

Agonist

Official Newsletter for the
Graduate Program in Pharmaceutical Sciences
Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center
Amarillo, Texas



**Fall 2018
Issue 22**

UPDATE FROM DR. AHSAN

This spring, one of our graduate students, Hanumantha Rao Madala, successfully defended his dissertation and began his new career as a postdoctoral fellow at Harvard. Nihar Kinarivala and Kshitij Verma also defended dissertations in the fall of 2017 and attended our graduation ceremony. However, we missed seeing AGM Mostofa and Hanumantha Rao Madala, who also defended their dissertations, in this spring's convocation ceremony, but we celebrate their academic achievements and wish them the best in their jobs as postdoctoral fellows. Three more students, Md. Abul Kaisar, Faleh Alqahtani and Maria "Heidi" Villalba, successfully defended their dissertations this summer and moved forward toward new positions.



We welcomed three new Ph.D. students this fall, who are now tackling their coursework and lab training head on. Sounak Bagchi, Shiva Hadi Esfahani and Shafikur Rahman are showing great promise; we wish them the best in their Ph.D. work here.

We are highly appreciative of four outstanding guest speakers, who shared helpful information through our seminar course series this past spring semester. In February, we had Dr. Chun-Li Zhang from the University of Texas in Dallas, TX; in April, our own alumni, Dr. Jagan Parepally from the Food and Drug Administration; and in May, David Mann of Vascular BioSciences in Durham, NC, and Dr. Tim Lahm from Indiana University in Indianapolis, IN. Our students had the opportunity to benefit greatly from their diverse expertise.

We are very proud of our students, who continue each year to publish and present, and obtain awards and scholarships more than any group before them. The lists of their accomplishments just gets longer every year! This spring, Mr. Sharavan Ramachandran, one of our Ph.D. students who works in the lab of Dr. Sanjay Srivastava, received the Syngenta Fellowship Grant in Human Health Applications of New Technologies, which he was selected for in November 2017. His fellowship for \$15,000 is associated with the Society of Toxicology.

On top of all this, we have many students who go above and beyond their required studies, volunteering to support our local community and national organizations such as the AHA. We are proud of their extra efforts to benefit overall health locally and on a broader scale.

Meanwhile, several of our alumni reunited over lunch at the FDA. If you have an opportunity to meet with alumni among your fellow colleagues, send a picture to Teresa or Susan to include in future editions of our newsletter. If you have changed jobs, be sure to let us know where you now are and keep Teresa updated on your employment. Please stay in touch!

GPPS OFFICE - TTUHSC School of Pharmacy, Suite 217; FAX 356-4021

Dr. Fakhru Ahsan, Graduate Program Advisor, Professor, Pharmaceutical Sciences: 414-9235

Teresa Carlisle, Graduate Program Coordinator: 414-9329

Susan King, Graduate Student Advisor: 414-9330

Dr. Tom Abbruscato, Associate Dean, GSBS; Chair/Professor, Pharmaceutical Sciences: 414-9234

Agonist is published every fall and spring semester by the Graduate Program of Pharmaceutical Sciences (GPPS). For updates and new information, e-mail Susan at susan.king@ttuhsc.edu.

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Spring 2018 Graduates

Kshitij Verma, Ph.D.
Lab of Dr. Paul Trippier

Dissertation Presented
November 3, 2017

“Discovery of Potent and Highly Selective Small-Molecule Inhibitors of Aldo-Keto Reductase 1C3 (AKR1C3)”



Nihar Kinarivala, Ph.D.
Lab of Dr. Paul Trippier

Dissertation Presented
November 10, 2017

“Design, Synthesis and Evaluation of Aromatic Carbamates as Neuroprotective Agents”



Spring Summer 2018 Dissertations

Md. Abul Kaisar - Lab of Dr. Luca Cucullo
Monday, May 7, 2018 at 1:00 pm
AMA PAC 1120 / LUB HSC 2B480

Faleh Alqahtani - Lab of Dr. Ulrich Bickel
Wednesday, June 6, 2018 at 9:00 am
AMA SOP 335 / LUB HSC 1C111

Heidi Villalba - Lab of Dr. Thomas Abbruscato
Thursday, June 7, 2018 at 2:00 pm
AMA PAC 1110 / LUB HSC 1C111



Hanumantha Rao Madala, Ph.D.
Lab of Dr. Kalkunte Srivenugopal

Dissertation Presented
March 2, 2018

“Rational Redox-Driven Multi-Targeted Drug Discovery for Human Brain Tumors”



Nihar Kinarivala was hooded by Dr. Paul Trippier

*Convocation
May 12, 2018*



Kshitij Verma was hooded by Dr. Paul Trippier.



Dr. Fakhru Ahsan, Kshitij Verma, Nihar Kinarivala, Dr. Paul Trippier



Nihar Kinarivala, Dr. Paul Trippier, Kshitij Verma

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NEW STUDENTS for FALL 2018



Fall 2018
[L-R] Sounak Bagchi, Shiva Hadi Esfahani,
Md. Shafikur Rahman

Sounak Bagchi, B.Pharm.
Birla Institute of Technology
India
Lab: Dr. Rahul Dev Jayant

Shiva Hadi Esfahani, B.S., M.S.
Tabriz University of Medical Sciences
Iran
Lab: Dr. Vardan Karamyan

**Md. Shafikur Rahman, B.Pharm.,
M.Pharm.**
University of Dhaka
Bangladesh
Lab: Dr. Paul Trippier

*Change of season,
Change of foliage,
Beautiful blue skies,
Green growing everywhere...*



Photos by Fatema Tuz Zahra,
Graduate Student/Research Assistant
in the lab of Dr. Constantinos Mikelis



*...After wild fires threatened
our campus this spring,
it was wonderful to see
an abundance of rain!*



GRADUATE STUDENT SEMINAR PROGRAM - Spring 2018

01/17/2018 — **Abraham Al-Ahmad, Ph.D.** — Seminar course overview for first/second-time Presenters

01/24/2018 — **Ronak Patel** — “Modeling diseased blood-brain barrier using patient derived stem cells (Making a case with Batten disease and familial form of Alzheimer’s disease)”

02/07/2018 — **Thamer Albekairi** — “The Mechanism of Biphalin Entry and Neurovascular Protection of the Ischemic Brain”

02/09/2018 — **Guest Speaker, Chun-Li Zhang, Ph.D.**, Associate Professor, W. W. Caruth, Jr. Scholar in Biomedical Research, Dept. of Molecular Biology, Center for Regenerative Science and Medicine, University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center, Dallas, TX — “Fate Reprogramming to Understand Neural Degeneration and Regeneration”

02/21/2018 — **Bader Huwaimel** — “Behavioral Phenotyping of Cerebral Ischemia in Mice Models”

02/28/2018 — **Taylor Liles** — “Behavioral Phenotyping of Cerebral Ischemia in Mice Models”

03/02/2018 — **Hanumantha Rao Madala, Doctoral Dissertation Defense** — “Rational Redox-Driven Multi-Targeted Drug Discovery for Human Brain Tumors”

03/07/2018 — **Fatema Tuz Zahra** — “Role of endothelial RhoA in developmental and bFGF-induced angiogenesis”

03/14/2018 — **Andrew Baez** — “Development of Novel Peptidomimetics for the Activation of Neurolysin in Post-Ischemic Stroke”

03/28/2018 — **Ahmed Morsy** — “Small-Molecule inhibitors of ABAD, a novel target to develop treatment for Alzheimer’s disease”

03/28/2018 — **Snehal Raut** — “A Tissue Chip Model Mimicking Pulmonary Sarcoidosis: Concept, Design, Fabrication and Cell Seeding”

04/04/2018 — **Sharavan Ramachandran** — “Anti-Psychotic Drug for Pancreatic Cancer Treatment”

04/11/2018 — **Daniela Rolph** — “Directed Differentiation of Dental Pulp Stem Cells for Osteoporosis Therapy”

04/20/2018 — **Alumni Guest Speaker, Jagan Parepally, Ph.D.**, Senior Clinical Pharmacologist -Neurology Drug Products Team, Division of Clinical Pharmacology-1, Office of Clinical Pharmacology, OTS, CDER, FDA — “The Effect of Intrinsic Factors on Pharmacokinetics / Pharmacodynamics (PK/PD) of Zolpidem”

04/25/2018 — **Carl “Joey” Greene** — “Use of Stem-Cell Product for Diabetic Wound Healing”

04/25/2018 — **Behnaz Lahooti** — “PAH-mimicking tissue chips to elucidate the sex disparity in PAH”

05/02/2018 — **Guest Speaker, David Mann, CEO & Chairman, Vascular BioSciences, VBS Pharmaceuticals, Durham, NC** — “Vascular BioSciences: A Study in Science-Based Entrepreneurship”

05/04/2018 — **Kumari “Iti” Kaushik** — “Pimozide suppresses the growth of brain tumors by targeting STAT3 signaling”

05/04/2018 — **Behnam Noorani** — “Fabrication and characterization of 3D-printed microvascular structures based on hydrogel for blood-brain-barrier model”

05/09/2018 — **Distinguished Seminar Guest Speaker, Tim Lahm, M.D.**, Associate Professor of Medicine, and Adjunct Professor of Cellular & Integrative Physiology; Catherine and Lowe Berger and Pauline L. Ford Investigator of Pulmonary Medicine; Director of Pulmonary Research; Division of Pulmonary, Critical Care, Sleep and Occupational Medicine; Indiana University School of Medicine; Richard L. Roudebush VA Medical Center; Indianapolis, IN — “Sex steroid signaling in pulmonary hypertension - Have we come closer to solving the estrogen paradox?”

“No amount of observations of white swans can allow the inference that all swans are white, but the observation of a single black swan is sufficient to refute that conclusion.”

~ David Hume

PUBLICATIONS

≈**Alamri FF, Shoyaib AA**, Biggers A, **Jayaraman S**, Guindon J. and Karamyan VT. Applicability of the grip strength and automated von Frey tactile sensitivity tests in the mouse photothrombotic model of stroke. *Behav Brain Res*. 2018 Jan 15;336:250-255. Epub 2017 Sep 8.

≈**Rashid J, Alobaida A**, Al-Hilal TA, Hammouda S, McMurtry IF, Nozik-Grayck E, Stenmark KR, Ahsan F. Repurposing rosiglitazone, a PPAR-γ agonist and oral antidiabetic, as an inhaled formulation, for the treatment of PAH. *J Control Release*. 2018 Jun 28;280:113-123. Epub 2018 Apr 30.

≈**Faleh Alqahtani**, Ekram Ahmed Chowdhury, Raktima Bhattacharya, Behnam Noorani, Reza Mehvar, and Ulrich Bickel. Brain Uptake of [¹³C] and [¹⁴C]Sucrose Quantified by Microdialysis and Whole Tissue Analysis in Mice. *Drug Metab Dispos*. 2018 Aug 16. pii: dmd.118.082909. [Epub ahead of print]

≈**Chowdhury EA, Alqahtani F**, Bhattacharya R, Mehvar R, Bickel U. Simultaneous UPLC–MS/MS analysis of two stable isotope labeled versions of sucrose in mouse plasma and brain samples as markers of blood-brain barrier permeability and brain vascular space. *J Chromatogr B Analyt Technol Biomed Life Sci*. 2018 Jan 15;1073:19-26. Epub 2017 Dec 6.

≈**Ogola B, Zhang Y, Iyer L**, Thekkumkara T. 2-Methoxyestradiol causes matrix metalloproteinase 9-mediated transactivation of epidermal growth factor receptor and angiotensin type 1 receptor downregulation in rat aortic smooth muscle cells. *Am J Physiol Cell Physiol*. 2018 May 1;314(5):C554-C568. Epub 2018 Jan 24.

≈**Kaisar MA, Sivandzade F, Bhalerao A**, Cucullo L. Conventional and electronic cigarettes dysregulate the expression of iron transporters and detoxifying enzymes at the brain vascular endothelium: In vivo evidence of a gender-specific cellular response to chronic cigarette smoke exposure. *Neurosci Lett*. 2018 Jun 4;682:1-9. [Epub ahead of print]

≈**Kadry H**, Al-Hilal TA, **Keshavarz A**, Alam F, Xu C, Joy A, Ahsan F. Multi-purposable filaments of HPMC for 3D printing of medications with tailored drug release and timed-absorption. *Int J Pharm*. 2018 Jun 10;544(1):285-296. Epub 2018 Apr 20.

≈**Lee Y.**, Gettman L. Descriptive Analysis of Prescriber Acceptance and Economic Benefit of Pharmacist Recommended Interventions in a Critical Care Unit. *INNOVATIONS in Pharmacy*. 2018;9(2):1-20.

≈**Madala HR**, Punganuru SR, Ali-Osman F, Zhang R, Srivenugopal KS. Brain- and brain tumor-penetrating disulfiram nanoparticles: Sequence of cytotoxic events and efficacy in human glioma cell lines and intracranial xenografts. *Oncotarget, Advance Publications. Oncotarget*. 2017 Dec 15;9(3):3459-3482.eCollection 2018 Jan 9.

≈**Madala HR**, Punganuru SR, Arutla V, Misra S, Thomas TJ, Srivenugopal KS. Beyond Brooding on Oncometabolic Havoc in IDH-Mutant Gliomas and AML: Current and Future Therapeutic Strategies. *Cancers (Basel)*. 2018 Feb 11;10(2). pii: E49.

≈**Mostofa A**, Punganuru SR, **Madala HR**, Srivenugopal KS. S-phase Specific Downregulation of Human O6-Methylguanine DNA Methyltransferase (MGMT) and its Serendipitous Interactions with PCNA and p21cip1 Proteins in Glioma Cells. *Neoplasia*. 2018 Apr;20(4):305-323. Epub 2018 Mar 3.

≈**Punganuru SR, Madala HR**, Mikelis CM, Dixit A, Arutla V, Srivenugopal KS. Conception, synthesis, and characterization of a rofecoxib-combretastatin hybrid drug with potent cyclooxygenase-2 (COX-2) inhibiting and microtubule disrupting activities in colon cancer cell culture and xenograft models. *Oncotarget*. 2018 May 25;9(40):26109-26129. eCollection 2018 May 25.

≈**Al-Ahmad AJ, Patel R**, Palecek SP, Shusta EV. Hyaluronan impairs the barrier integrity of brain microvascular endothelial cells through a CD44-dependent pathway. *J Cereb Blood Flow Metab*. 2018 Jan 1:271678X18767748. [Epub ahead of print].

≈**Patel R, Hossain MA**, German N, Al-Ahmad AJ. Gliotoxin penetrates and impairs the integrity of the human blood-brain barrier in vitro. *Mycotoxin Res*. 2018 Jul 13. [Epub ahead of print]

≈**Rashid J, Nahar K, Raut S, Keshavarz A**, Ahsan F. Fasudil and DETA NONOate, Loaded in a Peptide-Modified Liposomal Carrier, Slow PAH Progression upon Pulmonary Delivery. *Mol Pharm*. 2018 May 7;15(5):1755-1765. Epub 2018 Mar 26.

≈**Collar AL**, Swamydas M, O'Hayre M, **Sajib MS**, Hoffman KW, Singh SP, Mourad A, Johnson MD, Ferre EM, Farber JM, Lim JK, Mikelis CM, Gutkind JS, Lionakis MS. The homozygous CX3CR1-M280 mutation impairs human monocyte survival. *JCI Insight*. 2018 Feb 8;3(3). pii: 95417. [Epub ahead of print].

PUBLICATIONS (cont'd)

≈Vaidya B, **Sifat AE**, Karamyan VT, Abbruscato TJ. The neuroprotective role of the brain opioid system in stroke injury. *Drug Discov Today*. 2018 Mar 1. pii: S1359-6446(17)30460-9. [Epub ahead of print]

≈**Sivandzade F**, Cucullo L. In-vitro blood-brain barrier modeling: A review of modern and fast-advancing technologies. *J Cereb Blood Flow Metab*. 2018 Jul 30:271678X18788769. [Epub ahead of print]

≈Yao HP, Feng L, Weng TH, Hu CY, **Suthe SR**, Mostofa AGM, Chen LH, Wu ZG, Wang WL, Wang MH. Preclinical Efficacy of Anti-RON Antibody-Drug Conjugate Zt/g4-MMAE for Targeted Therapy of Pancreatic Cancer Overexpressing RON Receptor Tyrosine Kinase. *Mol Pharm*. 2018 Jun 26. [Epub ahead of print]

≈**Verma K, Gupta N**, Zang T, Wangtrakuldee P, Srivastava SK, Penning TM, Trippier PC. AKR1C3

Inhibitor KV-37 Exhibits Antineoplastic Effects and Potentiates Enzalutamide in Combination Therapy in Prostate Adenocarcinoma Cells. *Mol Cancer Ther*. 2018 Jun 11. pii: molcanther.1023.2017. [Epub ahead of print]

≈**Villalba H**, Shah K, **Albekairi TH, Sifat AE**, Vaidya B, Abbruscato TJ. Potential role of myo-inositol to improve ischemic stroke outcome in diabetic mouse. *Brain Res*. 2018 Aug 27. pii: S0006-8993(18)30449-9. [Epub ahead of print]

≈Drummond RA, **Zahra FT**, Natarajan M, Swamydas M, Hsu AP, Wheat LJ, Gavino C, Vinh DC, Holland SH, Mikelis CM, Lionakis MS. GM-CSF Therapy in Human CARD9 Deficiency. *J Allergy Clin Immunol*. 2018 Jun 8. pii: S0091-6749(18)30846-7. [Epub ahead of print]

AWARDS & SCHOLARSHIPS

♦Aditya Bhalerao:

—Full-Tuition Scholarship, Howard Hughes Medical Institute, "Genetics of Addiction" course, The Jackson Laboratory, Bar Harbor, Maine; Sept.2018 (rec'd June 2018).

—Mary Lou Clements-Mann Scholarship, TTUHSC Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences, Fall 2018.

♦Nehal Gupta:

—Society of Toxicology's Toxicologic and Exploratory Pathology Specialty Section (TEPSS) Charles River Travel Award, SOT, San Antonio, TX; March 2018.

—Society of Toxicology 2018 Biotechnology Specialty Section [BTTS] Student Achievement Award, SOT San Antonio, TX; March 2018.

—Mary Lou Clements-Mann Scholarship, TTUHSC Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences, Fall 2018

♦Anwar Hossain:

—American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology's 2018 Graduate Student Travel Award, ASBMB at Experimental Biology/, San Diego, CA; April 2018.

—American Society of Microbiology's Student and Postdoctoral Travel Award AAR, ASM Microbe 2018, Atlanta, GA; June 2018.

—Mary Lou Clements-Mann Scholarship, TTUHSC Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences, Fall 2018.

♦Md. Abul Kaiser:

—TTUHSC Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences, Dean's Scholars Award, Fall 2017 (first applied 12/01/2017, added to stipend for duration of degree)

♦Kumari 'Iti' Kaushik:

—Seahorse Travel Award, Agilent Technologies, American Association for Cancer Research, Chicago, IL; April 2018.

♦Yoon Jung Lee:

—Phonathon Scholarship, TTUHSC Student Government Association Phonathon Scholarship Committee, awarded February 2018 (to be applied Fall 2018).

(continued on page 7)

AWARDS & SCHOLARSHIPS (cont'd)

♦Taylor Liles:

—Full-Tuition Scholarship, Howard Hughes Medical Institute, "Neurogenetic Tools: Using Mouse Models to Study Human Neurodegenerative Disease" course. At The Jackson Laboratory, Bar Harbor, ME; April—May 2018.

—Registration Fee Scholarship, National Institute of Health, to attend "The Whole Scientist", at The Jackson Laboratory, Bar Harbor, Maine; May 14-18, 2018.

—Travel Award, to attend "The Whole Scientist", at The Jackson Laboratory, Bar Harbor, Maine; May 2018.

—Full Tuition Scholarship from Howard Hughes Medical Institute to attend "Surgical Techniques in the Laboratory Mouse" Workshop, Jackson Laboratory, Bar Harbor, ME; Sept.2018 (selected Feb.2018).

♦Hanumantha Rao Madala:

—Seahorse Travel Award, from Agilent Technologies, Inc., for Society of Toxicology 57th Annual Meeting & ToxExpo, San Antonio, Texas; March 2018.

—American Society for Investigative Pathology, 2018 Sobel Scholar Trainee Travel Award, ASIP Annual Meeting at Experimental Biology (EB), San Diego, CA, April 2018.

♦Ahmed Morsy:

—Alzheimer's Drug Discovery Foundation [ADDF] Young Investigator Scholarship, 12th Annual Drug Discovery for Neurodegeneration Conference [DDNC]: An Educational Course on Translating Research into Drugs, Washington, DC; Feb.4-6,2018.

♦Behnam Noorani:

—Best Poster Presentation, Junior Graduate Students, Seventeenth Annual Research Days, TTUHSC School of Pharmacy Amarillo, TX; June 2018.

♦Sharavan Ramachandran:

—Syngenta Fellowship Grant in Human Health Applications of New Technologies, Society of Toxicology Annual Meeting & ToxExpo, San Antonio, TX; March 2018.

—Travel Grant, Cayman Chemical, American Association for Cancer Research, Chicago, IL; April 2018.

—Seahorse Travel Award, Agilent Technologies, American Association for Cancer Research, Chicago, IL; April 2018.

♦Md. Sanaullah Sajib:

—Travel Scholarship, North American Vascular Biology Organization (NAVBO) Vasculata 2018, Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri; July 2018..

♦Ali Sifat:

—Graduate Student Travel Support Award, Society of Toxicology, San Antonio, TX; March 2018.

♦Farzane Sivandzade:

—Registration/Tuition Scholarship, National Institute of Health, to attend "The Whole Scientist" course at The Jackson Laboratory, Bar Harbor, Maine; May 2018.

—Travel Award, to attend "The Whole Scientist" course, at The Jackson Laboratory, Bar Harbor, Maine; May 14-18, 2018.

♦Sreedhar Reddy Suthre:

—Graduate Student Travel Support Award, Society of Toxicology, San Antonio, TX; March 2018.

—American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology (ASBMB) 2018 Graduate Student Travel Award, ASBMB at Experimental Biology, San Diego, CA; April 2018.

♦Heidi Villalba:

—Student Government Association's Phonathon Scholarship, TTUHSC SGA (selected Feb. 2018, applied to Fall 2018 term).

♦Fatema Tuz Zhara:

—Travel Scholarship, North American Vascular Biology Organization (NAVBO) Vasculata 2018, Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri; July 2018.

—Mary Lou Clements-Mann Scholarship, TTUHSC Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences, Fall 2018

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS



**Alzheimer's
Drug Discovery
Foundation**

**Alzheimer's Drug Discovery Foundation,
Drug Discovery for Neurodegeneration Conference
February 4-6, 2018 * Arlington, VA**

***Amed Morsy, Nihar Kinarivala, Hezhen Wang, Paul C. Trippier.** "Small molecule ABAD inhibitors as a therapeutic strategy in Alzheimer's Disease"

**American Association for the Advancement of Science
February 15-19, 2018 * Austin, TX**

Mohammad Anwar Hossain, Md. Sanaulah Sajib, Ali Ehsan Sifat, Thomas Abbruscato, Constantinos Mikelis, Nadezhda German. "Novel Class of Natural Product-Based Opioid Antagonists"



**Society of Toxicology * 57th Annual Meeting and ToxExpo
March 11-15, 2018 * San Antonio, TX**

***Podium Presentation: Nehal Gupta and Sanjay Srivastava.** "Atovaquone: An anti-protozoal, antimalarial drug suppresses breast tumor growth by inhibiting HER2/ β -catenin signaling"

***Mohammad A. Kaisar, Ravi K. Sajja and Luca Cucullo.** "Relevance of Gender in Tobacco Smoking-Dependent Dysregulation of the Iron Exporter Slc40a1"

***H. Madala, S. Punganuru, and K. Srivenugopal.** "Idh Mutations Inspired Oxidative Therapy To Higher Grade Gliomas"

***Sharavan Ramachandran and Sanjay Srivastava.** "Capsaicin: a negative regulator of Warburg effect in pancreatic cancer"

***A. E. Sifat, B. Vaidya, M. A. Kaisar, L. Cucullo, and T. J. Abbruscato.** "Nicotine and E-Cigarette Exposure Alters Brain Glucose Utilization in Ischemic Stroke"

***Sreedhar Reddy Suthe, Hang-Ping Yao, Paul C. Trippier and Ming-Hai Wang.** "Development of a novel RON targeted antibody-drug conjugates using cysteine bridging technology for potential treatment of pancreatic cancer"

**Saudi Association for Pulmonary Hypertension
11th Annual Conference
April 5-7, 2018 * Dubai, UAE**

Podium Presentation: Ahmed A. Alobaida. "Inhaled PLGA Particles of Rosiglitazone, oral antidiabetic, and SNAP, Nitric oxide donor as a promising targeted therapy for PAH" [Invited Speaker]



**American Association for Cancer Research
April 14-18, 2018 * Chicago, IL**

***Nehal Gupta, Stephen Wright, Sanjay K. Srivastava.** "Atovaquone suppresses triple negative breast tumor growth by inhibiting myeloid derived suppressor cells"

***Itishree Kaushik, Alok Ranjan, Blake Schwetzmenn and Sanjay K Srivastava.** "Pimozide suppresses the growth of brain tumors by targeting oncogenic pathways"

***Hanumantha Rao Madala, Surendra Reddy Punganuru, Kalkunte Srivenugopal.** "IDH1 mutation-inspired α -ketoglutaric acid mimics for oxidative therapy of higher grade gliomas through α -ketoglutarate dehydrogenase inhibition"

***Sharavan Ramachandran, Neel Fofaria and Sanjay K. Srivastava.** "Piperlongumine, a novel option to overcome BRAF inhibitor resistance in melanoma".

***Sharavan Ramachandran and Sanjay K. Srivastava.** "Novel antipsychotic drug for pancreatic cancer treatment"

***Sreedhar Reddy Suthe Hang-Ping Yao, Paul C. Trippier and Ming-Hai Wang.** "Development of a novel RON targeted antibody-drug conjugates using cysteine bridging technology for potential treatment of pancreatic cancer"

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CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS (cont'd)

Experimental Biology * April 21-25, 2017 * San Diego, CA

***Mohammad Anwar Hossain**, Hardik I. Parikh, Nadezhda German. "Novel Class of PqsR Inhibitors to Reduce the Biofilm Formation of *P. aeruginosa*"

***Laxmi Iyer**, Yong Zhang and Thomas Thekkumkara. "Tannic Acid Downregulates Angiotensin Type 1 Receptor in Aortic Smooth Muscle Cells Through EGFR Dependent Phosphoinositide 3-Kinase Pathway"

***Podium Presentation: Hanumantha Rao Madala**, Viswanath Arutla, Surendra R. Punganuru, Kalkunte Srivenugopal. "Structure-based drug design to overcome temozolomide resistance in glioblastoma (GBM) through a dual inhibition of MGMT and base excision repair"

***Hanumantha Rao Madala**, Surendra R. Punganuru, Kalkunte S. Srivenugopal. "IDH1 mutation-inspired α -ketoglutaric acid mimics for oxidative therapy of higher grade gliomas through α -ketoglutarate dehydrogenase inhibition"

***Podium Presentation: Shyanne Page**, Mikaelan Cuciarre-Stulligross, Sara Faress, Al-Ahmad, Abraham. "Determining the effect of the WNT/b-catenin pathway on the ischemic blood-brain barrier using induced pluripotent stem cells"

***Podium Presentation: Sreedhar Reddy Suthe**, Hang-Ping Yao and Ming-Hai Wang. "Reduced RON expression, DM1 resistance and MRP1 upregulation contributes to resistance in colon cancer cells against anti-RON antibody-drug conjugate Zt/g4-DM1"

***Sreedhar Reddy Suthe**, Hang-Ping Yao, Paul C. Trippier and Ming-Hai Wang. "Development of a novel RON targeted antibody-drug conjugates using cysteine bridging technology for potential treatment of pancreatic cancer"

***Heidi Villalba**, Bhuvaneshwar Vaidya and Thomas Abbruscato. "Role of Myo-inositol in Ischemic Stroke Outcome in a Type 2 Diabetic Mouse Model"



TTUHSC Abilene Research Symposium * April 27, 2018

YoonJung Lee, YoungHee Kwon, Alejandra Fernandez, James Stoll. "Anticonvulsant Effects of Physical Activity in a Mouse Chronic Corneal Kindling Model"

**Abilene Research
Symposium**



**American Society for Microbiology
June 7-11, 2018 * Atlanta, GA**

***Mohammad Anwar Hossain**, Nadezhda A. German. "Design and Synthesis of Novel Classes of Quorum Sensing Inhibitors to Suppress the Virulence Program of *Pseudomonas Aeruginosa*"

**Gordon Research Seminar and Conference
Enzymes, Coenzymes and Metabolic Pathways
July 21-27, 2018 * Waterville Valley, NH**

***Srinidhia Jayaraman**, Yehia Merchef, David A Ostrov, Vardan Karamyan. "Positive Allosteric Modulation of Endopeptidase Neurolysin"

GRS



**North American Vascular Biology Organization - Vasculata
July 23-26, 2018 * Washington University, St. Louis, MO**

***Md Sanullah Sajib**, Fatema Tuz Zahra, Jee Hyun Park, Paul Tullar, Sanjay K. Srivastava, Ulrich Bickel, and Constantinos M. Mikelis. "Endothelial RhoA activation: an important step in the metastatic process"

***Fatema Tuz Zahra**, Md Sanullah Sajib, Mohd Nazmul Hasan Apu, Racheal Akwii, Paul Tullar, Michail S. Lionakis, Constantinos M. Mikelis. "Involvement of small GTPases in basic fibroblast growth factor (bFGF)-induced angiogenesis"

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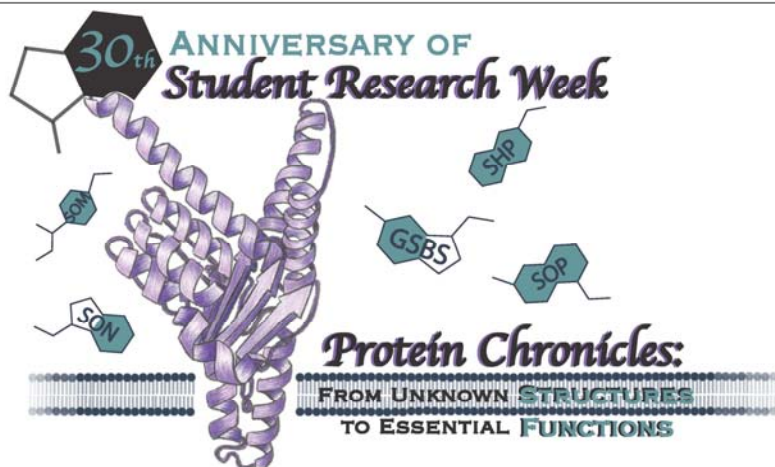
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The 30th Annual Student Research Week, hosted by the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences in Lubbock, was held **March 20-23, 2018**. Student Research Week is an interdisciplinary event organized every year by TTHSC GSBS students to showcase their research and build a platform for interaction. This year's theme of "Protein Chronicles" showcased two main guest speakers:



Prof. Jane Richardson, James B. Duke Professor of Biochemistry at Duke University, MacArthur Fellow—National Academies of Sciences & Medicine member.

Dr. Francisco Bezanilla, Lillian Eichilberger Cannon Professor at University of Chicago—National Academy of Sciences member—Latin American Academy of Sciences member—Rockefeller Foundation and AAAS Fellow.

GPPS PRESENTERS:

Select Student Podium Presentations:

Laxmi Iyer, Yong Zhang and Thomas Thekkumkara. "Tannic Acid Downregulates Angiotensin Type 1 Receptor in Aortic Smooth Muscle Cells Through EGFR Dependent Phosphoinositide 3-Kinase Pathway"

Md. Sanaulah Sajib, Fatema Tuz Zahra, Jee Hyun Park, Paul Tullar, Sanjay K. Srivastava, Ulrich Bickel, and Constantinos M. Mikelis. "Tumor cells activate small GTPase RhoA in endothelial cells to facilitate transendothelial migration during cancer metastasis"

Poster Presentations:

Yoon Jung Lee, Younghee Kwon, Alejandra Fernandez, James Stoll. "Anticonvulsant Effects of Physical Activity in a Mouse Chronic Corneal Kindling Model"

Page, Shyanne, Mikaelan Cucciare-Stuligross, Sarah Faress, Abraham Al-Ahmad. "Using induced pluripotent stem-cell-derived BMECs to determine the role that the Wnt/ β -catenin pathway plays in healthy and ischemic blood-brain barriers"

Zahra F.T., Sajib M.S., Ichiyama Y., Tullar P., Kubota Y., Mikelis C.M. "Role of endothelial small GTPase RhoA in embryo development and retinal angiogenesis"

ANIMALCULES DETECTED:

DANGER MODEL ACTIVATED

SAVE THE DATE

TTHSC
BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES

PRESENTS

31ST STUDENT RESEARCH WEEK

MARCH 19TH – MARCH 22ND, 2019

TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY
HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER
LUBBOCK CAMPUS

INCLUDES A VENDOR SHOW, POSTER COMPETITION
AND KEYNOTE ADDRESSES FROM:

DR. POLLY MATZINGER
DR. MARVIN WHITELEY

SCHOOL OF PHARMACY CELEBRATION OF ACHIEVEMENT
Graduate Student Association at Amarillo

May 4, 2018 Award Ceremony
Honors for Students, Faculty & Staff



Dr. Constantinos Mikeles (right) was awarded the "Graduate Mentor of the Year" presented by GSAA President, Nehal Gupta.



Nehal presented the "Graduate Teaching Team of the Year (Physiology-Based Pharmacology)" award to (L-R) Drs. Margaret Weis, Luca Cucullo, Ulrich Bickel, Vardan Karamyan, and Kalkunte Srivenugopal (not shown). Yoon Jung Lee (2nd from left) assisted with the presentation.



Dr. Weis (right) received the "Graduate Teacher of the Year (Physiology-Based Pharmacology)" award, presented by Yoon Jung Lee.

Yoon Jung Lee (left) presented Nehal Gupta with the award for "Outstanding GSAA Student of the Year".



This year, the ten-week **2018 Amarillo Biomedical Research Internship** kicked off May 29th, with **eight** ABRI interns working in various School of Pharmacy labs in Amarillo. Significant presentations from different backgrounds and perspectives were given throughout the summer by School of Pharmacy faculty and staff. Graduate Program Advisor, Dr. Fakhru Ahsan, finished with a brief summary of the Graduate Program. The program concluded August 3rd with a luncheon for ABRI interns, parents, faculty, graduate students and staff, with each of the interns being presented with a certificate, and then giving a podium presentation of their respective research.



(back, L-R) Racheal Akwii, Holden Archer, Nausheen Syeera, Taru Bharadwaj, Juan Valdez
(front, L-R) Ashlee Bradley, Maritza Brito, Jacob Biggers

ABRI Interns:

- » **Racheal Akwii** ~ Dr. Constantinos Mikelis, Pharmaceutical Sciences
- » **Holden Archer** ~ Dr. Sanjay Srivastava, Department of Immunotherapy and Biotechnology
- » **Taru Bharadwaj** ~ Dr. Hiranmoy Das, Pharmaceutical Sciences
- » **Jacob Biggers** ~ Dr. Fakhru Ahsan, Pharmaceutical Sciences
- » **Ashlee Bradley** ~ Dr. James Stoll, Pharmaceutical Sciences
- » **Maritza Brito** ~ Dr. Abraham Al-Ahmad, Pharmaceutical Sciences
- » **Nausheen Syeera** ~ Dr. Vardan Karamyan, Pharmaceutical Sciences
- » **Juan Valdez** ~ Dr. Paul Trippier, Pharmaceutical Sciences

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Seventeenth Annual **School of Pharmacy** Research Days June 13-14, 2018

This year, School of Pharmacy faculty members, graduate students, post-docs and residents from all four campuses again converged at the Amarillo Civic Center in Amarillo, TX to talk about their research and build collaborations and friendships.

Podium presentations were given Wednesday and Thursday afternoon by selected Individuals, and the annual dinner and social were held Wednesday evening in the Amarillo Civic Center's Heritage Room. Presentations were judged on both days, and awards were presented Thursday afternoon to complete the event. Of our GPPS graduate students, two were invited to give podium presentations, 20 more participated, and six of these gained recognition and were awarded during the final ceremony.



Keynote Speakers:

Mark W. Feinberg, M.D., Associate Professor of Medicine, Brigham and Women's Hospital/Harvard Medical School Director, Program in Cardiovascular RNA Biology, Division of Cardiovascular Medicine, Boston, MA. "Turning trash to treasure: targeting the non-coding genome to control ischemic cardiovascular disease"

Diana Sobieraj, Pharm.D., Assistant Professor of Pharmacy Practice, University of Connecticut, School of Pharmacy. "Evidence-Based Practice Centers (EPCs) Research Group"

Distinguished Speakers:

Guillermo Altenberg, M.D., Ph.D., Professor and Chair, Department of Cell Physiology and Molecular Biophysics, TTUHSC School of Medicine, Lubbock.

Susan E. Bergeson, Ph.D., Associate Dean, TTUHSC, Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences, Associate Professor, Department of Pharmacology and Neuroscience, Lubbock.

GPPS Podium Presentations:

• **Nehal Gupta** and Sanjay K. Srivastava. "Atovaquone: An Anti-Protozoal, Antimalarial Drug Suppresses Breast Tumor Growth by Inhibiting Her2/b-Catenin Signaling"

• **Zahra F.T.**, Sajib M.S., Ichiyama Y., Akwii R., Apu M.N.H.Tullar P., Kubota Y., Mikelis, C.M. "Differential Role of Endothelial Small Gtpase Rhoa in Physiological Versus Pathological Angiogenesis"

GPPS Best Poster Awards:

Senior Graduate Student Category:

- Ekram Ahmed Chowdhury
- Sharavan Ramachandran
- Sanaullah Sajib

Junior Graduate Student Category:

- Behnam Noorani
- Daniela Rolph
- Iti Kaushik



Nehal Gupta presenting



Fatema Tuz Zahra presenting

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(Research Days, cont'd from page 12)

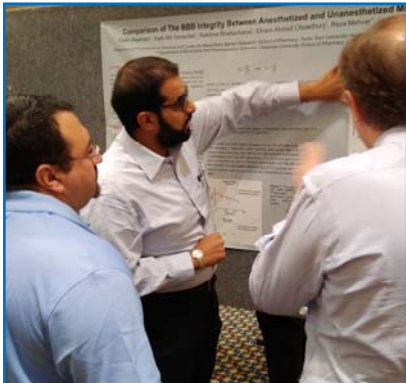
Graduate Student Poster Presenters:

- **Faleh Alqahtani**, Md. Sanaullah Sajib, Raktima Bhattacharya, Ekram Ahmed Chowdhury, Reza Mehvar and Ulrich Bickel. "Comparison of the BBB Integrity between Anesthetized and Unanesthetized Mice"
- **Sarah Anderson** and Hiranmoy Das. "Mechanisms of Dental Pulp-Derived stem Cells in Reducing Inflammations Associated with Inflammatory Bowel Disease"
- **Derek Barthels**, Manjusri Das, Suman Kanji, Hiranmoy Das. "Use of Adult Stem Cells in Treating Ischemic Stroke Mediated by Photothrombosis in NOD/SCID Mice"
- **Ekram Ahmed Chowdhury**, **Behnam Noorani**, **Niznxi Zhao**, Faleh Alqahtani, Irene La-Beck, Ulrich Bickel. "Use of Erythrocyte Ghosts as a Versatile Tool in Measuring Drug Permeability and In Vitro Effects of Anesthesia"
- **Mohammad Anwar Hossain** and Nadezhda A. German. "Design and Synthesis of Dual-Acting Quorum Sensing Inhibitors to Suppress the Virulence Program of Pseudomonas Aeruginosa"
- **Laxmi Iyer**, Yong Zhang and Thomas Thekkumkara. "Tannic Acid Downregulates Angiotensin Type 1 Receptor in Aortic Smooth Muscle Cells through EGFR Dependent Phosphoinositide 3-Kinase Pathway"
- **Itishree Kaushik**, Alok Ranjan, Blake Schwettmann and Sanjay K Srivastava. "Pimozide Suppresses the Growth of Brain Tumors by Targeting Oncogenic Pathways"
- **Ali Keshavarz**, Taslim A. Al-Hilal, Wei Li and Fakhrul Ahsan. "A Micropattern-Engraved Two-Compartment Tissue-Chip to Model the Right Ventricle and Pulmonary Arteries as a Single Functional Unit for Studying PAH-Induced Right Ventricular Hypertrophy"
- **YoonJung Lee**, Alejandra Fernandez, James Stoll. "The Anticonvulsant Effect of Physical Activity Differs between Sexes in the Mouse Corneal Kindling Model"
- **Hanumantha Rao Madala**, Viswanath Arutla, Surendra R. Punganuru, Kalkunte S. Srivenugopal. "Structure-Based Drug Design to Overcome Temozolomide Resistance in Glioblastoma (GBM) through a Dual Inhibition of Mgmta and Base Excision Repair"
- **Ahmed Morsy**, Paul C. Trippier. "Small-Molecule Inhibitors of the Ab-ABAD Interaction as a Therapeutic Target in Alzheimer's Disease"
- **Behnam Noorani**, Ekram Ahmed Chowdhury, Srikumar Krishnamoorthy, Changzue Xu, Ulrich Bickel. "Fabrication and Characterization of 3D-Printed Microvascular Structures Based on Hydrogel for Blood Brain Barrier"
- **Shyanne Page**, Mikaelan Cucciarre-Stulligross, Sarah Faress, Abraham Al-Ahmad. "Wnt of Change: Determining the Effect of the Wnt/b-Catenin Pathway on the BBB during Ischemic/Re-Oxygenation Stress"
- **Sharavan Ramachandran** and Sanjay K Srivastava. "Novel Anti-Parkinson Drug for Pancreatic Cancer Treatment"
- **Snehal Raut** and Fakhrul Ahsan. "Development of a Tissue Chip Model Mimicking Pulmonary Sarcoidosis"
- **Daniela Rolph**, Moonmoon Deb, Manjusri Das, Suman Kanji, Matthew Joseph, Reeva Aggarwal, Hiranmoy Das. "Ferutinin Activates Dental Pulp-Derived Stem Cells by Epigenetically Regulating the Canonical Wnt Signaling Pathway"
- **Md. Sanaullah Sajib**, Fatema Tuz Zahra, Racheal Akwii, JeeHyun Park, Paul Tullar3, Sanjay K. Srivastava, Ulrich Bickel, and Constantinos M. Mikelis. "It Takes Two to Tango: Cancer-Endothelial Cell Interaction During Metastasis through Endothelial Rhoa Activation"

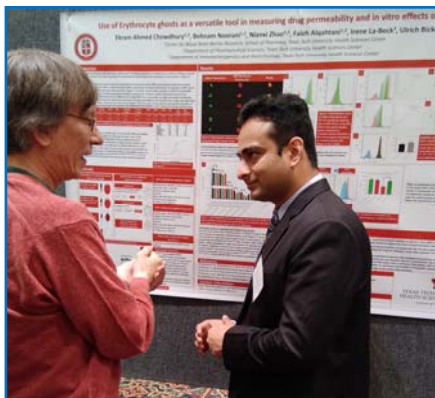
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(Research Days, cont'd from page 13)

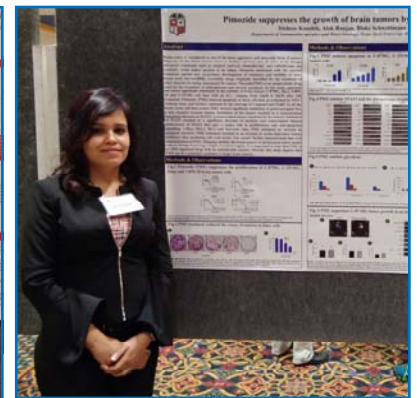
- **Abdullah Al Shoyaib**, Faisal F. Alamri, Abbie Biggers, Srinidhi Jayaraman, Fakhru'l Ahsan, Taslim A. Al-Hilal, Vardan T. Karamyan. "Exercise-Dependent Upregulation of Angiogenic Proteins and Motor Function Recovery after Photothrombotic Stroke in Mice"
- **Ali E. Sifat**, Bhuvaneshwar Vaidya, Mohammad A. Kaisar, Luca Cucullo, Thomas J. Abbruscato. "Nicotine & E-Cig Exposure Alters Brain Glucose Uptake and Metabolism in Ischemic Stroke"
- **Sreedhar Reddy Suthe**, Hang-Ping Yao, and Ming-Hai Wang. "RON-Targeted Antibody-Drug Conjugate Therapy Ablates Cancer Stem-Like Cells and Induces Long-Term Tumor Regressions in Preclinical Models of Triple-Negative Breast Cancer"



Faleh Alqahtani (middle) presenting



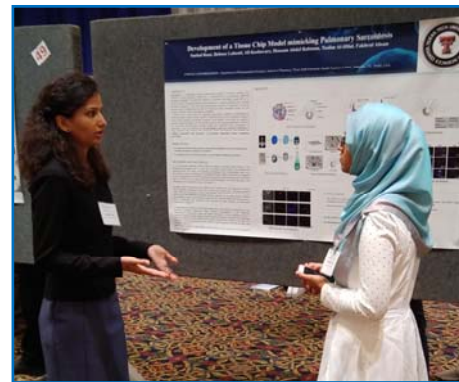
Ekram Chowdhury (right) presenting



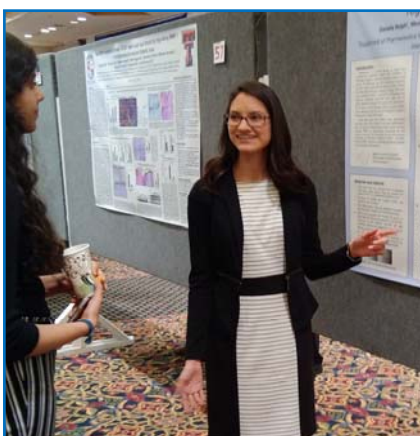
Kumari "Iti" Kaushik



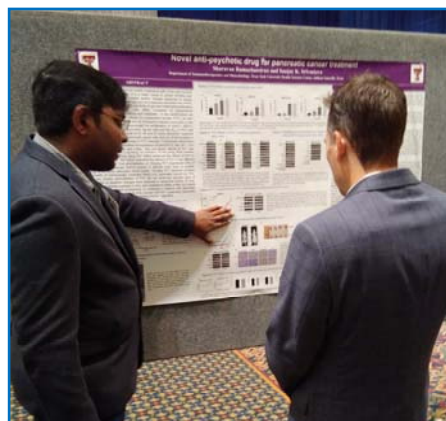
Ahmed Morsy



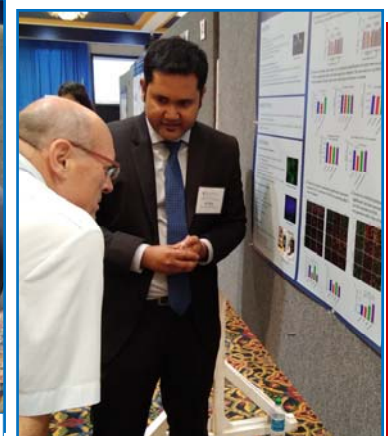
Snehal Raut (left) presenting



Daniela Rolph (right) presenting



Sharavan Ramachandran (left) presenting



Ali Sifat (right) presenting

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This spring, several of our graduate students and School of Pharmacy faculty members attended the “Go Red for Women” event at the Amarillo Civic Center for the American Heart Association, supporting stroke-focused research for women’s health issues.



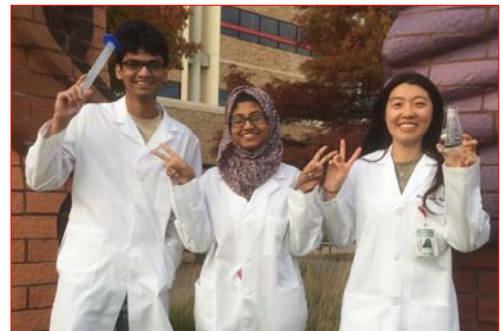
Graduate students Heidi Villalba, Joey Greene, Ali Sifat, Shyanne Page
[Photo used with permission of AGN Media]

(front, L-R) Heidi Villalba, Dr. Margaret Weis, Kinzie Sherrill, Daniela Rolph, Shyanne Page
 (back, L-R) Dr. Abraham Al-Ahmad, Derek Barthels, Ali Sifat, Joey Greene
[Photo used with permission of AGN Media]

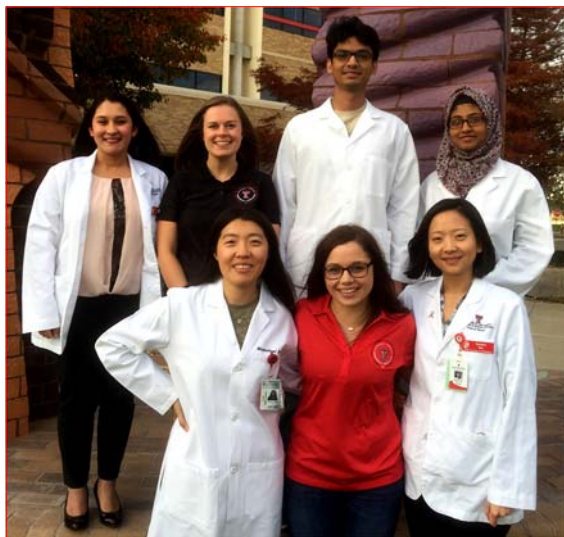


Three of our graduate students were 2017-2018 officers for **Inter-Professional Ambassadors (IPA)** at TTUHSC Amarillo. Yoon Jung Lee served as President, Abdullah Al Shoyaib as Historian, and Fatema Tuz Zahra as Secretary.

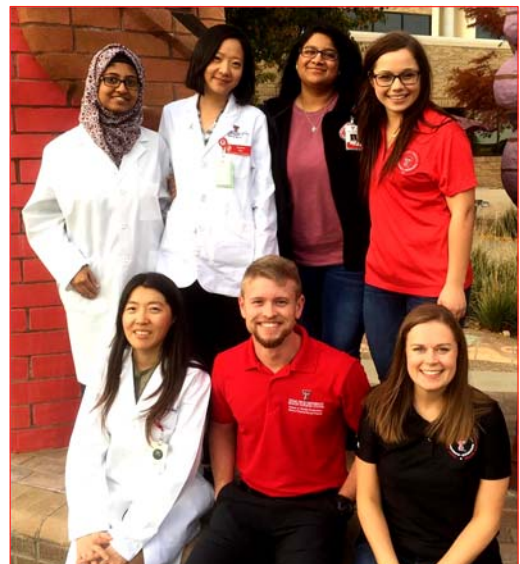
The **IPA** organization was designed to promote inter-professional collaboration of the healthcare areas to enhance quality healthcare in order to improve patient outcomes. On our campus, **IPA** offers opportunities for students of various the medical disciplines to interact and understand the roles and responsibilities of all disciplines.



Graduate students Abdullah Al Shoyaib, Fatema Tuz Zahra, and Yoon Jung Lee



(back, L-R) Sami Baruwal [Pharmacy], Katherine Meng [Physical Therapy], Abdullah Al Shoyaib [GSBS], Fatema Tuz Zahra [GSBS],
 (front, L-R) Yoon Jung Lee [GSBS], Carly Gilbreath [Physical Therapy], SuYeon Yeo (Pharmacy)



(back, L-R) Fatema Tuz Zahra, SuYeon Yeo, Myla Bhakta [Pharmacy], Carly Gilbreath,
 (front, L-R) Yoon Jung Lee, Aaron Bradford [Physical Therapy], Katherine Meng

ALUMNI DIRECTORY

2001

Vikas Agarwal, Ph.D.
Director, New Product Development
Taris Biomedical
vagarwal@tarisbio.com

Sivakumar Vaithiyalingam, Ph.D.
Review Chemist/Staff Fellow
Division of Chemistry
OPS/CDER/FDA
Rockville, MD
Sivakumar.vaithiyalingam@fda.hhs.gov

2002

Sami Nazzal, Ph.D.
Associate Professor
Dept. of Pharmaceutics
College of Pharmacy
Univ. of Louisiana at Monroe, LA
nazzal@ulm.edu

2003

Paul Lockman, Ph.D.
Professor and the Douglas D.
Glover Endowed Chair
Dept. Basic Pharm. Sci., SOP
and the Assoc. Dir. for
Translational Res.
West Virginia University HSC
Morgantown, WV
prlockman@hsc.wvu.edu

2004

Fatima Mustafa, MS, RPh
Rite Aid
State College, PA 16801
fkhan810@gmail.com

Anitha Palamakula, Ph.D., R.Ph.
CDER/FDA
Rockville, MD
anitha_100@yahoo.com

Rakhi Shah, Ph.D.
FDA
Silver Springs, MD
rakhi.shah@fda.hhs.gov

Mohammad Nutan, Ph.D.
Associate Professor
Dept. of Pharmaceutical Sciences
Rangel College of Pharmacy
Texas A&M HSC
Kingsville, Texas
mnutan@pharmacy.tamhsc.edu

2005

Anjaneya Chimalakonda, Ph.D.
Bristol-Myers Squibb Co.
Pennington, NJ
anjaneya.chimalakonda@bms.com

Ragini Vuppugalla, Ph.D.
Bristol-Myers Squibb
Princeton, NJ
ragini.vuppugalla@bms.com

Alamdar Hussain, Ph.D.
Dept. of Basic Pharmaceutical Sci.
College of Pharmacy
University of Oklahoma
Oklahoma City, OK
alamdar-hussain@ouhsc.edu

Haritha Mandula, Ph.D.
FDA
Derwood, MD
haritha.mandula@gmail.com

Jagan Mohan Parepally, Ph.D.
FDA
Derwood, MD
jagan_parepally@fda.hhs.gov

2006

Young Tag Ko, Ph.D.
Gwangju Inst. of Science & Tech.
Gwangju, South Korea
youngtakko@gmail.com

Nusrat Motlekar, Ph.D.
FDA

Vaughan Wittman, Ph.D.
Director, Immunoassay Dev.
Sanofi Pasteur VaxDesign Corp.
Orlando, FL
vaughan.wittman@sanofipasteur.com

Joachim Hartman, Ph.D.
CMC Dossier Leadership Manager,
Pharmacist, Chemical & Pharma-
ceutical Dev., Project & Dossier
Leadership Biopharma, Global
Research & Development
Merck KGaA
Darmstadt, Germany
joachim.hartmann@merckgroup.com

Celee Spidel, Ph.D.
Pharm.D. Student
Texas Tech University HSC, SOP
Amarillo, TX
spidel@suddenlink.net

Julie Gaasch Lockman, Ph.D.
Director of Scientific Dev. and Res.
Pathfinder
West Virginia Clinical &
Translational Science Institute
Morgantown, WV
jmlockman@hsc.wvu.edu

Cornelia Kiewert, Ph.D.
Stiftslnikum Mittelrhein gGmbH
Klorenz, Germany
connie.and.io@web.de

2007

Chaitanya Chimalakonda, M.S.
CDER/FDA
Krishna.Chimalakonda@fda.hhs.gov

Jennifer Paulson, Ph.D., Pharm.D.
Target Pharmacy
Amarillo, Texas
paulson.jennifer@ymail.com

2008

James Egbert, M.S.
Seqwright DNA Technology Serv.
Houston, TX

Jiukuan Hao, Ph.D.
Dept. of Pharmaceutical Sciences
Winkle College of Pharmacy
Cincinnati, OH
haojn@ucmail.uc.edu

Shuhua Bai, Ph.D.
Dept. of Basic Pharmaceutical
Sciences, School of Pharmacy
Husson University
Bangor, ME
bais@husson.edu

Fancy Thomas, Ph.D.
Prescient Life Sciences
New Delhi, India
thomasfancy@gmail.com

Sharanya Vemula, Ph.D.
Vertex Pharmaceuticals Inc.
Cambridge, MA
sharanyavemula@gmail.com

2009

Katie Bennett, Ph.D.
TTUHSC, Clinical Lab.
Sciences Program
Molecular Pathology Program
Lubbock, TX
katie.bennett@ttuhsc.edu

Chandan Thomas, Ph.D.
Lake Erie College of Osteopathic
Medicine and School of Pharmacy
Dept. of Pharmaceutical Sciences
Bradenton, FL
cmthomas@lecom.edu

Lloyd Alfonso, Ph.D.
DYC School of Pharmacy
Buffalo, NY 14201
alfonsol@dyc.edu

Nikhil Vad, Ph.D.
Post Doc
Vontz Center for Molecular Studies
Cincinnati, OH
nikhil.vad@ttuhsc.edu

Imam Shaik, Ph.D.
Postdoctoral Associate
Dept. of Pharmaceutical Sciences
University of Pittsburgh SOP
Pittsburgh, PA
IHS4@pitt.edu

2010

Erika Wisdom, M.S.
Emerg. Mangmt. Program Manager
National Nuclear Security Admin.
Department of Energy
Los Alamos National Laboratory
Los Alamos, NM
erikawisdom@yahoo.com

Sunny Guin, Ph.D.
Research Instructor
Anschutz Medical Campus
University of Colorado
Aurora, CO
sunny.guin@gmail.com

Vamshi Manda, Ph.D.
Post Doc
University of Mississippi
Oxford, MS
mandavamshi@gmail.com

Ridhi Parasrampuria, Ph.D.
The State University of New York
Novartis Pharmaceuticals Co
Buffalo, NY
ridhiprp@gmail.com

Sarah Willis, M.S.
Veteran's Administration
Amarillo, TX

Vivek Gupta, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
Biopharmaceutical Sciences
School of BioPharmacy
Keck Graduate Institute
Claremont, CA
vkg4280@gmail.com

Rajendar Mittapalli, Ph.D.
Associate Clinical Pharmacokinetic
II
Abbvi Inc. (Abbott)
Chicago, IL
rajendarmrk@gmail.com

Arun Satelli, Ph.D.
MD Anderson Cancer Institute
Houston, TX
arun.satelli@gmail.com

Rachita Sumbria, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
Biopharmaceutical Sciences
Keck Graduate Institute
Claremont, CA
Rachita_Sumbria@kqi.edu

Kunal Taskar, Ph.D.
Senior Investigator
Mechanism & Extrapolation Tech.
DMPK, UK
RD Platform Technology & Science
kunal.s.taskar@gsk.com

2011

Venkateswaran Chithambaram
Pillai, Ph.D.
University of Pittsburgh
Pittsburgh, PA
venki.c.pillai@gmail.com

Satyanarayana Goda, Ph.D.
Research Scientist
Formurex, Inc.
Stockton, CA
satyapharma@gmail.com

Vinay Rudraraju, Ph.D.
Safety Scientist
Daiichi Sankyo
Edison, NJ
virura@gmail.com

Li Yang, Ph.D.
Staff Fellow
FDA
Silver Spring, MD
ylwhzsd@gmail.com

Kaci Bohn, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
Curricular Chair
Pharmaceutical Sciences
Harding University
Searcy, AR
kbohn@harding.edu

Russell Snyder, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
Dept. of Biomedical Sciences
TTUHSC, Amarillo, TX
russell.snyder@ttuhsc.edu

(Continued on page 17)

ALUMNI DIRECTORY (Continued)

Bhavna Verma, Ph.D.
Post Doc
USC/Norris Comprehensive Cancer
Center

Los Angeles, CA
bhavnaverma80@rediffmail.com
Yan Xu, Ph.D.
Bristol-Myers-Squibb
New Brunswick, NJ
yannxu@gmail.com

Shashi Kudugunti, Ph.D.
Research Associate
Repligen Corporation
Waltham, MA
skudugunti@repligen.com

Ramakrishna Samala, Ph.D.
Sr. Research Associate
Dept. of Pharmaceutical Sciences
TTUHSC, Amarillo, TX
ramakrishna.samala@ttuhsc.edu

2012

Prabodh Kandala, Ph.D.
Senior Scientist
Roivant Sciences
Drug Product Development
Morrisville, NC
prabodh.kandala@gmail.com

Siva Koganti, Ph.D.
Postdoctoral Research Associate
Dept. of Internal Medicine,
Cardiovascular Medicine
University of Iowa
Iowa City, IA
Koganti2468@gmail.com

Snehal Padhye, Ph.D.
Formulation Scientist
Biovolutions Inc
Woburn, MA
snehal.padhye@gmail.com

2013

Hussaini Syed Sha Qhattal, Ph.D.
Senior Scientist
DPT Laboratories
San Antonio, TX 78229
Hussaini_mph@yahoo.com

Shuangling Zhang, Ph.D.
Postdoctoral Associate
University of Minnesota
zsl_2008@163.com

Chris Adkins, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
School of Pharmacy
South University
Savannah, GA
cadkins@southuniversity.edu

Mamoon Rashid, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor
Dept. of Pharmaceutical Sciences
Appalachian College of Pharmacy
Oakwood, VA
tturashid@gmail.com

Kaushik Shah, Ph.D.
Pharmacist
Walgreens
Midland Odessa, TX
Kaushik.K.Shah@gmail.com

Ameya Paranjpe, Ph.D.
Raleigh, NC

2014

Shahriar (Abir) Absar, Ph.D.
Clinical Pharmacologist
Office of Clinical Pharmacology
Office of Translational Science
CDER/FDA
Silver Spring, MD
Mohammad.Absar@fda.hhs.gov

Nina Blakeman, Ph.D.
Grand Canyon University
College of Nursing and Health Care
Professions (On-line)
Tulsa, TX

Parul Gupta, Ph.D.
Senior Scientist
Pfizer Inc.
La Jolla, CA
pearlets@gmail.com

Brijesh Patel, Ph.D.
Director R & D
DS Laboratories
Tampa, FL
Brijesh@dslaboratories.com

Sharad Sharma, Ph.D.
Postdoctoral Associate
Pharmaceutical Sciences
State Univ. of New York at Buffalo
Buffalo, NY

Naomi Wangler, Ph.D.
Alfaisal University
Saudi Arabia
naomiwangler@gmail.com

Manoj Banjara, Ph.D.
Postdoctoral Research Fellow
Cleveland Clinic
Cleveland, OH
banjarm@ccf.org

Nilesh Gupta, Ph.D.
Chief Scientific Officer / Co-Founder
Neofluidics LLC
Lubbock, TX (head office)
Carlsbad, CA (currently living)
nileshgupta1203@gmail.com

Jun Liu, Ph.D.
Scientist
Primer Analytical Solutions Corp.
Princeton, NJ

Subhasree Nag, Ph.D.
Trainee Scientist — Bioanalytical
Method Development/Validation
Cheshire, CT
Subhasreea.nag@gmail.com

Kamrun (Shumi) Nahar, Ph.D.
ORISE Fellow
US FDA
Silver Spring, MD
Knahar.ttu@gmail.com

2015

Rajiv Balyan, Ph.D.
Clinical Pharmacology Fellow
Cincinnati Children's Hospital
Medical Center
Cincinnati, OH
Rajiv.Balyan@cchmc.org

Raktima Bhattacharya, Ph.D.
Post Doc Res Associate
Texas A&M University SOP
College Station, TX
raktima1@yahoo.com

Pooja Naik, Ph.D.
Post Doc Research Associate
Dept. of Rheumatology
John Hopkins University SOM,
Baltimore, MD
naik.pooja12@gmail.com

Vindhya Edpuganti, Ph.D.
Post Doctoral Fellow
Emory Institute for Drug Dev.
Emory University
Atlanta, GA
Evindhya@gmail.com

Md. Kowser Miah, Ph.D.
Post Doctoral Fellow
University of Pittsburg
Pittsburg, PA
kowserdu11@gmail.com

Raghavender Chivukula, Ph.D.
Post Doctoral Fellow
Stanford Research Institute (SRI)
Menlo Park, CA
Raghu.Chivukula@sri.com

Neel Fofaria, Ph.D.
Strategy Consultant
Mumbai, India
Fofaria.neel@gmail.com

Md. Rashedul Islam, Ph.D.
Post Doctoral Research Fellow
Neuroprotection Research Lab
MGH/Harvard Medical School
Boston, MA
Ri.phdu36@gmail.com

Sukesh Voruganti, Ph.D.
Sr. Scientist
Monarch PCM
Dallas, TX
Sukesh.Voruganti@gmail.com

2016

Kito Barrow, Ph.D.
Dallas, TX
kbarrow28@gmail.com

Alejandra Fernandez, Ph.D.
Post Doctoral Fellow
Emory University
Atlanta, GA
afernand611@gmail.com

Md. Jahidur Rashid, Ph.D.
Post-doctoral Research Associate
University of Utah
Division of Clinical Pharmacology
Department of Pediatrics
School of Medicine
Salt Lake City, UT
Jahidur.Rashid@hsc.utah.edu

Debasish Basak, Ph.D.
Post Doctoral Fellow
MD Anderson
Houston, TX
Rana_basak@yahoo.com

Tanvirul Hye
Assistant Professor
Dept. of Pharmaceutical Sciences
TTUHSC, Abilene, TX
Tanvirulhye@gmail.com

2017

A.G.M. Mostofa, Ph.D.
Postdoctoral Fellow
Moffitt Cancer Center
Tampa, FL
agmmostofa2013@gmail.com

Benard Ogola, Ph.D.
Postdoctoral Fellow
Tulane University School of Med.
Dept. of Pharmacology
New Orleans, LA
bogola1348@gmail.com

jee Hyun Park, Ph.D.
Postdoctoral Scientist
Eli Lilly and Company
Rockville, MD
jeehyunpark17@gmail.com

Alok Ranjan, PhD.
Postdoctoral Fellow
National Institute of Health
Bethesda, MD
Alok.rnjin03@gmail.com

Shikha, Ph.D.
Postdoctoral Fellow
Northwestern University
Evanston, IL
Shikha.bitm@gmail.com

2018

Nihar Kinarivala, Ph.D.
Research Fellow
Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer
Center
New York, NY
Nihar.Kinarivala@gmail.com

Hanumantha Rao Madala, Ph.D.
Research Fellow
Massachusetts General Hospital
Boston, MA
hanupharma9@gmail.com

Kshitij Verma, Ph.D.
Postdoctoral Research Associate
Genentech
South San Francisco, CA
kmsverma@gmail.com

Md. Abul Kaiser, Ph.D.
ORISE Fellow
Oak Ridge Institute for Science and
Education, USFDA
Silver Spring, MD
kaisarpharmsci@gmail.com

Faleh Alqhatani, Ph.D.
Teaching Assistant
King Saud University
Saudi Arabia
aldukeen112@gmail.com

(Continued on page 18)

ALUMNI DIRECTORY
(Continued)

Maria (Heidi) Villalba, Ph.D.
Post Doctoral Research Associate
Texas Tech University HSC SOP
Department of Pharmaceutical
Sciences
Amarillo, TX
Heidi.Villalba@ttuhsc.edu

*For more detailed information on
an alumni OR for any changes/
additions, please contact Teresa at
Teresa.Carlisle@ttuhsc.edu.

GPSS Alumni currently working at the FDA gather for lunch...



(Clockwise from left): Anitha Govada, Rakhi Shah, Li Yang, Nusrat Motlekar, Jagan Parepally, Chandan Thomas, Abir Absar, Venki Chithambaram Pillai, Haritha Mandula, SamataTiwari, Kamrun Nahar



*Congratulations to Heather Grubb
(Office of Sciences) and
her husband, Jake, on
the birth of their new
baby girl this spring!
Welcome to Parker Jane!*



*Congratulations to Mohammad
Rashedul "Rashed" Islam
and his wife, Cynthia,
on the birth of their
new little boy this spring!
Welcome to Rian Aadrik Rashed!*



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GSAA/AAPS BULLETIN BOARD

GSAA Officers for 2018-2019:

President: **Md. Sanullah Sajib**
Vice-President: **Ekrum Chowdhury**
Treasurer: **Fatema Tuz Zahra**
Secretary: **Daniela Rolph**
Historian: **Behnaz Lahooti**
International Representative:
Hossam Abdelrahman
Student Senate Representative:
Ali Keshavarz



2018-2019 Officers of the Amarillo AAPS Student Chapter

Chair ♦ **Laxmi Iyer**
Chair-Elect ♦ **Md. Sanullah Sajib**
Vice-Chair ♦ **Ahmed Alobaida**
Treas./Sec. ♦ [tbd]

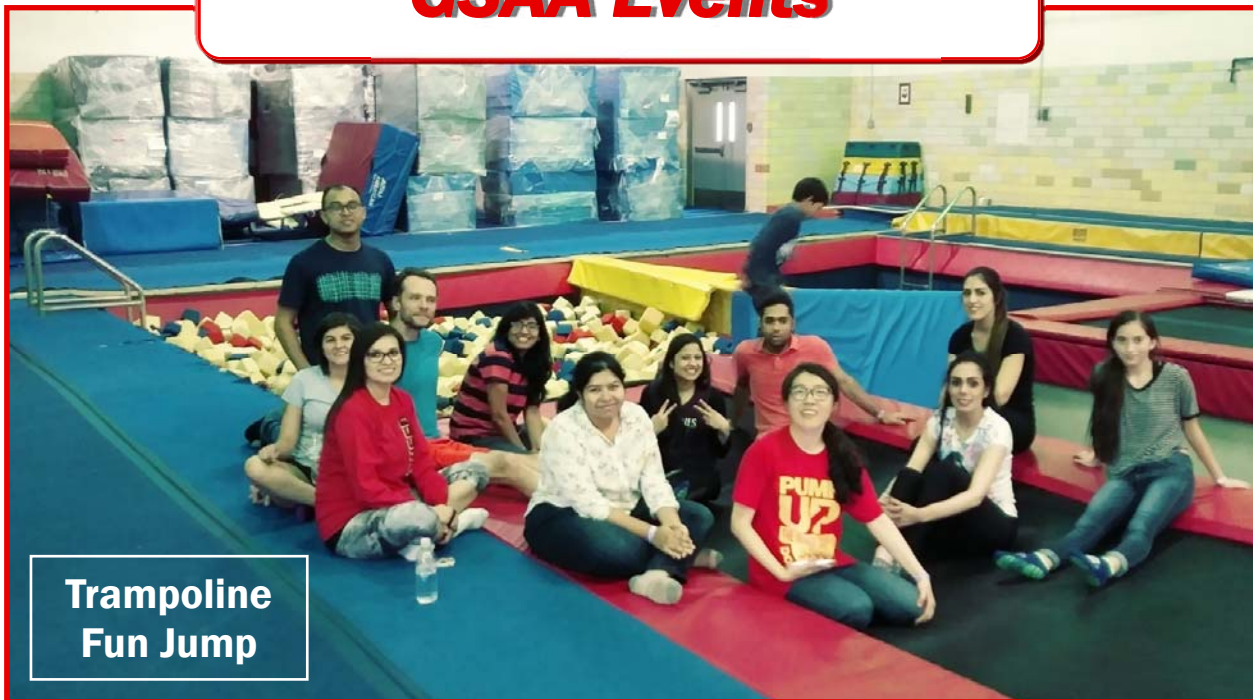
GSSA Members Participated Sp'18:

- *January**
High Plains Children's Home & Family Services,
Tutoring for Children
Movie Day w/Lunch
- *February**
Alive & Aware Health Explosion
Trampoline Fun Jump
- *March**
GSAA Boba Tea & Indian Cuisine Fundraising
Event (for cancer patient)
Ski Trip
- *April**
Snack Pak 4 Kids
International Night

Community Service & Social Events Planned for F'18:

- *September**
Back-to-School Picnic at the Park
- *October**
Amarillo Heart Walk, American Heart Association
Laser Tag
- *November & December**
[tbd]

GSAA Events



Trampoline Fun Jump

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more GSAA Events

Ski Trip



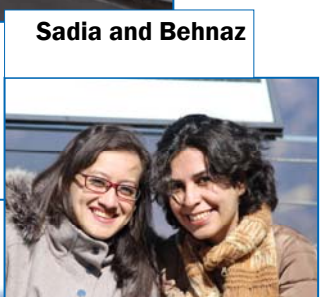
Joey



Ekram (right) and wife, Sadia



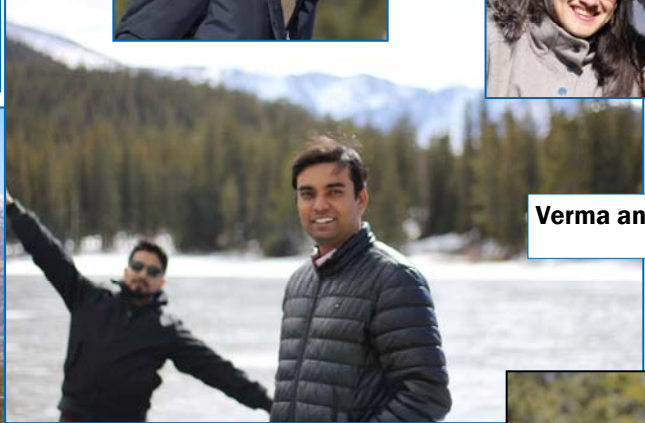
Yoon



Sadia and Behnaz



Ashraf and wife, Husna



Verma and Aditya



Adi, Shuklaji, Ekram, Ashraf and Husna, Verma and Nehal



Morsy and wife, Meiran



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... and more GSAA Events



Ekram, Snehal, Yoon, Nehal, Fatema, Sajib, Shoyaib

International Night



Snehal and Aditya



Ekram, Shoyaib, Sifat, Sajib, Aditya, friend Shuklaji



Ahmed, Sharavan, Iti, Behnaz



Snehal, Aditya, Sharavan, Iti