylan Larsen will work in Ben Philpot's lab and Maggie McCormick will work with Dr. Ellie Tzima. Brett Rollins' decision is pending and Brooks Scull will continue his work in the Lund lab.

ARRIVALS & DEPARTURES



Whitman Corlew

Belated congratulations to graduate student **Rebekah Corlew** (Philpot lab) and husband Deric, who recently welcomed their son Whitman John Corlew, born May 16, 2008, at 12:01pm weighing 8 lbs.

Xuming Dai, MD, PhD, has joined the Faber lab as a postdoctoral fellow. He earned his degrees at the Second Military Medical University in Shanghai, China, and completed a residency in Internal Medicine at the Long Island Jewish Medical Center in New York.

Congratulations also to graduate student **Melinda DiVito** (Cheney lab) and Mark Jezyk for their wedding on May 30th. Mark received a PhD from the UNC Biochem/Biophysics department in 2006 and is currently a post-doc at the NIEHS. They were married in Melinda's hometown of Farmington Hills, Michigan.

Carolyn Suitt has accepted a position supervising the **UNC CGIBD** Histology Core, to begin on July 7th. Carolyn was an integral member of the Histology Facility for almost 4 years. Her contributions (both in skill and personality) to the facility were and are truly appreciated and she will be sorely missed. We wish her the best in her new endeavors.

Recent graduate **Koji Yashiro, PhD**, has left the Philpot lab to begin postdoctoral work with



Kirk McNaughton and Carolyn Suitt

Urogenix Inc, located in RTP. Urogenix is part of the Japanese pharmaceutical company **Astellas Inc**. Koji will be studying basic mechanisms of neuronal control of urination to help develop drugs to treat urinary incontinence.

New Department Web Site Goes Live

The department Web site has begun its transition to the new content management system as a part of the **School of Medicine Redesign Project**:

At the end of 2007, UNC School of Medicine and UNC Health Care launched new web sites with a coordinated look and feel. The purpose of this project is to provide a common and branded identity throughout the sites, focusing on providing information to external audiences.

The department site is a work in progress and your webmaster is busy transferring information from the old pages to the new. The site is also a collaborative effort. Please contribute your most recent information, photos, research images, news, etc. to Adriana Tavernise (adrianat@med.unc.edu). Feel free also to report broken links and make suggestions regarding content.

Additional Notes:

Link to 2008-2009 Teaching and Committee Assignments [here](#).

Correction to last month's newsletter:

Tabitha Massey (HR Facilitator) works remotely on Tuesdays.

Your tax-deductible gift to the UNC Department of Cell & Molecular Physiology will foster research, innovative teaching, and support a wide range of activities. Contact Rich Lotstein at 843-6190 or richlot@med.unc.edu for information.

Please send feedback and submissions to the newsletter to Adriana Tavernise at adrianat@med.unc.edu

