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The NICHD Connection

June 2015

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Interesting Opportunity: Mid-Atlantic Case Competition

By Sisi Liu

The NIH Fellow Consulting Club, in collaboration with The Graduate Student Consulting & Beyond Club from the University of Virginia, organized the Mid-Atlantic Case Competition held on the NIH Bethesda campus on April 17, 2015. I had the opportunity to serve as the co-chair of the organizing committee. This competition invited PhD, JD, and MD students and postdoctoral fellows to create a solution to a pharmaceutical company technology transfer and growth strategy case. The event demonstrated the application of science training and scientific thinking to solving real-life business problems.

The UMT Consulting Group provided the case for this competition. The case involved the growth strategy of a global pharmaceutical company engaged in research and development, manufacturing, and marketing of its brand-name pharmaceutical products. This company has an established presence in major therapeutic areas including anticoagulant, cardiology, HIV, gynecology, antibacterial, diabetes, and oncology.

Competing teams worked on the case for six days. Teams focused on analyzing the potential of drugs under development by the company at different stages: research, clinical trials, commercial launch, and recommendations for prioritizing and optimizing the company's drug portfolio. The teams also worked on pricing, distribution, and marketing strategies of selected drugs. Each group prepared a final report to present on the competition day.

The competition attracted more than 100 applications. The top 20 teams were invited to the NIH to present their recommendations. An NIH team with two NICHD graduate students, Afrouz Anderson (Dr. Amir H. Gandjbakhche's lab, University of California, Davis) and Hanbo Wang (Dr. Gisela Storz's lab, The Chinese University of Hong Kong), was one of the 20 selected teams. Other teams came from various universities, including, but not limited to, Columbia University, Cornell University, Duke University, Georgia Institute of Technology, Stony Brook University, and Rockefeller University. The competition also attracted sponsorship from top management consulting and biotechnology strategy consulting companies.

On the event day, all teams presented their recommended solutions to

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Letter from the Editor

"What careers would benefit from extensive scientific training?" is an important question for fellows looking to explore career options. The academic route is one obvious career choice, but if you choose a different path, what non-academic opportunities are out there?

Would you be surprised to learn that scientists are highly valuable in the financial world, corporate world, and as consultants to companies? Dr. Cynthia Robbins-Roth, author of "Alternative Careers in Science: Leaving the Ivory Tower," made an entire book out of this fact. The advantage of a scientifically driven thought process in a non-research field is not new. Dr. Robbins-Roth first published her book in 1998, and since its release, several more authors have followed suit exploring the career benefits of scientific training.

The Mid-Atlantic Case Competition is a spot-on example of using scientific training to solve real-world business problems. Graduate student Sisi Liu shares her experience with this competition in the **"Interesting Opportunity" column on the front page**. We also present **the top three questions and answers from each Career Round Table discussion** from the 2015 annual retreat, where former fellows with varied careers gathered to share their experiences.

On a final note, be sure to check out **this month's announcements** and **events**, including my own exciting news in the **"Life Outside Lab" column** and **a welcome to our new fellows and summer interns**!

Your Editor in Chief,
Shana R. Spindler, PhD

Please send questions or comments to **Shana.Spindler@gmail.com**.

Mid-Atlantic Case Competition

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the case in the first round of competition. Selected finalist teams then gave a final round presentation. Consultants from top consulting companies judged both rounds. The first prize went to the team from Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai. They demonstrated both excellent qualitative and quantitative analysis. In addition to the two rounds of competition, the event day included a career fair, a consulting career panel, and a networking reception. Participants enjoyed the opportunity to communicate with consultants and learn more about each consulting company and the job opportunities they offer.

The Mid-Atlantic Case Competition successfully provided an opportunity for advanced degree candidates to use their scientific knowledge, logical thinking, and analytical skills to solve a business problem. It was a wonderful demonstration of how a science degree can apply to all fields, not just academic ones. It also provided science students with insights into career choices outside of academia. To learn more about this case competition, please visit the competition website: **www.midatlanticcasecompetition.com**.

2015 Mid-Atlantic Case Competition organizing committee, with co-chairs Sisi Liu (third from left) from NICHD and Paul Vereshchetin (fourth from left) from University of Virginia.

First round presentation by the NIH Team at the FAES Academic Center, with Afrouz Anderson (first from right) and Hanbo Wang (second from right) from NICHD.

So, What's It Like Being a...? 2015 Career Round Table Recaps

Eight former NICHD fellows hosted a series of round table career discussions at the **Eleventh Annual Meeting of Postdoctoral, Clinical and Visiting Fellows, and Graduate Students**. If you missed this year's retreat, or simply wanted to visit more tables, read below for the three most common questions and answers at each table. Check back next month for a full retreat recap!

SHANTANU BHATT, PH.D
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR

Dr. Shantanu Bhatt received his B.S. in Biology from Denison University, followed by his Ph.D. in Microbiology and Molecular Genetics from Emory University. While at NICHD in the lab of Dr. Gisela Storz, he identified and characterized the roles of a number of small proteins in various biological functions, while mentoring a number of students on their own independent research projects. In addition, he was actively involved in a number of teaching courses sponsored by NICHD and FAES. In 2013, Dr. Bhatt accepted a teaching appointment at Saint Joseph's University where he is currently involved in both teaching and research mentoring.

Fun fact: I love to play chess and soccer.

Question 1: Are you able to do research in your position and how is the grant situation?

Yes, I am able to do research. However, unlike research-intensive institutes, I rely more on the work of undergraduate and master's students. We do not have a Ph.D. program or postdoctoral fellows to conduct research for us. There are several funding opportunities that are specific to small institutions for which bigger universities are not eligible, such as the AREA-R15 grant administered by the NIH, as well the RUI grant administered by the NSF.

Question 2: What academic path should I take to pursue a career in a college that focuses more on teaching?

You have to demonstrate that you are really interested in teaching. The best way to go about doing this is to teach. There are several opportunities provided at the NIH, such as the FAES, which allow both graduate students as well as postdoctoral fellows to teach. Moreover, formulating your own course, even a journal club, and mentoring students in lab reflect your commitment towards mentoring and teaching and will go a long way to enhance your curriculum vitae.

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2015 Career Round Table Recaps

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SHANTANU BHATT, PH.D (CONTINUED)

Question 3: What is the typical course load and what other duties are expected of you?

The typical course load is nine contact hours per week. However, besides that your job also entails having your own research lab, mentoring students in your lab, advising students, and being actively engaged in departmental, college, and university committees. All in all, it is a challenging but extremely rewarding career.

MELISSA CROCKER, M.D., MBA
ATTENDING AND INSTRUCTOR IN MEDICINE

Dr. Melissa Crocker graduated from Harvard College with a B.A. in biochemistry. After working for a year at a biostatistical firm providing support for pharmaceutical-based clinical trials, Melissa returned to Boston to obtain a combined MD/MBA from Tufts University. She then completed her pediatric residency at Children's National Medical Center in Washington, DC and her pediatric endocrine fellowship at the National Institutes of Health. While at the NIH, Melissa worked in the Section on Growth and Obesity (SGO) in Dr. Jack Yanovski's lab, where she studied the relationship between obesity and growth and puberty. She also worked with Dr. Deborah Merke on the use of adrenalectomy in congenital adrenal hyperplasia and with Dr. Constantine Stratakis on aromatase inhibitor treatment in patients with large cell calcifying sertoli cell tumors.

Fun fact: I worked in a lab at NICHD in high school, not knowing I'd be back as a fellow!

Melissa is now an attending in pediatric endocrinology at Boston Children's Hospital and an instructor in medicine at Harvard Medical School. Her clinical practice focuses on pediatric obesity, pediatric type 2 diabetes, and general pediatric endocrinology. She is a member of the scientific review committee for the endocrine, GI, nephrology, and ICU departments.

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2015 Career Round Table Recaps

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MELISSA CROCKER, M.D., MBA (CONTINUED)

Question 1: How can PhDs collaborate with clinicians on research?

Given that translational research has become an exciting area of research and one that is often funded, collaborations between clinicians and researchers are a great idea. Furthermore, clinicians often would like to be more involved in research but do not have the time or funding to support such activity. Many clinicians would be very receptive to a PhD researcher who approaches them with an area of interest for research, especially if some of their grant funds could be used to support a clinician's time in assisting with research. If funds are not available, a clinician might still be interested in a minor role in the research program as an advisor on clinical issues if this might lead to publications and the potential for promotion. Researchers should identify the clinicians in their department with clinical expertise related to the research they would like to conduct. Additionally, any MDs in the department with a research program would serve as good contacts for facilitating these interactions.

Question 2: How should NIH graduates approach a job opportunity that requires grant funding when grant writing has not been a large part of the experience at NIH?

I think this is a small roadblock, but not insurmountable. Many places do expect researchers to come with funding or the potential for funding. However, most places, especially those with a large department and a large budget, can fund a new hire for a short period of time, perhaps a year, while grants are obtained. Furthermore, if a researcher can join a lab with existing grants and begin working under those, the opportunity to apply for a grant of one's own will likely develop. I have found that those outside the NIH are very impressed with the training we receive at NIH, so this does make us marketable despite the lack of grant writing practice.

Question 3: What type of balance is feasible for MDs who want to practice clinical medicine and conduct research?

The answer depends a lot on the type of research pursued and whether the research will be grant funded. For those wishing to conduct bench research, the majority of time needs to be dedicated to the lab to allow for scheduling and completion of experiments and time to apply for grants. In this case, grant funding will likely support the salary, so little clinic time is needed to bring the department revenue. Most MDs in this scenario would do no more than one half-day clinic per week and often even less. Similarly with intensive clinical research that involves patient recruitment and study visits, time for clinical practice is limited and grant funding is critical. Slightly more clinical time may be feasible, especially if patients can be recruited from the clinic. However, retrospective clinical research, or participating in prospective research as a site in a larger drug-sponsored trial, is much more doable for someone wishing to maintain a larger clinical practice. Funding, however, is the main stumbling block here. Some departments, especially smaller ones without much of a research presence, might support 20 percent of one's time for research endeavors. But larger departments where research grants are more prevalent might require that any time away from clinical practice be supported with grant funding.

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2015 Career Round Table Recaps

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KATHERINE DONIGAN, PH.D.

STAFF FELLOW, FDA/CDHR/OIR

Fun fact: If I hadn't gone into science, I would have opened a bakery.

Dr. Katherine Donigan received her bachelor's degree in molecular biology from Lehigh University in 2005. She earned her Ph.D. in genetics from Yale University in 2011, where her studies focused on tumor-associated mutations in human DNA repair genes. She then went on to a postdoctoral fellowship in the Laboratory of Genomic Integrity at NICHD, where she studied DNA damage tolerance and translesion DNA synthesis. While at NIH, Katherine participated in the fellow-run Science Policy Discussion Group and ran the group's blog, *Science Policy For All*.

In 2013, she was selected as the 12th Genetics and Public Policy Fellow, a fellowship program cosponsored by the American Society of Human Genetics (ASHG) and the National Human Genome Research Institute (NHGRI). During her fellowship, Katherine spent the first several months at NHGRI working on genetics policy issues in the Program and Policy Analysis Branch in the Office of the Director. In her second fellowship rotation, she served as a Congressional Health Fellow in the Office of Senator Elizabeth Warren where she worked on health and science issues. Her fellowship concluded at ASHG, where she gained experience working in the nonprofit advocacy sector.

In 2014, Katherine accepted a position on the Personalized Medicine staff in FDA's Office of In Vitro Diagnostics in the Center for Devices and Radiological Health. In this position, she assists with the development and implementation of regulatory policy related to personalized medicine, including the FDA's recent proposal to begin actively regulating laboratory developed tests.

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2015 Career Round Table Recaps

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KATHERINE DONIGAN, PH.D. (CONTINUED)

Question 1: What kinds of things did you do as a postdoc to get science policy experience that made you competitive for a policy fellowship?

I participated in the NIH fellows-run Science Policy Discussion Group (**https://www.training.nih.gov/spdg**), which meets twice a month to discuss a science policy topic. The SPDG brings in invited speakers with expertise in the field, which is also an excellent networking opportunity. There is also a blog managed by SPDG members, which provides opportunities for fellows to demonstrate their ability to write about science policy issues for a general audience (**www.sciencepolicyforall.blogspot.com**). I managed the blog for a year and wrote several posts, which I was able to reference during my fellowship interview process. NIH also provides fellows with the ability to do a science policy detail, where (with permission of your PI) you can take a leave of absence from your lab position and spend a short amount of time working in a policy position. This allows you to get direct policy experience during your postdoctoral fellowship.

Question 2: Can you go back to academic science after being in policy for a few years?

I think the transition back to academia would be a difficult one to make, given that you would be completely out of the lab environment while working in the policy field. The fellowship I participated in (**http://www.ashg.org/pages/policy_fellowship.shtml**) is really geared towards people who want to stay in policy after leaving the fellowship, and for most people I know in the field, it is their career. That being said, there are some policy fellowships that can provide exposure to science policy while leaving the door open to go back to academia. The Christine Mirzayan fellowship (**http://sites.nationalacademies.org/pga/policyfellows/**) run by the National Academies is a 12-week program, and I've known many people who have participated in this program during graduate school or as a postdoc.

Question 3: How can you find out more about different science policy careers?

I found the best way to find out about different types of science policy careers was to do a lot of informational interviews. In my experience, people are generally very willing to meet with you to discuss their work and how they got to where they are. If you hear someone talk about a policy job that interests you at a career fair, introduce yourself after the talk and ask if you could follow up over email with some additional questions. Even cold-emailing people based on what you read about on their organization's website can be effective. During these informational interviews, come prepared with specific questions in mind to demonstrate your interest. Always make sure to follow up afterwards with an email thanking the person for their time.

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2015 Career Round Table Recaps

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RYAN FUCHS, PH.D.
RESEARCH SCIENTIST AT NEW ENGLAND BIOLABS

Dr. Ryan Fuchs received his bachelor's degree and a Ph.D. in microbiology from The Ohio State University in 2002 and 2009, respectively. During his graduate work at Ohio State, he studied bacterial RNA riboswitches in the lab of Dr. Tina Henkin. From 2009 to 2011 he was a postdoctoral fellow at NICHD in the lab of Dr. Gisela Storz where his research focused on small proteins of unknown function in *E. coli*.

In 2011, Ryan accepted a position as a research scientist at New England Biolabs in Massachusetts. His position is in the RNA biology division under the guidance of the division head, Dr. G. Brett Robb. In addition to basic research projects, Ryan contributes to projects that are focused on developing products or expanding applications for existing products.

Question 1: Do you have to know someone in a company in order to get a job there?

No, in fact many people have gotten their job by applying through the company's website and going through the normal interview process. That being said, knowing someone is likely to get your application more attention.

Question 2: What attributes are being looked for in candidates for a job opening in industry?

The biggest things are what skills/knowledge background the individual has and their ability to work as part of a team.

Question 3: What was the interview process like for your position?

It consisted of a phone interview with my future boss followed by an onsite interview. During the onsite interview, I gave a seminar of ~60 minutes covering my work as a graduate student and postdoc, and then I met individually throughout the day with other researchers in the company.

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Fun fact: I watch way too many Washington Nationals and Detroit Tigers baseball games using MLB's streaming service.

2015 Career Round Table Recaps

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DEBORAH HENKEN, PH.D.

ACTING DIRECTOR OF THE OFFICE OF EXTRAMURAL RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

Dr. Deborah Henken earned her undergraduate degree from Swarthmore College in Pennsylvania and her doctorate from Dalhousie University in Nova Scotia, Canada, where her studies focused on regeneration in the visual system of the goldfish. After a year at Oxford University, she moved back to the States to complete her postdoctoral training at the (then) Medical College of Pennsylvania focusing on regeneration in the mammalian peripheral nervous system. She then moved to the intramural programs of NIH, where she spent five years at NINDS studying a virus-induced mouse model of nervous system plasticity. She transitioned from the intramural programs to the extramural programs through the Grants Associate (GA) program. This program offered the opportunity to spend one year of intensive training in all aspects of extramural grant administration and policy. She has done extensive rotations in review, program, and policy in many of NIH's Institutes and Centers as well as the Office of the Director. She was the last person to graduate from the program before it was terminated and has the added distinction of being the only one to give birth during the program!

Fun fact: I'm a plant person and love spending time in the garden.

Upon completion of the GA program, she took a position as a Program Officer at the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD), where she has responsibility for a varied and extensive portfolio in Developmental Neurobiology. For the last year, she has also been on detail at the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities (NIMHD), where she is the Acting Director of the Office of Extramural Research Activities and oversees Review and Grants Management Branches.

In addition to her scientific and administrative duties, she is active in science education, the NIH Recreation and Welfare Association, child care (past chair of the NIH Child Care Board), and promoting the careers of women in science. She is a founding member of the Bethesda Chapter of the Association for Women in Science (AWIS) and has served in a number of leadership roles over the years including president and secretary. She has received numerous Merit and Mentoring awards from the NICHD, NIMHD, and the NIH.

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2015 Career Round Table Recaps

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DEBORAH HENKEN, PH.D. (CONTINUED)

Question 1: How did you get the job you have now?

After Ph.D., postdoc, and an independent position, I wanted to be part of the "bigger" picture, and since for family reasons I wanted to stay in the greater DC area, I explored my options and chose research administration at the NIH as a career path. USA job lists all vacancies.

Question 2: What do you like about your position?

Public service, a constant learning experience, interacting with a lot of bright, smart, and energetic people, and the satisfaction of knowing that I'm making a difference in the greater scientific/research enterprise.

Question 3: What don't you like about your position?

Things can move slowly in government—this is the most frustrating part!

MATTHEW KOHN, PH.D.
SCIENCE OFFICER AT NYSTEM

Dr. Matthew Kohn received his B.A. in Biology from Williams College, a Ph.D. in Biological Sciences from Columbia University, and completed a postdoc with Dr. Melvin DePamphilis in the Program in Genomics of Differentiation at NICHD. Dr. Kohn's research interests were in preimplantation development and stem cells, using the mouse as a model system. After completing his postdoc, Matthew joined NYSTEM, the New York State Stem Cell Research program, as a Science Officer. As Science Officer, he is responsible for overseeing a portfolio of 50-plus research projects, ranging from basic, fundamental research, through translational and clinical projects, in addition to facilities and educational programs. Matthew is also involved in strategic planning for the program, preparation of Requests for Applications, and design of funding mechanisms.

In addition to his position with NYSTEM, Matthew is program coordinator for the NSF-funded Research Experience for

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Fun fact: I'm an avid Ultimate player – I started playing at Columbia High School in New Jersey where Ultimate was first invented. I played in college and grad school for a few years, and have started playing again, every summer since leaving the lab.

2015 Career Round Table Recaps

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MATTHEW KOHN, PH.D. (CONTINUED)

Undergraduates program at Wadsworth Center, the New York State Department of Health's research laboratory, and a member of Wadsworth's Clinical Laboratory Reference System, responsible for review of validation packages for genetic testing. Matthew is also a clinical assistant professor in the Department of Biomedical Sciences at the University at Albany School of Public Health.

Question 1: How did you get your job?

I say it was a fluke, but maybe serendipity is a better answer. I applied for traditional academic jobs, industry jobs, pretty much anything that came my way. When I got a call about the job with NYSTEM, I had to look through my files to even see what the job was. I was lucky in that my hiring supervisor had just come out of running a lab, and Wadsworth Center, where NYSETM is based, is a sort of academic environment. I say I was lucky because I was most prepared for an academic job search. I'd applied with pretty much an academic CV, and the interview included a research presentation. In retrospect, most of my success in landing and doing well in interviews seemed to come with academics or former academics.

Question 2: How did your training prepare you for your job?

My training prepared me in a number of ways. First, having a Ph.D. in biology provided a technical skill set to understand the research that I have to review. Could I do this without a Ph.D.? Yes, but it would be much more difficult. Second, having done a postdoc at NIH provided me with some training for the bureaucracy inherent in government. I learned how to write a justification that would appease the bean counters, at least some of the time. Third, the basic skills of a scientist—balancing multiple projects/experiments at a time, working both independently and in collaboration with colleagues to reach a shared goal, writing and presentation skills—these are all some of the softer skills I had experience with that are difficult to elaborate in a resume or CV, but that most of us receive training in.

Question 3: Did coming from NIH set you apart?

Yes, see above, question 2. But also, while I was at NIH, I had the opportunity to sit in on and observe peer review study sessions. I credit this with setting me apart from other candidates for my position (Brenda informs me this is no longer available, which is a real shame, because NIH postdocs have such limited opportunities to observe grant peer review). In addition, I was involved in a number of other activities at NIH, from chairing the first NICHD Fellows' Retreat, to working with FelCom and the NIH Child Care Board. Participating in these activities and working with the diverse groups involved were excellent training for the various demands on my time in my current job as well as many of the other jobs I pursued.

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2015 Career Round Table Recaps

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MALAIYALAM MARIAPPAN, PH.D.
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR

Fun fact: I enjoy gardening with my son since I come from a farming family.

Dr. Malaiyalam Mariappan received both a bachelor's and master's degree in Biochemistry from University of Madras, India, and then completed a Ph.D. at the University of Goettingen, Germany, studying the molecular basis of multiple sulfatase deficiency, a rare lysosomal disorder, in Dr. Kurt von Figura's lab. In 2007, he joined Dr. Ramanujan Hegde's lab at the NICHD studying the mechanism of tail anchored proteins insertion into the endoplasmic reticulum. In 2012, he joined the Department of Cell Biology at Yale School of Medicine as an Assistant Professor. His lab is interested in understanding mechanisms involved in the unfolded protein response (UPR) that detects the accumulation of misfolded proteins in the endoplasmic reticulum and initiates a cellular response to maintain protein homeostasis.

Dr. Mariappan is an Assistant Professor in the Cell Biology department at Yale School of Medicine. The major focus of his laboratory is to understand how cells sense and deal with the accumulation of misfolded proteins.

Question 1: In interviews, what do you think is most critical to convey?

I think you need to convey to the committee members that you will be a good fit for the department and that you will do well at research and teaching. During the interview process, you will get plenty of chances to convey this message. Importantly, your chalk talk should tell the committee members that you are asking questions that address important biological problems and that you know how to tackle the problems. So, practice your chalk talk several times with your colleagues.

Question 2: Are there any issues for visiting/international fellows to take into account?

During the interview process, you need to meet and talk to numerous people including faculty members, students, and postdocs. This is a very important part of the interview process. This might be particularly challenging for visiting fellows since we tend to avoid going around and talking to new people, partly due to cultural differences. The best ways to improve this skill are to start talking to your own colleagues and also to random people about their work, and try to ask questions. In addition, you should be able to succinctly describe your research to people with different backgrounds. Finally, visiting fellows often have different accents, so talking a bit slowly would help people to understand.

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2015 Career Round Table Recaps

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MALAIYALAM MARIAPPAN, PH.D. (CONTINUED)

Question 3: What does your work entail? What is a typical day like?

As a new principal investigator, you need to do experiments, discuss experiments with others in the lab, participate in departmental activities such as faculty meetings, and invite guest speakers. Another very important part of your work is to write grants and plan for future grants. It is a good idea to write an NIH grant during your postdoc period. Even if you do not get it, you will get to know the system. It may seem like being a PI is challenging, but you feel a great satisfaction as a creator, inventor, explorer, etc. Finally, you will never be bored with your job.

SARAVANA MURTHY, PH.D.
SENIOR SCIENTIST AT A START-UP

Dr. Saravana Murthy is a senior scientist at Scanogen Inc, a start-up company at Johns Hopkins Fastforward. Saravana completed his master's degree at Bangalore University, India and earned his Ph.D. degree in Molecular Neuroendocrinology at Max Planck Institute, Goettingen, Germany. Here Saravana worked on the characterization of SK2 channels and its splice variants using mouse models under the guidance of Prof. Joachim Spiess. He continued his graduate studies as a visiting Ph.D. student at the University of Hawaii.

Saravana joined Dr. Peng Loh's lab for his postdoctoral training, later as a research fellow at NICHD. He studied a novel splice variant of Carboxypeptidase E, ΔN-CPE and its mechanism in metastasis. CPE-ΔN is a patented powerful biomarker for predicting metastasis and recurrence in several human cancers. Saravana's research interests include development of early diagnostic tests, and he is an aspiring entrepreneur. At Scanogen, he is involved in the development of assays for rapid point-of-care diagnostic tests for cancer and infectious diseases.

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I like to volunteer at the local community level by helping in food and clothes packaging for donations. I also help at local river and creek clean-ups.

2015 Career Round Table Recaps

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SARAVANA MURTHY, PH.D. (CONTINUED)

Question 1: Why did you choose industry and how did you get there?

I'm an aspiring entrepreneur, and it was imperative that I gain as much knowledge and skill as possible before starting my own company. Hence, I was more inclined towards diagnostics-based start-up companies and keenly looking for those companies that successfully went through a fundraising round. The idea is that if a company has successfully raised capital by fundraising rounds, the chances are that they will most likely have positions open now or in the near future. And if you follow those companies regularly and apply, you are ahead of the crowd and have a better chance of getting hired. In my case, I was following several companies on LinkedIn, and as soon as I found an opening at Scanogen (formerly Twistnostics) that matched my profile, I applied immediately. The ad even mentioned "entrepreneurial, can-do attitude" as a job requirement.

Question 2: What is your role at Scanogen?

I work as a Senior Scientist and my role is to develop In Vitro Diagnostic assays (IVD) for the point-of-care diagnosis of infectious disease and for several types of cancers.

Question 3: Any advice on how to find a position in the industry?

Networking, networking, networking. It is very important to narrow down industries that would have positions related to your expertise and keep following those companies (LinkedIn would be a good start). Try to start having conversations with the people in those companies; you don't have to ask for a job on your very first conversation. Start with talking about the technologies the company is based upon and your interest in those technologies. Build the relationship over time and get to know the people. Once they are familiar with you, they would be much more confidant in discussing opportunities and jobs. More importantly, you will have an idea about the place that you could be working at for a while.

Meet Our New NICHD Fellows

Please join *The NICHD Connection* in welcoming the following fellows to the NICHD family:

OMANMA ADIGHIBE, M.D., PH.D.
Home city: Washington, DC
PhD institution: Oxford University, UK
NICHD mentor: Dr. Mel DePamphilis
Area of research: Program on Genomics of Differentiation

ARNAB DATTA, PH.D.
Home city: Kolkata, India
PhD institution: Nanyang Technological University, Singapore
NICHD mentor: Dr. Anil B. Mukherjee
Area of research: Neuroscience, Proteomics

HYUN MIN JUNG (OFFICIALLY, HYUNMIN JUNG), PH.D.
Home city: Seoul, South Korea
PhD institution: University of Florida
NICHD mentor: Dr. Brant Weinstein
Area of research: Vessel development in zebrafish (current), microRNA in Cancer Research (PhD)

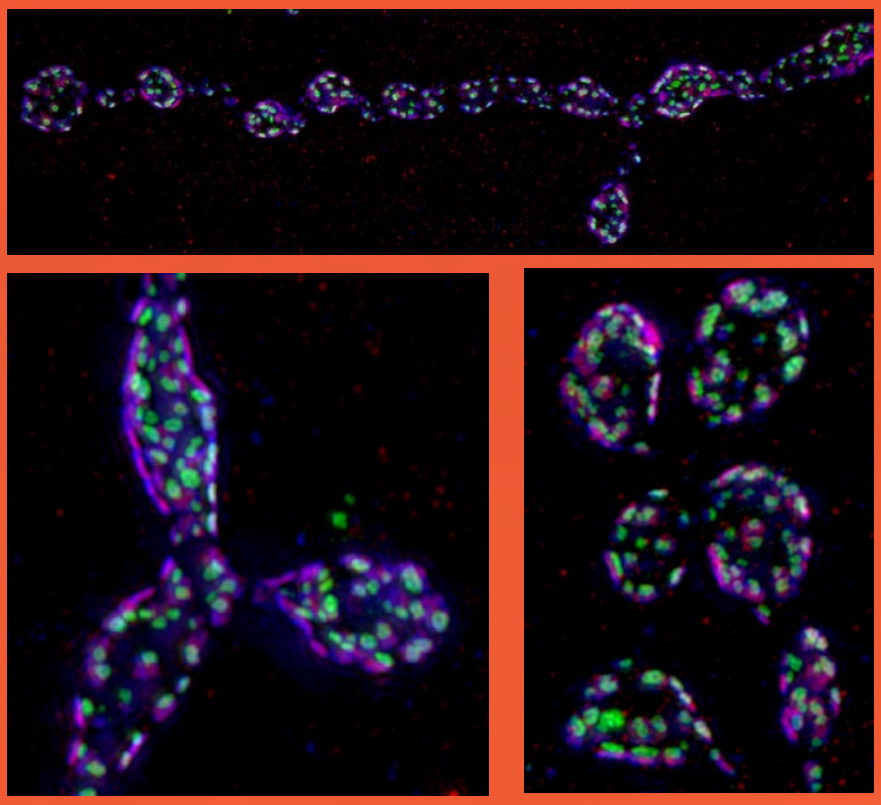
Life Outside Lab

The *NICHD Connection* Editor, Shana Spindler, and her family's new little addition, Eliana Rose Spindler. Perhaps we have a future NICHD fellow here?!

June Announcements

CONGRATS TO DR. MIKOLAJ SULKOWSKI, 2015 IMAGE COMPETITION WINNER

Dr. Mikolaj Sulkowski's three images of 3D structured illumination microscopy of the *Drosophila* neuromuscular junction won the NICHD Image Competition at the Eleventh Annual Meeting of Postdoctoral, Clinical and Visiting Fellows, and Graduate Students. To browse all of the Image Competition entries, please visit http://retreat.nichd.nih.gov/image_competition.html.



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June Announcements

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CONGRATS TO THE NICHD POSTBAC WINNERS FROM 2015 POSTBAC POSTER DAY

Congratulations to all of our postbacs who presented a poster at the 2015 Postbac Poster Day. We are excited to announce that eight NICHD postbacs received a top 20 percent award during the poster competition. Check back later this summer to learn more about our NICHD postbacs' winning work.

Announcing our top 20 percent winners for best poster from the overall competition:

- » Megan Bannon (Lilly lab)
- » Nicket Dedhia (Yanovski lab)
- » Vy Duong (Pfeifer lab)
- » Daniel Flores (Pfeifer lab)
- » Robyn Kalwerisky (Schisterman & Mumford lab, DIPHR)
- » Jung Park (Hoffman lab)
- » Maya Sangesland (Levin lab)

Announcing our top three winners from the internal NICHD competition:

- » Vy Duong (Pfeifer lab)
- » Jung Park (Hoffman lab)
- » Nathan Thomas (Cashel lab)

SAVE THE DATE! SUMMER GRANT WRITING WORKSHOP

"Write Winning NIH Grant Proposals"
9:00 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.
July 14, 2015

This workshop will address both practical and conceptual aspects that are important to the proposal writing process. Attendees will receive the "Grant Writer's Workbook" — an invaluable, up-to-date reference tool for those who intend to write NIH grant proposals. It includes topics from how to prepare a compelling Specific Aims page to insights into which review criteria are most important.

If you would like to register, please email Yvette Pittman at yvette.pittman@nih.gov.
There are only 25 slots for NICHD fellows.

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June Announcements
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WELCOME, SUMMER TRAINEES!

The NICHD Connection would like to extend a warm welcome to all of our NICHD summer trainees. Please do not hesitate to ask lots of questions—to your mentor, your lab mates, fellow trainees, the NICHD Office of Education, and even to this newsletter! If you have any topics you'd like covered in *The NICHD Connection* during your summer visit, please feel free to contact Brenda Hanning (hanningb@mail.nih.gov), Yvette Pittman (Yvette.Pittman@nih.gov), or Editor Shana Spindler (Shana.Spindler@gmail.com). Enjoy your time with us; be safe in the lab; and welcome!

June Events

THURSDAY, JUNE 4, 11:30 – 1:30 PM

8th Annual NIH Take a Hike Day.
NIH Bethesda Campus – in front of Building 1.
Support your Institute/Center and register for this fun event! For more information and to register your participation, please visit: http://www.ors.od.nih.gov/pes/dats/wellnes/hike/Pages/hike.aspx.