9th Annual
POSTDOCTORAL
RESEARCH
SYMPOSIUM

February 27th-29th, 2012

Program

Postdoctoral Association at UT Southwestern
SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Monday, February 27th, 2012
2:00-3:00pm  Career Seminar (All welcome)   NG3.112
Steven McKnight, Ph.D.  Chairman, Dept. of Biochemistry
“How to Secure and Lay a Foundation for Successful Career in Academia”
Sponsored by the PDA Career Development Committee

5:00pm  Posters on display   3rd Floor Commons, NG3

6:00pm  Symposium Happy Hour  TBA (off campus)
Sponsored by PDA Social Committee

Tuesday, February 28th, 2012
2:00-3:00pm  Career Development Workshop  NG3.112
Randy Hamrick, M.Ed.  Senior Organizational Development Consultant
“Conflict Management, Professionalism, and Goal Setting”
Sponsored by the PDA Career Development Committee

Wednesday, February 29th, 2012
1:30-3:30pm  Poster Session (All welcome)  3rd Floor Commons, NG3

4:00-5:00pm  University Lecture Series  EEF Auditorium, NB2
Andrew Dillin, Ph.D.  Salk Institute for Biological Studies
“Control of Proteostasis and Aging”
Sponsored by the Postdoctoral Association

5:00-7:00pm  Reception & Awards Ceremony  14th floor, ND14
Food & drinks will be served (one complimentary drink ticket per participant & judge)
Faculty, postdocs & graduate students are invited
UNIVERSITY LECTURE

CONTROL OF PROTEOSTASIS AND AGING

Andrew Dillin, Ph.D.
Professor, Howard Hughes Medical Institute Investigator
Salk Institute for Biological Studies, La Jolla, CA

Dr. Dillin is a Pioneer Developmental Chair in the Molecular and Cell Biology Laboratory at the Salk Institute for Biological Studies, Director of the Glenn Center for Aging, and a Howard Hughes Medical Institute investigator. He is a ground-breaking scientist in the field of aging research. His early work focused on genetically manipulating one element of the insulin-like growth factor-1 (IGF-1) signaling pathway—a highly conserved pathway that plays a crucial role in regulating lifespan and youthfulness across many species that are linked to extreme longevity in humans. Recently, he and his team pinpointed a protein in the insulin signaling pathway that is specifically responsible for extending the lifespan and youthfulness of C. elegans without disrupting the worms’ response to some forms of stress, development, and fertility. Dr. Dillin’s lab is continuing to investigate the role of the IGF-1 signaling pathway in aging and neurodegenerative disorders, such as Alzheimer’s disease. His lab recently discovered that reduced insulin/IGF-1 signaling suppressed the toxic effects of human beta-amyloid—the protein linked to Alzheimer’s disease—in worms. Even more intriguing, his lab found that the insulin/IGF-1 signaling pathways regulate two key proteins that influence how cells handle the accumulation of toxic protein aggregates, a common feature of neurodegeneration.

Previous University Lecture speakers sponsored by the Postdoctoral Association:
2011 Ruslan Medzhitov, Ph.D. Yale University
2010 Huda Zoghbi, M.D. Baylor College of Medicine
2008 Tom Maniatis, Ph.D. Harvard University
2007 Joan Massagué, Ph.D. Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center
2006 Kathryn Anderson, Ph.D. Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center
2005 Rama Ranganathan, M.D., Ph.D. UT Southwestern Medical Center
2004 Suzanne Pfeffer, Ph.D. Stanford University
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Postdoctoral Association (PDA) at UT Southwestern Medical Center is proud to host the 9th Annual Postdoctoral Research Symposium. This symposium provides a platform for postdoctoral scholars from across the campus to present their research and is a showcase for the outstanding work done at UT Southwestern. Almost 70 postdoctoral fellows will be presenting their work in this year’s symposium.

An event of this scale is possible only due to the efforts of numerous people. The PDA received generous funding and administrative support from the Interim Dean, Dr. Michael Roth, as well as the Postdoctoral Affairs Office (PDO), who made this symposium possible. Our special thanks go out to Dr. Deirdre Brekken and Michelle Greer of the PDO, for their tireless efforts in organizing and coordinating this event. We also thank Dr. Susanne Mumby, Assistant Dean of Postdoctoral Affairs, for her continued support.

This year was unique in that it marked the first time a committee consisting entirely of postdoctoral scholars reviewed and ranked the submitted abstracts for competitiveness. We are grateful for their time and dedication to this effort. We also thank the panel of faculty judges responsible for evaluating the highest-scoring abstracts and posters--their support was critical to the success of this event.

As always we are grateful for the support from all our sponsors, who are listed in this symposium booklet, for providing the funding to help make the Awards Reception a special event.

This event is special in that it is organized and executed largely by the postdoctoral scholars themselves. This year, the symposium continued the precedent of including postdoc mixers organized by the PDA Social Committee. We acknowledge the PDA Career Development Committee’s organization of career seminars focused on how to effectively run a robust laboratory as well as becoming a successful scientist, mentor, and citizen. These efforts significantly increase the scope and breadth of the PDA symposium, and also speak of the strong collaborative efforts within the PDA community. We extend a heart-felt “thank you” to these PDA sub-committees. Finally, we would like to acknowledge our vibrant and ever-enthusiastic symposium committee members who took out time from their hectic schedules to help with the tremendous planning required to make this event a successful one. We really appreciate all the time you put into this year’s Postdoctoral Research Symposium.

Finally, and most importantly, thank you to all the postdoctoral scholars at UT Southwestern for their continuing commitment and dedication to science and discovery.

Sincerely,

Diana Canseco, Ph.D. and Brett Pickett, Ph.D.
Co-Chairs, Ninth Annual Postdoctoral Research Symposium
The mission of the Postdoctoral Association at UT Southwestern Medical Center is “to develop a sense of community throughout our institution”. Our Annual Postdoctoral Research Symposium not only serves this goal, but affords our brightest postdoctoral scholars the chance to début and showcase their excellent biomedical research to their peers and mentors in a collegial atmosphere. This free exchange of ideas is at the heart of any healthy scientific discussion and is something the postdoctoral scholars continue to promote at this world-class biomedical institution. Our vibrant postdoctoral community continues to make milestone contributions to a wide variety of biomedical fields and publish their findings in top tier journals. On behalf of the Postdoctoral Association, I would like to thank all the participants who have graciously agreed to share their work with the university as a whole and the organizers who have volunteered their time and effort to making the Postdoctoral Research Symposium a successful event.

Thank you for your effort, teamwork, and excellent research.

L. Evan Reddick, Ph.D.
Interim President, Postdoctoral Association

From left to right: Deirdre Brekken, Evan Reddick, Chantelle Sephton, Waclaw Kusnierczyk, Charlene Supnet, Mahesh Padanad, Julia Kozlitina, Dan Dries, Brett Pickett. Not pictured: Diana Canseco, Srinivas Chollangi, Michelle Greer, Parth Shah, Guang-Zhong Wang.
Image is a cross section of the spinal cord at the thoracic level and is generated by crossing Nestin-CreERT2 mice with tdTomato reporter mice. TdTomato (red) labels both astrocytes and oligodendrocytes. Blue is NeuN staining showing cell bodies of neurons located in the dorsal and ventral horns of the spinal cord. Green is Olig2 staining marking oligodendrocyte lineage.
**Distinguished Service Award**

This award honors postdoctoral fellows, faculty, or staff members who have shown extraordinary dedication to helping UT Southwestern postdoctoral scholars. The Postdoctoral Association (PDA) is proud to announce that the recipients for this year’s award are Susanne Mumby, Ph.D., Dan Dries, Ph.D. and Jill Larsen, Ph.D.

**Dr. Susanne Mumby** joined the Graduate School staff in 2005 and was appointed Assistant Dean for Postdoctoral Affairs in 2006. She serves on the UT Southwestern Six-Year Planning Committee for Student & Trainee Affairs, implemented and enforces an official policy, and advocates on the behalf of postdoctoral scholars for benefits, including retirement and health services. Dr. Mumby established and oversees the annual Award for Excellence in Postdoctoral Research and as a co-chair of the Women in Science & Medicine Committee (WISMC) she helped initiate the Mentoring Series for Female Postdocs. She has overseen the evolution of the Postdoctoral Certificate Training Program, including the creation of courses such as Leadership Experience and Outreach Activity, to recognize the contributions of postdoctoral scholars on behalf of the PDA. She is responsible for the collection of over 200 video recordings of seminars, courses, symposia, and panel discussions available on-line. She has worked closely with the Career Development Committee (CDC) of the PDA and serves as a member of the Editorial Board of the PDA Postdoc Informer newsletter. Her creation and ardent support of the postdoctoral training program has greatly enhanced the experience of postdoctoral scholars at UT Southwestern.

**Dr. Daniel Dries** joined the lab of Gang Yu, Ph.D., in the Neuroscience Department as a postdoctoral scholar in 2007. He has served as Vice President of the PDA (2010-2011), interim PDA Secretary (2010), a departmental PDA representative, an ad-hoc PDA Travel Award judge, and was a founding member of the PDA Outreach committee. As Outreach committee chair, Dan spearheaded the Susan G. Komen run, activity books for patients at Children’s hospital and surrounding schools, served as a science fair and First Lego League judge, and has helped organize several blood drives (UTSW was awarded the most blood donated by an academic institution in 2010). Dan attended the 2010 National Postdoctoral Association meeting as a UTSW PDA representative. His solid leadership skills have expanded the presence of the PDA into the local community.

**Dr. Jill Larsen** joined the lab of John Minna, M.D., in the Hamon Center for Therapeutic Oncology as a postdoctoral scholar in 2008. She has served as a PDA Executive Board member (2008-2009), the PDA Vice President (2009-2010), and the PDA Secretary (2010-2011). Jill has also served as Chair of the Social committee, Web committee, Outreach committee, and co-chair of the Symposium committee. She launched the annual postdoc survey and attended the 2009 National Postdoctoral Association meeting. Jill’s willingness to help wherever needed and generous efforts on behalf of the PDA have greatly enhanced the community of postdoctoral scholars here at UT Southwestern.

We take this opportunity to thank Drs. Mumby, Dries, and Larsen for their faithful and diligent efforts to advocate for all postdoctoral scholars and for bringing the PDA to where it stands today.
Image was contributed by Dr. Chantelle Sephton.

The image shows immunofluorescence photograph of neuromuscular junctions in wholemount triangularis sterni muscle from a FUS transgenic mouse (hFUSWT). Presynaptic boutons and axons (red), post synaptic acetylcholine receptors (blue) and muscle and Schwann cells (green) are labeled. hFUSWT were generated as a model of the human motor neuron disease, amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS). These mice develop degeneration of the motor neurons, muscle weakness and paralysis. hFUSWT endplates show denervation (no overlap between pre and post-synapse), endplate shrinking and axon sprouting without the presence of an endplate. For more details, see poster No. 47.
Award for Excellence in Postdoctoral Mentoring

This award recognizes and honors UT Southwestern faculty who have demonstrated excellence in their ability to advise and mentor postdoctoral scholars. The finalists for this award consistently demonstrate a strong commitment to postdoctoral mentoring by providing research guidance in a healthy and collaborative working environment. They are committed to promoting career development, whether it be fostering the transition to independence or supporting the scholar in an alternative career path.

Eight different faculty members were nominated for the award by their current postdoctoral scholars, and we thank all the postdocs who wrote such wonderful nomination letters in support of their mentors. The finalists have been notified, and the winner of the 2012 Award will be announced at the Symposium’s Reception and Awards Ceremony. We thank all faculty for their support for continuing excellence in postdoctoral mentoring at UT Southwestern.
Image was contributed by Dr. Pavan Battiprolu.

Image represents Wheat Germ Agglutinin staining of skeletal muscle showing individual skeletal myocyte. As muscle performance depends on each and every myocyte; success of PDA is only possible when YOU participate. For more details, see poster No. 19.
AWARDS

Award for Excellence in Postdoctoral Research

This top award honors the outstanding accomplishments of a postdoctoral research scholar participating in the Postdoctoral Certificate Training Programs of the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences. Nominations are sought from faculty members and postdoctoral scholars. Finalists are interviewed by the Committee on Graduate School Awards. The committee chooses the awardee based on these criteria:

• The scholar’s creativity, productivity, presentation skills, and potential for an outstanding independent research path
• The originality, depth, and documented scientific impact of the postdoctoral research project(s) performed at UT Southwestern

The awardee will receive $2000 and present the University Lecture the week following the Awards Reception. For the first time this year, the other finalists will receive $500.

Susanne Mumby, Ph.D.
Assistant Dean of Postdoctoral Affairs

2011 Finalists for Excellence in Postdoctoral Research

Da Jia, Ph.D.
Dept. of Biochemistry
Mentor: Michael Rosen, Ph.D.

Enzo Porrello, Ph.D.
Dept. of Molecular Biology
Mentor: Eric Olson, Ph.D.

Arati Ramesh, Ph.D.
Dept. of Biochemistry
Mentors: Wade Winkler, Ph.D.
Kevin Gardner, Ph.D.

Kimberly Reynolds, Ph.D.
Dept. of Pharmacology
Mentor: Rama Ranganathan, Ph.D.
FOXP2 is a protein involved in the regulation of human language and brain development. The two amino acid differences between the human and chimpanzee forms of this protein are believed to play an important role in the origin of human language. This image shows the influence of FOXP2 on known metabolic pathways when we change the chimpanzee version of FOXP2 to the human version of FOXP2 in human neuronal cells. The results indicate that 1) many pathways are affected by this minor change in FOXP2 during evolution. 2) these pathways are clustered, suggesting that the influence is not uniformly distributed. Data were generated by genome wide microarray analysis and the enrichment of metabolic pathways were identified using iPath. For more details, see poster No. 10.
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