**UPDATE FROM DR. ABBRUSCATO**

Our Graduate Program in Pharmaceutical Sciences (GPPS) continues to support the research mission of the School of Pharmacy and TTUHSC. In spring and summer of 2010, GPPS graduate students participated in a total of 16 poster and oral presentations at national meetings including Experimental Biology in Anaheim, American Association for Cancer Research in Washington DC, Controlled Release in Portland, and the Gordon Research Conference in New London, NH. In addition, GPPS students had excellent participation in the 9th Annual Research Days with 27 graduate student presenters and Student Research Week in Lubbock with 16 presentations. The graduate students also authored a total of 15 publications thus far in 2010. 2010 has been a super year so far!

New additions to our curriculum have been made including a fall course on Drug Development and Discovery which is led by Dr. Fakhrul Ahsan and a new spring course in Graduate Kinetics by Dr. Reza Mehvar. I am sure the graduate students will benefit greatly from these topics and faculty expertise.

We graduated a total of 3 Ph.D. and 2 M.S students in spring and summer of 2010 and welcomed 10 new Ph.D. students to join our program, increasing our current GPPS enrollment to 43 Ph.D. students. I continue to be amazed by the contributions of the GPPS students and faculty and their collaborative efforts to build scientific research here at the School of Pharmacy and Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences.

**GPPS STUDENTS REPRESENT TTUHSC AT GORDON RESEARCH CONFERENCE**

The prestigious Gordon Research Conference (GRC) on “Barriers of the Central Nervous System” was held at Colby Sawyer College, New Hampshire, on June 20-25, 2010. Prominent blood-brain barrier (BBB) researchers from all over the world attended this conference. The Texas Tech BBB group had a very good representation with Drs. Smith, Bickel, Abbruscato, Lockman and Mark as well as six graduate students. The Gordon-Kenan Research Seminar was held on 19th and 20th of June in conjunction with the main GRC conference at the same venue. This was a unique forum (chaired by Kunal Taskar, Ph.D. candidate in Pharmaceutical Sciences, and Dr. Valeska Reichel) for graduate students, post-docs, and other scientists with comparable levels of experience and education to present and exchange new data and cutting edge ideas. The focus was to encourage young researchers exploring the field of blood-brain interfaces to display their research and methods they use and interact and gain valuable knowledge from the experts in this field. For the GRC Research Seminar, Dr. Joan Abbott was the keynote speaker. Rachita Sumbria and Li Yang were among the few students selected to give a podium presentation in the student’s seminar session. Each student had a chance to present his/her poster, interact and get feedback BBB researchers. Texas Tech was appreciated by many eminent researchers for their quality research and participation at the Gordon Conference.  (See Page 6 for student presentations.)

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**Fall 2010 Issue 6**

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**GSAA EVENTS**

GPPS OFFICE - Suite 217 - 806-356-4015; Fax 356-4021

Dr. Tom Abbruscato, Associate Dean for GSBS, Graduate Program Advisor, Associate Professor, Pharmaceutical Sciences, x 320

Teresa Carlisle, Graduate Program Coordinator, x287

Shari Morris, Graduate Student Advisor, x227

Agonist is published every fall and spring semester by the Graduate Program of Pharmaceutical Sciences (GPPS). For updates and new information, email Shari at shari.morris@ttuhsc.edu.

Click here for deadlines of Current Awards and Scholarships
PH.D. & MASTERS GRADUATES FOR 2010

Spring 2010

Erika Wisdom
Lab of Dr. Thomas Thekkumkara
Thesis Presented March 22, 2010
Acute Hyperglycemia Induced Cellular Alterations in Human Proximal Tubule Epithelial Cells

Professional Information:
AB Analyst
B&W Pantex Plant
U.S. Department of Energy/National Nuclear Security Administration
Amarillo, Texas
erikawisdom@yahoo.com

Summer 2010

Sunny Guin
Lab of Dr. Ming-Hai Wang
Dissertation Presented June 4, 2010
Development of Immunoliposome based Therapeutics Targeting RON Receptor Tyrosine Kinase Overexpressed by Colon and Breast Cancer Cells under Normoxic and Hypoxic Conditions

Professional Information:
Postdoctoral Fellow, Lab of Dr. Dan Theodorescu
Anschutz Medical Campus
University of Colorado
13001 E. 17th PL, Bldg 500, Suite C6004
P.O. Box 6511, MS F434
Aurora, CO 80045
sunny.guin@ucdenver.edu

Summer 2010

Ridhi Parasrampuria
Lab of Dr. Reza Mehvar
Dissertation Presented June 9, 2010
Hepatobiliary Disposition of Uptake and Efflux Substrates in the Isolated Perfused Rat Livers

Professional Information:
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The State University of New York
University at Buffalo
Cooke Hall, North Campus
Buffalo, NY 14260
ridhiprp@gmail.com

Summer 2010

Vamshi Manda
Lab of Dr. Paul Lockman
Dissertation Presented June 28, 2010
Drug-drug Interaction between Nicotine and HIV-Protease Inhibitor Saquinavir at the Blood-brain Barrier

Professional Information:
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The State University of New York
University at Buffalo
Cooke Hall, North Campus
Buffalo, NY 14260
mandavamshi@gmail.com

Summer 2010

Sarah Willis
Lab of Dr. James Stoll
Thesis Presented June 17, 2010
The Effect of Anaplerotic Diet in Epilepsy Models

Professional Information:
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1300 Coulter
Amarillo, TX 79106
sarah.willis@ttuhsc.edu

SUMMER 2010

DISSERTATIONS for FALL 2010

Arun Satelli—Wed; 10/13/10; 10:30 am -11:30 pm; AM 107/ABI 1130/LUB 2B480
Raj Mittapalli—Fri; 10/15/10; 10:00 am - 11:00 am; AM 107/ABI 1130/LUB 2C101
Vivek Gupta—Wed, 10/20/10; 10:30 am - 11:30 am; AM 107/ABI 1130/LUB 2C101
Kunal Taskar—Fri; 10/22/10; 1:00 pm - 2:00 pm; AM 107/ABI 1130/LUB ACB110
Rachita Sumbria—Mon; 10/25/10; 9:00 am - 10:00 am; AM 107/ABI 1130/LUB 2C101
Li Yang—Wed; 10/27/10; 10:30 am - 11:30 am; AM 107/ABI 1130/LUB 2C101
CONVOCATION MAY 21, 2010
LUBBOCK, TEXAS

Dr. Thomas Abbruscato (representing Dr. Reza Mehvar) places hood on Imam Shaik (F09)

Nikhil Vad (Sum09) receives his hood from Dr. Majid Moridani

Erika Wisdom (Sp10) waits for her mentor, Dr. Thomas Thekkumkara

L to R: Dr. Jayarama Gunaje, Dr. Majid Moridani, Dr. Lloyd Alfonso, Dr. Nikhil Vad, Dr. Imam Shaik, Dr. Thomas Abbruscato, Erika Wisdom, Dr. Thomas Thekkumkara

Dr. Jayarama Gunaje places hood on Lloyd Alfonso (Sum09)

L to R: Shari Morris, Erika, Nikhil, Teresa Carlisle, Lloyd and Imam

Graduation Dinner with graduates, family, mentors and GPPS staff in Lubbock

NEW STUDENTS FOR 2010

Rajiv Balyan, M.S. Biomedical 
& Veterinary Science
Summer 2010
Lab: Dr. Majid Moridani

Manoj Banjara, B Tech in Biotechnology
Fall 2010
Lab: Dr. James Stoll (Rotation)

Raktima Bhattacharya, Ph.D.
Fall 2010
Lab: Dr. Ulrich Bickel

Vindhya Edpuganti, B.Pharm.
Summer 2010
Lab: Dr. Reza Mehvar

Alejandra Fernandez, B.S. in Biochem/Mol Bio
Fall 2010
Lab: Dr. James Stoll

L to R (back row) - Rajiv Balyan, Rashed Islam, Sharad Sharma, Nilesh Gupta, Manoj Banjara
L to R (front row) - Kamrun Nahar, Alejandra Fernandez, Raktima Bhattacharya, Vindhya Edpuganti, Subhasree Nag

Nilesh Gupta, B.Pharm.
Summer 2010
Lab: Dr. Fakhrul Ahsan

Md. Rashedul Islam, M.Pharm
Fall 2010
Lab: Dr. Thomas Abbruscato

Subhasree Nag, M.Pharm.
Fall 2010
Lab: Dr. Ruiwen Zhang (Rotation)

Kamrun Nahar, M.Pharm.
Fall 2010
Lab: Dr. Fakhrul Ahsan

Sharad Sharma, B.Pharm.
Fall 2010
Lab: Dr. Ming-Hai Wang

♥Brijesh Patel & Khyati Patel
5/22/10 * India

♥Sunny Guin & Indrani Nayak
5/25/2010 * India

♥Satya Goda & Vijaysri Nannapaneni
8/14/2010 * California
At SRW 2010 sponsored by the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences in Lubbock, there were 22 poster entries in the category of basic science, senior researchers, 16 of which represented our GPPS student body!


2nd place—Arun Satelli. “Galectin-4 is a tumor suppressor and its loss correlates with the onset and progression of colorectal cancer”

3rd place—Rachita Sumbria. “Cerebral metabolic depression associated with acute microdialysis probe implantation”

Presenters at SRW

Satyanarayana Goda, Helen Thorshiem, Thomas J Abbruscato, and Quentin R Smith. “Quantification of loop diuret permeability at the blood-brain barrier by in situ perfusion and liquid chromatography - tandem mass spectrometry”

Vivek Gupta and Fakhrl Ahsan. “Respirable PLGA Microspheres of PGE1-HP-β-CD Complex for PAH Treatment”


Siva Koganti and Thomas Thekkumkara. “2-Methoxy Estradiol Mediated Downregulation of Angiotsin Type 1 Receptor Expression”

Shashi Kudugunti, Nikhil Vad, Moridani. “In-vitro and in-vivo investigation of Caffeic acid Phenethyl Ester (CAPE) prodrug as an anti-melanoma agent”

Md. Mamunnur Rashid, Li Yang, Thiruma V. Arumugam, Thomas J. Abbruscato, Vardan T. Karamyan. “The non-AT1, non-AT2 angiotensin binding site plays a role in neuronal cell death”

Vinay Rudraraju, Kunal Taskar, Rajendar Mittapalli, Kaci Bohn, Christopher Adkins, Paul Lockman, Diane Palmieri, Patricia Steeg, and Quentin R. Smith. “Doxorubicin distribution in brain metastases of breast cancer”


Russell Snyder, Prabhath Biju, Rekha Yesudas and Thomas Thekkumkara. “Retinoic Acid, A Novel Transcriptional Repressor of AT1R”

Hussaini Syed Sha Qhattal, Xini Liu. CD44 mediated tumor targeting using hyaluronan conjugated liposomes. (Continued in next column)
Sixty-six presenters participated in the Ninth Annual Research Days, which took place on Tuesday, June 15th and Wednesday, June 16th on the SOP Amarillo campus. The keynote speaker on Tuesday was the newly appointed president of TTUHSC, Dr. Ted Mitchell. The annual dinner and social followed at the Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum in Canyon. The results of the presentation judging were announced Wednesday afternoon as follows:

≈ Department of Biomedical Sciences ≈

1st Place - Prabodh Kandala
2nd Place – Snehal Padhye
3rd Place - Bhavna Verma
3rd Place - Parul Gupta

≈ Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences ≈

1st Place - Kunal Taskar
2nd Place – Chris Adkins
3rd Place - Rachita Sumbria

Research Days poster presentations follow on the next page.
**Agonist**

**NINTH ANNUAL RESEARCH DAYS**

**PRESENTATIONS**

(*Award winners*)

Mohammad Shahriraul Ahsar, Suna Choi, Young Min Kwon. “Targeted and Triggered Release of Tissue Plasminogen Activator (tPA) for Safer Thrombolytic Therapy”

*Adkins CE*, Mittapalli RK, Manda VK, Taskar KS, Bohn KA, Rudraraju V, Smith QU, Lockman PR. “Heterogeneous Permeability and P-glycoprotein Function in Pre-Clinical Brain Metastases of Breast Cancer”


V.C. Pillai and R. Mehvar. “Inhibitory Effects of Tannic Acid on Cytochrome-P450 Reductase (CPR) is Confounded by Its Ability to Directly Reduce Cytochrome C”

Raghavender Chivukula, Srinivasan Marimuthu, Lloyd F. Alfonso, Jayarama B. Gunajee. “Aspirin Acetylates p53 and Inhibits Camptothecin Induced p21 in Colon Cancer Cells”

Satyanarayana Goda, Helen R. Thorsheim, Thomas J. Abbruscato and Quentin R. Smith. “Restricted Brain Distribution of Bumetanide is Mediated by Active Efflux Transporters (Rat Oatp2 & OAT3) at the Blood-Brain Barrier”

*Parul Gupta* and Sanjay K. Srivastava. “Phenethyl Isothiocyanate Suppress the Growth of Breast Cancer Cells by Inhibiting EGFR and Her-2”

*Prabodh K. Kandala*, Kartick C. Pramanik, Srinivas Reddy Boreddy and Sanjay K. Srivastava. “3,3’-Diindolylmethane (DIM)-Induced Apoptosis in Ovarian Tumors is Mediated by Inhibition of EGFR-ERK Pathway”


Sivaramakrishna Koganti, Thomas Thekkumkara. “2-Methoxy Estradiol Mediated Downregulation of Angiotensin Type 1 Receptor Expression”

Shashi Kudugunti, Helen Thorsheim, Quentin Smith, Majid Moridani. “Bioactivation of Caffeic Acid Penethyl Ester Prodrug by Tyrosinase Inhibits Human Glutathione S-transferase and Case Selective Toxicity to Melanoma Cells”


Brijeshkumar Patel, Vivek Gupta and Falkhrul Ahsan. “PEG-PLGA Microparticles of Low Molecular Weight”

Md. Mamunur Rashid, li Yan, Thiruma V. Arumugam, Thomas J. Abbruscato, Vardan T. Karamyan. “Association of the Novel Non-AT1, Non-AT2 Angiotensin Binding Site with Neuronal Cell Death in Mouse MCAO Model of Stroke”

Ramakrishna Samala, Kunal Taskar, Vinay Rudraraju, Kaci Bohn, Rajendran Mittapalli, Amanda Roberts, Helen Thorsheim, Paul Lockman and Quentin Smith. “Free Drug Concentration in Metastatic Brain Tumors”


Russell Snyder, Thomas Thekkumkara. “Novel Mechanism for 13-cis Retinoic Acid Mediated Angiotensin Type 1 Receptor Downregulation”


Hussaini Syed Sha Qhattal, Xinli Liu. “Molecular Weight and Grafting Density of Hyaluronan Determines CD44 Mediated Tumor Cell Uptake of Hyaluronan-Functionalized Nanoliposomes”


*Bhavna Verma*, Jon Weidanz. “TCRm Antibodies Against Peptide/HLA Complexes Represent a Novel Class of Therapeutic Antibodies for Targeting Cancer”


Yan Xu, Jon A. Weidanz, Ulrich Bickel. “Brain Uptake and Pharmacokinetic Studies on Transgenic Mice Models”


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**Barriers of the CNS, Gordon Research Conferences**

at Colby-Sawyer College, New London, NH

Gordon-Kenan Research Seminar, 6/19-20/10

**Blood/Brain Interfaces in Health & Disease, 6/20-25/10**

Satyanarayana Goda, Helen R. Thorsheim, Thomas J. Abbruscato and Quentin R. Smith. “Restricted Brain Distribution of Bumetanide is Mediated by Active Efflux Transporters (Rat Oatp2 & OAT3) at the Blood-Brain Barrier”


Yan Xu, Jon A. Weidanz, Ulrich Bickel. “Brain Uptake and Pharmacokinetic Studies on Transgenic Mice Models”

L. Yang, K.K. Shah, T.J. Abbruscato. “Characterization of the Neuroprotective Effects of Biphalin, a Potent Opioid Receptor Agonist, in Focal Brain Ischemia”
GRADUATE STUDENT SEMINAR PROGRAM - SPRING 2010

1/13/10 - Erika Wisdom - “Cell Signaling in Acute Hyperglycemia Induced Apoptosis Human Proximal Tubule Epithelial Cells”
1/13/10 - Bhavna Verma - “RL4B TCR Mimic Monoclonal Antibody Targets Specific Peptide/HLA Class I and Retards Tumor Growth In-Vivo Using Breast Cancer Models”
1/20/10 - Snehal Padhye - “RON Targeted Doxorubicin Immunoliposomes for Pancreatic Cancer Stem like Cell Toxicity”
1/27/10 - Russell Snyder - “Retinoic Acid, A Novel Transcriptional Repressor of AT1R”
2/3/10 - Md. Mamunur Rashid - “The Novel Non-AT1, Non-AT2 Angiotensin Binding Site Plays A role in Neuronal Cell Death”
2/3/10 - Hussaini Syed Sha Qhattal - “Formulation Optimization of Nanoliposomes and Nanoemulsions Containing Antineoplastic Agents”
2/10/10 - Venkateswaran Chithambaram Pillai - “NADPH-Cytochrome P450 Reductase: Functional Perspectives and Gene Silencing Approach”
2/10/10 - Arun Satelli - “Galectin-4, a Differentiation Biomarker of Colorectal Epithelial Cells, Exhibits Tumor Suppressor Properties”
2/17/10 - Kunal Taskar - “Pharmacokinetics and Pharmacodynamics of Paclitaxel in an Experimental Brain Metastases Animal Model”
2/17/10 - Rachita Sumbria - “Microdialysis in a murine stroke model”
2/24/10 - Shuangling Zhang - “The Effects of Acute Phase Proteins in the Brain Microvasculature”
3/17/10 - Md. (Abir) Absar - “Targeted and Triggered Release of Tissue Plasminogen Activator (tPA) for Safer Thrombolytic Therapy”
3/17/10 - Kaci Bohn - “Tumor Vasculature Alterations in Brain Metastases of Breast Cancer”
3/24/10 - Chris Adkins - “Blood-Brain Barrier Integrity in a Parkinson’s Disease Rat Model”
3/31/10 - Sunny Guin - “Chronic Hypoxia Induced Down-Regulation of RON and MET Receptor Tyrosine Kinases as a Mechanism of Acquired Resistance to Specific Tyrosine Kinase Inhibitor”
3/31/10 - Ramakrishna Samala - “Novel Methods to Estimate Active Drug Concentration in Brain Tumors and Correlate with Activity in-vitro”
5/5/10 - Naomi Wangler - “Isolation and Identification of the Non-AT1 Non-AT2 Ang II Binding Site”

The 10-week 2010 Amarillo Biomedical Research Internship Program Concluded July 30

with a day of poster presentations and awards followed by a luncheon. The mission of the ABRI Program is to foster interest in the Graduate Program in Pharmaceutical Sciences among promising and gifted students considering graduate studies leading to research careers in biomedical sciences. Below are the ABRI students, mentors and their poster presentation:

John Fullerton - Dr. Majid Moridani - John Fullerton, Shashi Kudugunti, Rajiv Balyan, Majid Moridani. “Synthesis of Nine Novel Acetyloxybenzoic Acid Derivatives as Anti-Melanoma Agents”
Ricardo Leveck - Dr. James Stoll - Ricardo Leveck, James Stoll. “Thiamine Transport by BOCT1 and BOCT2”
Tri Salihima - Dr. Xiny Li - Tri Salihima, Hussaini Syed Sha Qhattal, Xiny Li. “High Performance Liquid Chromatography - UV Detection and Quantitation of Cellular Uptake of Benzyl Isothiocyantate Nanoemulsion”
Angela Vela - Dr. Karen Mark - Angela Vela, Jill Roberts and Karen Mark. “Inflammatory Model of Liver Fibrosis in the Rat”

Binod Banjara

Angela Vela

Tri Salihima (L)

Ricardo Leveck (L front) & John Fullerton (R)

Hezhen Wang


**AWARDS & SCHOLARSHIPS**

- **Kaci Bohn**—TTUHSC Phonathon/Thankathon Scholarship for 2010 - $750
- **Prabodh Kandala**—Mary Lou Clements Scholarship for 2010 - $500
- **Russell Snyder**—American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology (ASBMB) Best Thematic Poster; themed “Hypertension: Treatment, Disparities and Molecular Mechanisms”; presented at Experimental Biology, Anaheim, April 2010 - $500
- **Arun Satelli**—Biotechnology Travel Scholarship from American Association of Pharmaceutical Sciences for AAPS Conference in LA (2009) - $750; Student Scholar’s Award for Young Research Scientists from American Association of Indian Pharmaceutical Sciences to attend the American Association of Pharmaceutical Sciences (AAPS) in Los Angeles (2009) - $500; 2010 Graduate Student Symposium Award in Biotechnology from AAPS to be presented in New Orleans.
- **Sarah Willis**—Double T Star-Spangled Scholarship
- **Venki Chithambaram Pillai**
- **Satya Goda**
- **Sunny Guin**
- **Vivek Gupta**
- **Shashi Kudugunti**
- **Vamsi Manda**
- **Raj Mittapalli**
- **Vinay Rudraraju**
- **Arun Satelli**
- **Kaushik Shah**
- **Rachita Sumbria**
- **Kunal Taskar**
- **Li Yang**
- **Yan Xu**
- **Bhavna Verma**

**AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF PHARMACEUTICAL SCIENCES SCHOLARSHIPS FOR 2010**

Given by the Graduate Student Association of Amarillo

- Vivek Gupta - $750
- Shashi Kudugunti - $750
- Arun Satelli - $1000+Registration

**AAPS TRAVELSHIPS FOR 2010 Annual Meeting & Exposition, New Orleans, LA**

- Vivek Gupta - $750
- Shashi Kudugunti - $750
- Arun Satelli - $1000+Registration
- Kunal Taskar - $750
- Bhavna Verma - $750
- Li Yang - $750
- Yan Xu - $750

**SCHOOL OF PHARMACY**

**RECOGNIZING EXCELLENCE**

**Honors for Students, Faculty & Staff**

Drs. Mehvar & Bickel (Dr. Miller - Abilene) receive an award from Siva Koganti for the Graduate Student Teaching Team of the Year.

Faculty members L to R: Dr. Ulrich Bickel, Dr. Sanjay Srivastava, Dr. Reza Mehvar, Dr. Xinli Liu, Dr. Young Min Kwon

**New Department Contacts**

- **Department of Pharmaceutical Sciences** - SOP Suite 309; 806-356-4015
  Unit Supervisor - Desmon Dunn, x245. Coordinator - Janie Rogers, x247
- **Department of Biomedical Sciences** - SOP Suite 309; 806-356-4015
  Unit Supervisor - Marty Stephens, x241.
COMMUNITY SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES

GPPS students participated in:
* Highland Park High School Science Fair poster judging—March 12th
* TTUHSC School of Pharmacy Medication Clean Out—March 27
* PharmD & Student Senate clothing drive
* Casino Night fundraiser for St. Jude’s Children’s Research Hospital—May

CRAZY FUN WITH GSAA

GSAA General Body Meetings
12:15 -1:15 pm
10/19/10; 11/30/10

GSAA Officers 2010-2011
L to R, Back Row:
Secretary—Ameya Paranjpe
International Officer—Abir Absar
Vice-President—Brijesh Patel
L to R, Front Row:
Historian—Parul Gupta
Student Senate Office—Chris Adkins
President—Naomi Wangler
Treasurer—Pooja Naik

AAPS Officers 2010-2011
Chair—Kunal Taskar
Chair-Elect—Satya Goda
Vice-Chair—Hussaini Syed
Shah Qhattal
Treasurer—Prabodh Kandala