UPDATE FROM DR. AHSAN

Last Fall was a busy semester for our program — full of academic and social events. For the first time in our program, we had three speakers from three different pharmaceutical companies, who presented seminars and spoke with our students regarding interview skills and career opportunities at pharmaceutical companies. Ms. Harrell, Dr. Patton and Dr. Gibbs talked about regulatory affairs, entrepreneurship and pharmacokinetic modelings, respectively. Three students (Ameya, Abir and Brijesh) defended their doctoral dissertations, and three new students (Faleh, Laxmi and Amer) joined the program. Faleh and Amer are the first two students from Saudi Arabia to join our student body, which is predominantly international. Let's congratulate our graduating students, and wish the best of luck to our new students! Five graduate students received travel awards to attend various national meetings. Congratulations to Abir, Neel, Parul, Rashed and Sukesh for their receipt of those awards! The program and students have organized or participated in a number of social events, which include the 2013 AAPS Alumni and Friends Reception in San Antonio, Texas, the Women in Science Endeavor, the AHA Heart Walk, the JDRF Walk, a picnic and bowling. We would like to thank Dean Smith for his support to organize the Alumni Reception at the AAPS 2013 meeting. Overall, Fall 2013 was a mix of hard work and fun!

GPPS Graduate Students Benefit from Distinguished Speakers

Our Fall 2013 semester got off to a great early start with outstanding guest speakers. On 8/16/2013, we were privileged to have Kay Mary Harrell, R.Ph., J.D., Senior Director, Regulatory Affairs, DPT Laboratories, Ltd. of San Antonio, TX, who presented information on “Regulatory Affairs and Drug Development”.

In the same month on 08/28/2013, we were honored to have John Patton, Ph.D., President and CEO, Dance Pharmaceuticals, Inc. of San Francisco, CA. He presented research on “Marine Biology to Inhaled Insulin”.

Later in the fall on 10/16/2013, we had very helpful input from Megan Gibbs, B.Sc.Pharm., Ph.D., F.C.P., Executive Director, Pharmacokinetics and Drug Metabolism, Amgen Inc. of Thousand Oaks, CA. She presented "Opportunities in Industry: Career Development" and "Modeling and Simulation to Impact on Decision Making in Early Development".
Ameya Paranjpe  
Lab of Dr. Kalkunte S. Srivenugopal  
Dissertation Presented  
October 11, 2013  
"Redox-based Repurposed Drugs as Potent and Rational Inhibitors of the Human DNA Repair Protein MGMT for Increased Efficacy of Anticancer Alkylating Agents"

Nina Blakeman  
Lab of Dr. Margaret Weis  
Friday, March 14, 2014 at 9:00 am  
AMA SOP 335  
ABI SOP 1130  
LUB ACB 120

Parul Gupta  
Lab of Dr. Sanjay Srivastava  
Thursday, March 20, 2014 at 3:30 pm  
AMA SOP 107  
ABI SOP 1130  
LUB ACB 230

Graduate Program in Pharmaceutical Sciences  
Class of 2013-2014

New Students for Spring 2014  
(left to right):  
Faleh Alqahtani, B.Pharm.  
King Saud University  
Riyadh, Saudi Arabia  
Lab: Dr. Ulrich Bickel  
Laxmi Iyer, B.Pharm.  
Nirma University  
Ahmedabad, India  
Lab: Dr. Thomas Thekkumkara  
Amer Alali, B.Pharm.  
King Saud University  
Riyadh, Saudi Arabia  
Lab: Dr. Xinli Liu
WiSE - WOMEN IN SCIENCE ENDEAVORS
By Alejandra Fernandez & Pooja Naik

Women in Science Endeavors (WiSE) is a community event that organizes interactive science workshops to encourage middle school girls from Amarillo, Canyon and surrounding areas to pursue a career in math or science. This year’s 25th Anniversary WiSE Conference was held October 19th at Amarillo College, where 18 different experimental workshops were demonstrated to middle school girls.

On behalf of Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center, Alejandra Fernandez, Amanda Whiteside and Pooja Naik presented three sessions about emulsification, the science of lotions. In their workshop, they showed the girls how to prepare lotions. The girls got to mix the ingredients, while learning the importance of each one of them. Once they chose their favorite scents, they got to make and name their own lotions, and take them home. They were very excited not just to do hands-on preparations, but also to learn the science behind it. The workshop taught the girls the process of emulsification, and the biology of our sensory system and brain in understanding the different kinds of smell.

WiSE is an important program for young girls because they come to realize that women can really make a difference in the sciences and that this field comprises everything from making bubbles to making medicines. More importantly, the girls leave thinking that science can be fun.

AWARDS & SCHOLARSHIPS

Shahriar Absar — American Association of Pharmaceutical Scientists, Graduate Student Symposium Award in Drug Discovery and Development and Interface, Selected for Podium Presentation, Travel Support Award, $1,000.00, Fall 2013

Neel Fofaria — AACR-NCI-EORTC International Conference on Molecular Targets and Cancer Therapeutics, Scholar-in-Training Travel Award, $600.00, Fall 2013

Parul Gupta — Lone Star Regional Chapter of the Society of Toxicology, Travel Support Award, $170.00, Fall 2013

Parul Gupta — Lone Star Regional Chapter of the Society of Toxicology, Charles River Award, $100.00, Fall 2013

Parul Gupta — GSBS Dean’s Scholar Award, $5,000.00 per year for duration of her degree plan, Dec. 2013

Mohammad R Islam — American Association of Pharmaceutical Scientists, Graduate Student Symposium in Drug Discovery and Development and Interface, Selected for Podium Presentation, Travel Support Award, $1,000.00, Fall 2013

Benard Ogola — Office of Institutional Planning and Assessment Scholarship, $500.00, Fall 2013

Sukesh Voruganti — AAPS DDDI (Drug Discovery & Development Interface) Section Travel Award, $500.00, Fall 2013
GRADUATE STUDENT SEMINAR PROGRAM - FALL 2013

8/16/13 - Guest Speaker: Kay Mary Harrell, R.Ph., J.D., Senior Director, Regulatory Affairs at DPT Laboratories, Ltd. - “Regulatory Affairs and Drug Development”

8/21/13 - Kamrun Nahar - “Inhalable peptide-decorated nanocarrier for targeting pulmonary vascularity”

8/28/13 - Guest Speaker: John Patton, Ph.D., Dance Pharmaceuticals - “Marine Biology to Inhaled Insulin”

9/4/13 - Manoj Banjara - “Lipocalin-2 is a Marker for Neuronal Cell Death in Sterile Neuroinflammation”

9/11/13 - Jee Hyun Park - “Establishing a Brain Metastasis Model for Evaluating TCRm Therapeutics”

9/18/13 - Parul Gupta - “Decoding the Molecular & Cellular Mechanisms of HER2 in Breast Cancer Metastasis”

9/18/13 - Sharad Sharma - “mTOR Inhibition Prevents BMS-777607 Induced Chemoresistance in Breast Cancer Cells by Suppressing Polyploidy and Senescence”

9/25/13 - Kito Barrow - “Improving the Efficacy of Taxane Drugs with Methylseleninic Acid in the Treatment of Castration-Resistant Prostate Cancer”

9/25/13 - Neel Fofaria - “STAT-3 induces anoikis resistance, promotes cell migration and metastatic potential in cancer cells”

10/2/13 - Guest Speaker: Harvinder Gill, Ph.D., TTU Lubbock - “Engineering Micro and Nanosystems for Mucosal Vaccination”


10/9/13 - Nina Blakeman - “The Interplay Between eNOS Palmitoylation and Phosphorylation: The Triacsin C Effect”

10/16/13 - Guest Speaker: Megan Gibbs - B.Sc.Pharm, Ph.D., F.C.P., Amgen, Inc. - “Modeling and Simulation to Impact on Decision Making in Early Development”


10/30/13 - Faculty Speaker: Jinhui Zhang, Ph.D., TTUHSC Amarillo - “Clinical pharmacokinetics of cancer chemopreventive phytochemicals from Angelica gigas Nakai (AGN) - Starting a journey in translational research”


11/6/13 - Alok Ranjan - “Repurposing antipsychotic drug ‘Penfluridol’ for cancer treatment”

11/13/13 - Guest Speaker: Barry Maurer, M.D., Ph.D., TTUHSC Lubbock - “Anticancer Cytotoxicity of Dihydroceramides - Clinical Translation”

11/20/13 - Raktima Bhattacharya - “Targeted Delivery of NFkB Decoys Protects Brain Endothelial Monolayers against Hypoxia/Reoxygenation Injury”

11/20/13 - A.G.M. Mostofa - “Primary resistance to polyploidy induction as a mechanism of chemosensitivity in BMS-777607-treated colorectal cancer cells”

12/4/13 - Md. Rashedul Islam - “Screening biphelin peptide analogs for their neuroprotective potential in models of ischemia”

12/4/13 - Raghavender Chivukula - “Studying TCR mimic monoclonal antibodies in immunocompetent mouse tumor models”
Biomedical Engineering Society Annual Meeting
September 25-28, 2013
Seattle, WA

• Nilesh Gupta, Shahriar Absar and Fakhrul Ahsan. "Targeted inhalable Pegylated lipidic nanomicelles containing fasudil: formulation and characterization."

American Association for Cancer Research, Molecular Targets and Cancer Therapeutics
October 19-23, 2013 * Boston, MA

• Neel M. Fofaria and Sanjay K. Srivastava. "Over-expression of STAT-3 induces anoikis resistance, promotes cell migration and metastatic potential in cancer cells."

AAPS * November 10-14, 2013 * San Antonio, TX


Lone Star Regional Chapter of the Society of Toxicology
October 18, 2013 * Lubbock, TX

• Parul Gupta and Sanjay K. Srivastava. "Natural compound cucurbitacin B inhibits metastatic breast cancer through HER2 suppression."

Society for Neuroscience Annual Meeting
November 9-13, 2013 * San Diego, CA

• Manoj Banjara, Katie Bennett, Alejandra Fernandez, and James Stoll. "Lipocalin-2 induction in sterile neuroinflammation: a marker for neuronal cell death."

Society for Free Radical Biology and Medicine
November 20-24, 2013 * San Antonio, TX

• Pooja Naik, Ravi Saaja, Shikha Prasad and Luca Cucullo. "Oxidative and Proinflammatory Impact of Tobacco Smoke Products on Blood Brain Barrier Endothelial Cells."

• Mohammad R Islam, Adriano Mollica, Yeon Lee, Victor Hruby and Thomas J Abbruscato. "Screening biphalin peptide analogs for their neuroprotective potential in models of ischemia."


• Sharad Sharma, Ruwen Zhang, Ming Wang. "mTOR Inhibitor AZD8055 Prevents BMS-777607 Induced Chemoresistance in Breast Cancer Cells by Blocking Development of Polyploidy and Senescence."

• Sukesh Voruganti, Jiang-Jiang Qin, Wei Wang, Ming-Hai Wang, John K. Buolamwini, and Ruwen Zhang. "Novel Small Molecule MDM2 Inhibitors for Pancreatic Cancer Therapy."


Each year, Student Research Week (SRW) provides a platform for students and faculty across the Texas Tech system and regional universities to showcase their research. This is a golden opportunity for various science disciplines to come together and interact in a professional environment, to facilitate exchange of ideas, promote their excellent research facilities and stimulate collaborations, together, progressing towards the advancement of science. The theme for the 2014 SRW is Molecular Imaging: Advancing Diagnostics, with emphasis on promoting the united efforts among researchers and clinical practitioners, leading to the use of molecular imaging in quality research and healthcare applications. This event will highlight this rapidly advancing method of medicine which will undoubtedly reshape the future of all medical professions. To encourage this endeavor, the Lubbock Graduate Student Association (GSA) will be hosting two eminent personalities from the field of fluorescent protein research and development of diagnostic applications. There will be two Keynote Speakers on Friday. The 11:00 am presentation will be by Martin L. Chalfie, Ph.D., 2008 Chemistry Nobel Laureate, William R. Kenan Jr. Professor and Chair of Biological Sciences, Columbia University. The 1:00 pm session will be presented by Lee Josephson, Ph.D., Associate Professor, Department of Radiology, Harvard Medical School and Associate Professor, Center for Translational Nuclear Medicine and Molecular Imaging Research, Massachusetts General Hospital.

UPCOMING CONFERENCES

Thirteenth Annual School of Pharmacy Research Days
TTUHSC Amarillo and Amarillo ~ Research Presentations
Civic Center Heritage Room ~ Annual Dinner

~~~ June 5 - 6, 2014 ~~~

Watch your e-mail for further information from Office of Sciences.

The 10-week 2014 Amarillo Biomedical Research Internship Program will begin the end of May and run through the beginning of August. Applications will be accepted until Saturday, March 15, 2014. Interested undergraduate students are encouraged to apply. Contact Teresa Carlisle by e-mail at Teresa.Carlisle@ttuhsc.edu.
Spring 2014, Issue 13

GSAA BULLETIN BOARD

GPPS students participated (Fall 2013) in:
* Back to School Event
* JDRF Walk to Cure Diabetes
* AHA Heart Walk
* Clothing Drive for Salvation Army
* GSAA Picnic
* GSAA New Student Orientation & Bowling

Planned Community Events:
* Salvation Army Soup Kitchen Aide
* Volunteering at Ronald McDonald House in Amarillo

Spring 2014 Social Events:
* Lights-Out Miniature Golf — January 25
* International Night — February 22
* Hockey Night — March 8
* Colorado Ski Trip — March 21-23, 2014
  (for more info, contact Rashed Islam,
  GSAA President, rashedul.islam@ttuhsc.edu)
* 1990’s Costume Party — April 11

Shikha married
Rishi Rahangdale
12/10/2013
in Seoni,
Madhya Pradesh, India

Born to Shabana and Hussaini Syed Sha Qhattal on 01/07/2014
Umar Syed, 7.7 lbs, 20”

Born to Charetta West and Chris Tucker on 10/13/2013
Cali Jazele, 6.5 lbs, 19”

*For more detailed information on an alumni OR for any changes/additions, please contact the Graduate Program Office.

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2013
2014

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* For more detailed information on an alumni OR for any changes/additions, please contact the Graduate Program Office.