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Chair's Message

As 2009 comes to an end, I think it fair to say that we can all be proud of our accomplishments over the last 12 months. We endured the aftermath of Ike and rebuilt our homes and work places under difficult circumstances. The Department and the University have come back and Galveston has come back because of the efforts of many. Our colleagues in Houston and the citizens of Galveston provided key support to the legislature's approval of funding to repair and rebuild storm -roof facilities. Faculty, staff and students worked for months in a difficult environment to provide the necessary continuity in our education and research mission.

Over the rest of this academic year, renovation and replacement of infrastructure will accelerate.

Bids have now been won, so more evidence of our progress should soon be easy to see.

Last week President David Callender spoke to our faculty and presented a vision that included an expanded educational mission, a focused research plan for growth, and a more collaborative approach to the clinical mission over the next several years. As the details of these strategic plans unfold, it is clear that our input and participation both as a department and as individuals will profoundly shape our potential for growth and excellence in our educational and research mission. I am confident of our success based on the level of professional and personal commitment that all of you have provided this last year. I am optimistic about the year ahead.

I also look forward to sharing the holiday spirit with all of the BMB family at our party this Friday at Fisherman's Wharf. There will be music, food and libations, but most of all a good time sharing friendship and camaraderie. See you there!

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Special Items of Interest

- ✦ Graduate Program Awards
- ✦ BCSO News

Awards and Announcements

Marlene Starr (Saito Lab) received the 2009 George Sacher Student Award for her poster presentation at the Gerontological Society of America Conference in Atlanta last month.

YongSun Lee was accepted as a member of the editorial team of World Journal of Oncology. His two year term begins in December 2009.



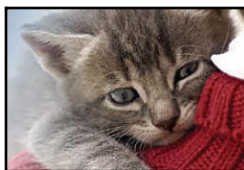
BCSO News

This holiday season, the BCSO will be gathering donations to support the Landstuhl Hospital Care Project and the Galveston Island Humane Society.

The **Landstuhl Hospital Care Project (LHCP)** is a non-profit organization that provides comfort and relief items for military members who become sick, injured, or wounded from service in Iraq, Kuwait, and Afghanistan. Donated items are distributed to patients at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center (LRMC) in Germany, the largest American military hospital outside the U.S.; to field hospitals in Afghanistan and Iraq; and to VA facilities throughout the United States. Each shipment that LHCP sends is sent in honor of a military member who has made the ultimate sacrifice and lost his or her life in service to our country. <http://www.landstuhlhospitalcareproject.org/>



The **Galveston Island Humane Society (GIHS)** provides a humane shelter for lost and unwanted animals. The GIHS is solely dedicated to the cause and welfare of unwanted or homeless animals. This organization provides a temporary refuge for these animals, arranges placement in responsible homes, and provides community education toward the prevention of cruelty to animals and the instruction of humane pet care. <http://www.galvestonhumane.org/welcome.php>



The deadline for donations is Monday, December 21st at NOON.

Donations are being collected by BCSO officers and may be left at Debora Botting's office, Room 107-D Basic Science Building.

Please see the [flyer](#) or contact the BCSO officers for additional details. Thank you for your support.

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Graduate Program News

Once again, our Program was fortunate to have a very high number of outstanding students and laboratories win numerous awards. At the GSBS Awards Luncheon held Friday, November 20 at the Hotel Galvez, they all received the well deserved recognition.

We are incredibly proud of our students and their mentors for their hard work and dedication after a difficult year following the many challenges of Hurricane Ike.

Please congratulate our students and their mentors.

Iwahara	Debashish Sahu	1st place poster: 3rd Annual John S. Dunn Magnetic Resonance Conf, Feb 6-7, 2009 UT Health Science Center
Ahmed	Sarah Hemauer	Barbara Bowman Memorial Award for Research Excellence
Bujalowski	Anu Roychowdhury	Irma Mendoza Scholarship Award
Kurosky	Christof Straub	Barbara Bowman Memorial Award for Research Excellence
		Biological Chemistry Student Organization Award for Excellence in Community Service
Kurosky	Christof Straub	Barbara Bowman Memorial Award for Research Excellence
Bujalowski	Michal Szymanski	2nd place poster: 3rd Annual John S. Dunn Magnetic Resonance Conf, Feb 6-7, 2009 UT Health Science Center
Bolen	William Austin Elam	Robert A. Welch Award for Excellence in Graduate Research in Chemistry
Bujalowski	Michal Szymanski	Marianne Blum, Ph.D. Endowed Scholarship Award
Fujise	Hung Doan	Curtis Lambert Scholarship
Iwahara	Debashish Sahu	Leroy Olson, PhD Endowed Scholarship
Soto/Hilser	Rodrigo Diaz Espinoza	Katherina Siebert Award for Excellence in Oncologic Research
Liu	Paul Evans	Stephen C. Silverthorne Memorial Award
Saito	Marlene Starr	Arthur V. Simmang Scholarship
Fujise	Hung Doan	Arthur V. Simmang Scholarship
Kurosky	Christof Straub	Rose and Harry Walk Research Award
Saito	Marlene Starr	Robert A. Welch Award for Excellence in Graduate Research in Chemistry
Bujalowski	Michal Szymanski	Betty Williams Scholarship
Liu	Paul Evans	University Federal Credit Union Graduate Student Organization Award
Watowich	Jeff Borgeson	

Of exceptional note, we are extremely proud of our Program Coordinator, Debora Botting, who was selected as the inaugural recipient of the Graduate Student Organization Administrative Assistant Award. Along with the student award winners, Debora was honored at the GSBS awards luncheon for her invaluable contributions to our program and to graduate education on campus. Please congratulate Debora on this well deserved award!!!

Please have a safe and happy holiday season.

-Dr. Sarita Sastry

Faculty on the Road



Dr. John Wiktorowcz chaired a session on “New Technologies in Proteomics” and giving an invited presentation entitled “Proteomic Biomarkers of Thoracic Aneurysms and Dissections: New and Comprehensive Methods for Biofluids Analyses” at the 3rd Annual World Congress of the Gene in Fochan, China in early December.

Dr. Yong Sun Lee presented a talk at the Department of Molecular and Cellular Biology at Baylor College of Medicine, Houston on Oct 22, 2009) entitled MicroRNAs and other small RNAs in cancer.

Dr. Alex Kurosky was an invited speaker at the University of Nevada, Reno in November 2009.

Dr. Kay Choi gave a talk titled "Biochemical and Structural studies of Npro from pestivirus" at the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) Animal Health and Well-being PD workshop (Chicago, IL) on December 6th 2009.

The following abstracts were presented at recent meetings:

Soman, K.V., Wiktorowicz, J.E., Li, D., Ramana, K.V., Srivastava, D., Srivastava, S.K., and Kurosky, A. Candidate Biomarker discovery by Time-course Analysis of Proteomic Data. HUPO Meeting (San Diego, CA 2009).

Kalita, A., Qi, H., Murai, H., Singh, B., Stafford, S., Kurosky, A., Sur., S. To identify the candidate proteins from ragweed pollen involved in Th2 cytokine production. AAI Meeting (Washington, DC 2009).

Kurosky, A., Straub, C., Pazdrak, K., Young, T., Stafford, S., Wu, Z., Wiktorowicz, J., Haag, A., English, R., Soman, K. Proteome Analysis of the Peripheral Blood Human Eosinophil. AAI Meeting (Washington, DC 2009).

Starosta, V., Pazdrak, K., Kurosky, A. Characterization of cell surface proteins involved in lipoxin A₄ inhibition of eosinophils activation. AAI Meeting (Washington, DC 2009).

Pazdrak, K., Young, T., Straub, C., Stafford, S., Kurosky, A. Priming of eosinophil by granulocyte-macrophage colony stimulation factor (GM-CSF) and upregulation of CD11b/CD18 is mediated by phosphorylated actin-bundling L-plastin. AAI Meeting (Washington, DC 2009).

Straub, C., Pazdrak, K., Stafford, S., Kurosky, A. Involvement of high mobility group box 1 (HMGB1) in dendritic cell differentiation and activation of eosinophils. AAI Meeting (Washington, DC 2009).

Wiktorowicz, J.E., Wu, Z., Soman, K., Guo, D., Milewicz, D.M., Brasier, A., Kurosky, A. Candidate Biomarkers for Thoracic Aortic Aneurysms: A Novel Platform for Biofluids. HUPO Meeting (Toronto, Canada 2009).

Straub, C., Pazdrak, K., Young, T.W., Stafford, S., Wu, Z., Wiktorowicz, J.E., Haag, A.M., English, R.D., and Kurosky, A., Toward the Proteome of the Human Peripheral Blood Eosinophil HUPO Meeting (Toronto, Canada 2009).

Faculty on the Road (cont.)

Straub, C., Midoro-Horiuti, T., Goldblum, R., Pazdrak, K., Kurosky, A. Elucidating the role of High Mobility Group Box 1 (HMGB1) in an experimental model of allergic asthma. (AAAI 2010 New Orleans, LA).

Pazdrak, K., Straub, C., Kurosky, A. The Formyl Peptide Receptor 2 (FPR2) is Expressed on Human Eosinophils and its Upregulation by Dexamethasone (Dex) is Abrogated by Interleukin 2 and 4. (AAAI 2010 New Orleans, LA).

Publications

Danecek, P., Lu, W. and **Schein, C.H.** PCP-consensus sequences of Flaviviruses: correlating variance with vector competence and disease phenotype. J. Mol. Biol., (in press), 2009.

Brian C. Tieu, Chang Lee, Hong Sun, Wanda LeJeune, Adrian Recinos, Xiaoxi Ju, **Heidi Spratt**, Dong-Chuan Guo, Dianna Milewicz, Ronald G. Tilton and **Allan R. Brasier**. An adventitial IL-6/MCP1 amplification loop accelerates macrophage-mediated vascular inflammation leading to aortic dissection in mice. Journal of Clinical Investigations 119(12): 3637-3651 (2009)

DORA BOCANGEL, SHILADITYA SENGUPTA, SANKAR MITRA and KISHOR K. BHAKAT, p53-Mediated Down-regulation of the Human DNA Repair Gene O6-Methylguanine-DNA Methyltransferase (MGMT) via Interaction with Sp1 Transcription Factor. Anticancer Res. 2009 Oct;29(10):3741-50.PMID: 19846904 [PubMed - in process]

