

Agonist

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



**Fall 2017
Issue 20**

UPDATE FROM DR. AHSAN



.In spring semester, four of our graduate students – Alok Ranjan, Shikha, Jee Hyun Park and Benard Ogola – successfully defended their dissertations and launched into their new careers. In May, we were happy to witness the hooding of Alok, Shikha, Jee Hyun and Benard as they officially graduated. Also among them were Jahidur Rashid and Tanvirul Hye, who completed their doctoral work in the summer and fall of 2016, respectively. We missed Debasish Basak, who defended his dissertation in fall 2016, in the graduation ceremony. Alok Ranjan was chosen to be a GSBS Outstanding Graduate Student, and was one of the two chosen who spoke at the May Convocation. He spoke about the surprises he found when he came to our Amarillo campus, and the people he met in both the good times and bad times. One of our recent graduates, Dr. Hye, recently joined TTUHSC as an assistant professor at our Abilene Campus. We are proud of all our graduates and wish them the very best in the future.

This fall semester, we received four new Ph.D. students and four new M.S. students into the full swing of coursework and lab training. Hossameldin Abdelrahman, Sarah (Woods) Anderson, Derek Barthels and Saeideh Nozohouri have all begun their Ph.D. work, and Racheal Akwii, Kinzie Sherrill, Nausheen Syeera and Juan Valdez are each pursuing their M.S. We are hoping for great success in all their studies here.

In addition to celebrating graduation and welcoming new students, our students have continued to publish, to present, and to receive awards and scholarships during the past semester. Many of our students were also involved in volunteering for extra activities that benefit others. Students took part in many events with a desire to give back to the community and help improve the overall health of people in the area. As such, students are participating at events to benefit local organizations, including the High Plains Food Bank, Ramps Across Texas, Eveline Rivers, the Salvation Army and Goodwill. Several of our students are also involved in events supporting some of the medical research organizations that are so directly related to our work, such as the March of Dimes' March for Babies, the Panhandle Cancer Cure Foundation; and the American Heart Association's Amarillo Heart Walk. Overall, our students have been quite busy with both academic and extracurricular activities.

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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 2017 Graduates



Alok Ranjan, Ph.D.
 Lab of Dr. Sanjay Srivastava
Dissertation Presented
 December 7, 2016
 "Penfluridol, an antipsychotic drug for cancer therapy"



Shikha, Ph.D.
 Lab of Dr. Luca Cucullo
Dissertation Presented
 January 27, 2017
 "Role of Nrf2 and Protective Effects of Metformin Against Cigarette Smoke-Induced Cerebrovascular Toxicity"

Jee Hyun Park, Ph.D.
 Lab of Dr. Ulrich Bickel

Dissertation Presented
 March 24, 2017

"Potential Immunotherapy of Breast Cancer Brain Metastases with a TCR Mimic Antibody"



Benard Ogola, Ph.D.
 Lab of Dr. Thomas Thekkumkara

Dissertation Presented
 March 29, 2017

"2-Methoxyestradiol Mediated Angiotensin Type 1 Receptor Down-regulation: A Paradigm Shift in Estrogenic Effects on Cardiovascular System"



Summer/Fall 2017 Dissertations

A.G.M. Mostofa

Lab of Dr. Kalkunte S. Srivenugopal
 Tuesday, August 15, 2017 at 3:30pm
 AMA SOP 107 / LUB HSC 1C111 / DLS PSW 514

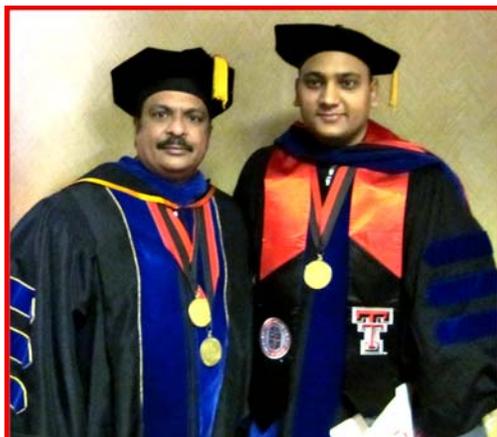
Kshitij Verma

Lab of Dr. Paul C. Trippier
 Friday, November 3, 2017 at 1:30pm
 AMA PAC 1110 / LUB HSC 1C111 / DAL SW 433

Nihar Kinarivala

Lab of Dr. Paul C. Trippier
 Friday, November 10, 2017 at 2:00pm
 AMA PAC 1120 / LUB HSC 1C111

CONVOCATION MAY 13, 2017



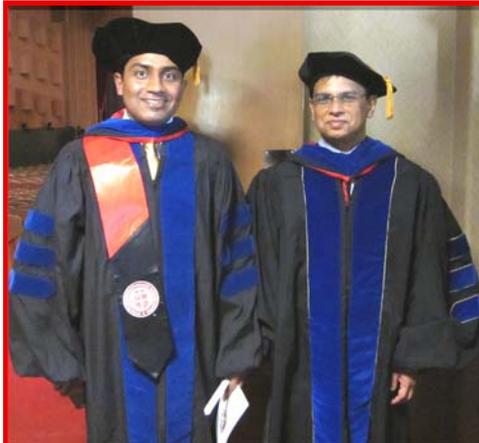
Dr. Sanjay Srivastava hooded Alok Ranjan

Alok Ranjan, PhD, was one of two students chosen this year as a GSBS Outstanding Graduate Student. Per GSBS, there were so many qualified candidates, it was decided two should receive this honor in 2017.

Both Alok Ranjan, PhD, and Monish Makena, PhD, were chosen and spoke at Convocation, addressing the subject of life's welcome and unwelcome surprises, as well as what matters most in life.

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CONVOCAATION MAY 13, 2017 (cont'd)



Md. Jahidur Rashid was hooded by Dr. Fakharul Ahsan



Dr. Luca Cucullo hooded Shikha.



Jee Hyun Park was hooded by Dr. Ulrich Bickel



(back, L-R) Drs. Thomas Abbruscato, Benard Ogola, Thomas Thekkumkara, Luca Cucullo, Fakhrul Ahsan, Sanjay Srivastava, (front, L-R) Alok Ranjan, Shikha, Jee Hyun Park, Md. Jahidur Rashid



(L-R) Drs. Jahidur Rashid, Alok Ranjan, Jee Hyun Park, Benard Ogola, Shikha



Dr. Thomas Thekkumkara hooded Benard Ogola.

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NEW STUDENTS for FALL 2017



Fall 2017

[back, L-R] Racheal Akwii, Hossam Abdelrahman, Derek Barthels
[front, L-R] Nausheen Syeara, Sarah (Woods) Anderson, Kinzie Sherrill, Saeideh Nozohouri
[not pictured] Juan Valdez

PhD Students:

Hossameldin Abdelrahman

BS Pharmaceutical Sciences,
MSc Pharmaceutics
Al-Azhar University, Cairo, Egypt
Lab: Dr. Fakhru Ahsan

Sarah (Woods) Anderson

BS Pharmaceutical Science
Campbell University Buies Creek, NC
Lab: Dr. Hiranmoy Das

Derek Barthels

BA Chemistry
Texas Tech University, Lubbock, TX
Lab: Dr. Hiranmoy Das

Saeideh Nozohouri

BS/MS Pharmaceutical Sciences
Tabriz University of Medical Sciences, Iran
Lab: Dr. Thomas Abbruscato

MS Students:

Racheal Akwii

BS Biomedical Sciences
Makerere University, Kampala, Uganda

Kinzie Sherrill

BS Biology
Texas State University, San Marcos, TX

Nausheen Syeara

BPharm Pharmacy
BRAC University, Dhaka, Bangladesh

Juan Valdez

BS Biology
St. Mary's University, San Antonio, TX

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GRADUATE STUDENT SEMINAR PROGRAM - SPRING 2017

01/11/2017 — **Abraham Al-Ahmad, Ph.D.** — “Special Session for First/Second-Time Presenters”

01/18/2017 — **Benard Ogola** — “2- Methoxyestradiol Down-regulates Angiotensin Type 1 Receptor Through GPR30 Dependent EGFR Phosphorylation at Tyrosine 1148”

01/27/2017 — **Shikha, Doctoral Dissertation Defense** — “Role of Nrf2 and Protective Effects of Metformin Against Cigarette Smoke-Induced Cerebrovascular Toxicity”

02/01/2017 — **Guest Speaker, Patrick T. Ronaldson, Ph.D.**, Assistant Professor, Department of Medical Pharmacology; Director, Graduate Program in Medical Pharmacology; University of Arizona — “Targeting Blood-Brain Barrier Transporters: Implications for Treatment of Diseases with a Hypoxia/Reoxygenation Component”

02/08/2017 — **Hanumantha Rao Madala** — “Development of stable brain-penetrating disulfiram nanoparticles and elucidation of the molecular mechanisms of their cytotoxicity in glioma cell lines”

02/15/2017 — **Ahmed Alobaida** — “Inhaled S-nitroso-N-acetylpenicillamine (SNAP), a nitric oxide donor, for pulmonary preferential reduction of arterial pressure in PAH”

02/15/2017 — **Shyanne Page** — “Determining the influence of gender on blood-brain barrier function during cerebral ischemia using human-induced pluripotent stem cells”

02/22/2017 — **Ali Keshavarz** — “Deploying Microfluidic Technology and the Science of Bio-Printing in Pharmaceuticals”

02/22/2017 — **Sreedhar Reddy Suthe** — “A Novel Antibody-Drug Conjugate Targeting RON Receptor-Tyrosine Kinase for Treatment of Triple Negative Breast Cancer (TNBC)”

03/01/2017 — **Yoon Jung Lee** — “Anticonvulsant effect of exercise in a mouse chronic seizure model: corneal kindling”

03/01/2017 — **Sharavan Ramachandran** — “Capsaicin: A Negative Regulator of the Warburg Effect in Pancreatic Cancer”

03/08/2017 — **Guest Speaker, Noelle Williams, Ph.D.**, Core Director, Preclinical Pharmacology Core Lab at the Simmons Comprehensive Cancer Center; and Associate Professor, University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center — “Letting the Compound Speak for Itself: Serendipitous Targeting of Drugs to their Site of Action”

03/15/2017 — **Faisal Alamri** — “Establishing Novel Sensorimotor Tests for Long-Term Functional Assessment After Experimental Stroke”

03/15/2017 — **Abdullah Al Shoyaib** — “Targeting AMPK and PPAR α to Promote Exercise-Mediated Recovery After Ischemic Stroke in Mice”

03/24/2017 — **Jee Hyun Park, Doctoral Dissertation Defense** — “Potential Immunotherapy of Breast Cancer Brain Metastases with a TCR Mimic Antibody”

03/29/2017 — **Benard Ogola, Doctoral Dissertation Defense** — “2-Methoxyestradiol Mediated Angiotensin Type 1 Receptor Downregulation: A Paradigm Shift in Estrogenic Effects on Cardiovascular System”

04/12/2017 — **Anwar Hossain** — “Gliotoxin: Review on synthetic challenges”

04/12/2017 — **Md. Sanullah Sajib** — “Role of Endothelial RhoA in Cancer Metastasis”

04/19/2017 — **Md. Ashraf-Uz-Zaman** — “Changing the Fate of Penfluridol: A Medicinal Chemistry Approach”

04/19/2017 — **Ali Sifat** — “Nicotine & E-Cigarette Exposure Alters Brain Glucose Utilization and Stroke Outcome”

04/26/2017 — **Bader Huwaimel** — “Design and Synthesis of Mitochondrial Complex II Inhibitors for the Treatment of Cancer”

04/26/2017 — **Taylor Liles** — “Effects of Vortioxetine on Select ABC Transporters at the Blood-Brain Barrier: Implications for Combination Chemotherapy”

04/28/2017 — **Alumni Speaker, Jiakuan Hao, Ph.D.**, Associate Professor, Dept. of Pharmaceutical Sciences, James L. Winkle College of Pharmacy, University of Cincinnati, Cincinnati, Ohio — “Motivation and Commitment are Essential for Career Success”

05/03/2017 — **Thamer Albekairi** — “The Mechanism of Biphalin Entry Into the Ischemic Brain”

05/03/2017 — **Snehal Raut** — “Decellularization and Electrospinning in Engineering of Artificial Lung Tissue”

05/10/2017 — **Md. Yousuf Ali** — “Cytokine Stimulation of NOS Activity is not Straightforward”

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*“Do what you can,  
 with what you have,  
 where you are.”*

*Theodore Roosevelt*

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## PUBLICATIONS

- ≈Miah MK, **Chowdhury EA**, Bickel U, Mehvar R. Evaluation of [ $^{14}\text{C}$ ] and [ $^{13}\text{C}$ ]Sucrose as Blood-Brain Barrier Permeability Markers, *J Pharm Sci*. 2017 Jun;106(6):1659-1669. doi: 10.1016/j.xphs.2017.02.011. Epub 2017 Feb 24.
- ≈Kim CG, Lee H, **Gupta N, Ramachandran S, Kaushik I**, Srivastava S, Kim SH, Srivastava SK. Role of Forkhead Box Class O proteins in cancer progression and metastasis. *Semin Cancer Biol*. 2017 Aug 1. pii: S1044-579X(17)30092-5. doi: 10.1016/j.semcancer.2017.07.007. [Epub ahead of print]
- ≈Wang H, **Huwaimel B, Verma K**, Miller J, Germain TM, **Kinarivala N**, Pappas D, Brookes PS, Trippier PC. Synthesis and Antineoplastic Evaluation of Mitochondrial Complex II (Succinate Dehydrogenase) Inhibitors Derived from Atpenin A5. *ChemMedChem*. 2017 Jul 6;12(13):1033-1044. doi: 10.1002/cmcd.201700196. Epub 2017 Jun 12.
- ≈**Kaisar MA**, Sajja RK, **Prasad S**, Abhyankar VV, **Liles T**, Cucullo L. New experimental models of the blood-brain barrier for CNS drug discovery. *Expert Opin Drug Discov*. 2017 Jan;12(1):89-103. Epub 2016 Nov 7.
- ≈**Kaisar MA, Villalba H, Prasad S, Liles T, Sifat AE**, Sajja RK, Abbruscato TJ, Cucullo L. Offsetting the impact of smoking and e-cigarette vaping on the cerebrovascular system and stroke injury: Is Metformin a viable countermeasure? *Redox Biol*. 2017 Jun 17;13:353-362.
- ≈**Kinarivala N**, Shah K, Abbruscato TJ, Trippier PC. Passage Variation of PC12 Cells Results in Inconsistent Susceptibility to Externally Induced Apoptosis. *ACS Chem Neurosci*. 2017 Jan 18;8(1):82-88. doi: 10.1021/acschemneuro.6b00208. Epub 2016 Oct 20.
- ≈**Mostofa AG**, Punganuru SR, **Madala HR**, Al-Obaide M, Srivenugopal KS. The Process and Regulatory Components of Inflammation in Brain Oncogenesis. *Biomolecules*. 2017 Mar 27;7(2). pii: E34. doi: 10.3390/biom7020034.
- ≈**Mostofa AGM**, Hossain MK, Basak D, Bin Sayeed MS. Thymoquinone as a Potential Adjuvant Therapy for Cancer Treatment: Evidence from Preclinical Studies. *Front Pharmacol*. 2017 Jun 12;8:295. doi: 10.3389/fphar.2017.00295. eCollection 2017. Review.
- ≈**Patel R, Page S**, Al-Ahmad AJ. Isogenic blood-brain barrier models based on patient-derived stem cells display inter-individual differences in cell maturation and functionality. *J Neurochem*. 2017 Jul;142(1):74-88. doi: 10.1111/jnc.14040. Epub 2017 May 14.
- ≈Sajja RK, **Prasad S**, Tang S, **Kaisar MA**, Cucullo L. Blood-brain barrier disruption in diabetic mice is linked to Nrf2 signaling deficits: Role of ABCB10? *Neurosci Lett*. 2017 Jul 13;653:152-158. doi: 10.1016/j.neulet.2017.05.059. Epub 2017 May 29.
- ≈**Prasad S**, Sajja RK, **Kaisar MA, Park JH, Villalba H, Liles T**, Abbruscato T, Cucullo L. Role of Nrf2 and protective effects of Metformin against tobacco smoke-induced cerebrovascular toxicity. *Redox Biol*. 2017 Aug;12:58-69. doi: 10.1016/j.redox.2017.02.007. Epub 2017 Feb 12.
- ≈**Ranjan A**, Srivastava SK. Penfluridol suppresses glioblastoma tumor growth by Akt-mediated inhibition of GLI1. *Oncotarget*. 2017 Mar 23. doi: 10.18632/oncotarget.16515. [Epub ahead of print]
- ≈**Ranjan A**, German N, Mikelis C, Srivenugopal K, Srivastava SK. "Penfluridol induces endoplasmic reticulum stress leading to autophagy in pancreatic cancer". *Tumour Biol*. 2017 Jun; 39(6):1010428317705517. doi:10.1177/1010428317705517.
- ≈**Ranjan A**, Wright S, Srivastava SK. Immune consequences of penfluridol treatment associated with inhibition of glioblastoma tumor growth. *Oncotarget*. 2017 Jul 18;8(29):47632-47641. doi: 10.18632/oncotarget.17425.
- ≈**Rolph DN, Greene CJ**, Das H. Nanofiber Expanded CD34+ Stem Cells as an Alternative for Bone Marrow Transplantation. In: Bone Marrow Transplantation (pp. 2-37). *Telagana, India: Avid Science*; 2016. Book Chapter.
- ≈**Rolph DN** and Das H. Krüppel-Like Factor 2 (KLF2) in Limiting Inflammation in Rheumatoid Arthritis. In: Treatment Options for Rheumatoid Arthritis (pp. 2-43). *Telagana, India: Avid Science*; 2017. Book Chapter.
- ≈**Sifat AE**, Vaidya B, Abbruscato TJ. Blood-Brain Barrier Protection as a Therapeutic Strategy for Acute Ischemic Stroke. *AAPS J*. 2017 Jul;19(4):957-972.

*"The purpose of life is to serve and to show compassion and the will to help others. Only then have we ourselves become true human beings." Albert Schweitzer*

## CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

**American Heart Association, International Stroke Conference  
February 21-24, 2017 \* Houston, TX**

\***Ali Sifat**, Bhuvaneshwar Vaidya, Heidi Villalba, Mohammad A. Kaisar, Luca Cucullo, Thomas J. Abbruscato. "E-Cigarette Exposure Alters Brain Glucose Utilization and Stroke Outcome". **Podium Presentation**

\***Abdullah Al Shoyaib**, Faisal F. Alamri, Abbie Biggers, Srinidhi Jayaraman, Vardan T. Karamyan. "Combined AICAR and GW501516 Therapy Promotes Motor Recovery After Photothrombotic Stroke in Mice".



**Society of Toxicology  
56th Annual Meeting and ToxExpo  
March 12-16, 2017 \* Baltimore, MD**

\***Nehal Gupta**, Parul Gupta and Sanjay Srivastava. "Penfluridol Reduces Paclitaxel Resistance in Breast Cancer by Inhibiting HER2/ $\beta$ -catenin Signaling".

\***Mohammad A. Kaisar**, Ali E. Sifat, Thomas J. Abbruscato & Luca Cucullo. "To Vape or Not to Vape: Addressing Some E-Cigarette Safety Concerns at the Cerebrovascular Level".

\***Hanumantha Rao Madala**, Surendra Reddy Punganuru, Kalkunte Srivenugopal. "Synthesis of a novel non-diuretic, brain-penetrating, ethacrynic acid analog and demonstration of its potent efficacy in orthotopic glioblastoma (GBM) models".

\***S. Prasad**, R. Sajja, MA Kaisar, T. Liles, H. Villalba, L. Cucullo. "Metformin prevents cigarette smoke exposure induced cerebrovascular impairment in vitro and in vivo",

\***Kshitij Verma**, Tianzhu Zang, Trevor M. Penning, and Paul C. Trippier. "Design, Synthesis and Evaluation of Inhibitors of Type 5  $17\beta$ -Hydroxysteroid Dehydrogenase (AKR1C3) as Novel Therapeutics to Manage Castration Resistant Prostate Cancer (CRPC) and Acute Myeloid Leukemia (AML)".

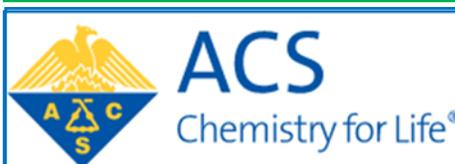
**American Association for Cancer Research \* April 1-5, 2017 \* Washington, D.C.**

\***Nehal Gupta**, Parul Gupta and Sanjay Srivastava. "Inhibition of HER2/ $\beta$ -catenin signaling by penfluridol overcomes resistance to paclitaxel in breast cancer".

\***Hanumantha Rao Madala**, Surendra Reddy Punganuru, Kalkunte Srivenugopal. "Synthesis of a novel non-diuretic, brain-penetrating, ethacrynic acid analog and demonstration of its potent efficacy in orthotopic glioblastoma (GBM) models".

\***A.G.M. Mostofa**, Kalkunte S. Srivenugopal. "Interplay of human MGMT DNA repair protein with PCNA / p21cip1 and MGMT's novel role as an S-phase checkpoint".

\***Sharavan Ramachandran** and Sanjay K. Srivastava. "Capsaicin suppresses pancreatic tumor growth by inhibiting tumor cell metabolism".



**American Chemical Society  
April 2-5, 2017 \* San Francisco, CA**

\***Nihar Kinarivala**, Fadi Saadeh, Joelle Makoukji, Rose-Mary Boustany and Paul C. Trippier. "Design, Synthesis and Employment of Flupirtine-Derivative Chemical Probes for Neuroprotective Target Identification".

**Experimental Biology  
April 22-26, 2017 \* Chicago, IL**

\***Laxmi Iyer**, Yong Zhang and Thomas Thekkumkara. "Tannic Acid is a Tissue-Specific Dual Modulator of Angiotensin Type 1 Receptor and Low-Density Lipoprotein Receptor in Rat Aortic Vascular Smooth Muscle and Liver Epithelial Cells: An Insight into the French Paradox".



\***Hanumantha Rao Madala**, Surendra Reddy Punganuru, Francis Ali-Osman, Kalkunte Srivenugopal. "Development of stable and brain-penetrating disulfiram nanoparticles, characterization and efficacy in glioma cell culture and xenograft models". **Podium Presentation**

\***Shyanne Page**; Patel, Ronak; Munsell, Allie; Al-Ahmad, Abraham. "The ischemic blood-brain barrier in a dish: Use of patient-derived stem cells to model the response of the neurovascular unit to oxygen-glucose deprivation stress".

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## CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS (cont'd)



  
TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY  
HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER.



**Center of Excellence for Translational  
Neuroscience and Therapeutics (CTNT)**  
April 21, 2017 \* TTUHSC Lubbock, TX

**Center of Excellence for  
Translational Neuroscience and Therapeutics (CTNT)**

1<sup>st</sup> Annual Meeting  
Thursday, April 21<sup>st</sup>, 2016 • Room: ACB150

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

**American Association of  
Pharmaceutical Scientists,  
National Biotechnology Conference**  
May 1-3, 2017 \* San Diego, CA

 **2017 AAPS  
National Biotechnology  
Conference** Advancing Health Through  
Innovations in Biotherapeutics

MAY 1-3, 2017  
SAN DIEGO

\***Jee Hyun Park**, Raktima Bhattacharya, Faleh Alqahtani and Ulrich Bickel. "T-cell receptor mimic antibody brain uptake studies in a newly developed HLA-A2 brain metastasis model". **Podium Presentation**

\***Nehal Gupta**, Parul Gupta, Sanjay Srivastava. "Penfluridol overcomes paclitaxel resistance by inhibition of HER2/[beta]-catenin signaling in breast cancer model".

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

\***Md. Sanallah Sajib**, Fatema Tuz Zahra, Jee Hyun Park, Paul Tullar, Sanjay K. Srivastava, Ulrich Bickel, Constantinos M. Mikelis. "Role of Endothelial RhoA-ROCK Pathway during Hematogenous Metastasis",

\***Kshitij Verma**, Tianzhu Zang, Trevor M. Penning, and Paul C. Trippier. "Inhibitors of AKR1C3 as Novel Therapeutics for the Treatment of Castration Resistant Prostate Cancer (CRPC) and Acute Myeloid Leukemia (AML)".

 **NATIONAL CANCER INSTITUTE**

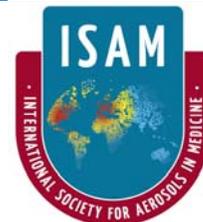
**National Cancer Institute  
at the National Institutes of Health,  
Graduate Student Recruiting Program**  
May 3-4, 2017 \* Bethesda, MD

\***Kshitij Verma**, Tianzhu Zang, Trevor M. Penning, and Paul C. Trippier. "Design, Synthesis and Evaluation of Small-Molecule Inhibitors of AKR1C3 to Manage Castration Resistant Prostate Cancer (CRPC) and Acute Myeloid Leukemia (AML)". **Invited Speaker**

**International Society of Aerosols in Medicine Congress**  
June 3-7, 2017 \* Santa Fe, NM

\***Ahmed Alobaida**, Taslim Al-Hilal and Fakhrul Ahsan. "Inhaled S-nitroso-N-acetylpenicillamine (SNAP), a nitric oxide donor, for pulmonary preferential reduction of arterial pressure in PAH". **Podium Presentation**

\***Ali Keshavarz**, Taslim A. Al-Hilal, and Fakhrul Ahsan. "A microfluidic platform mimicking the bifurcating respiratory tract to assess the deposition of anti-asthma drugs".



**Gordon Research Seminar and Conference for Bioorganic Chemistry**  
June 11-16, 2017 \* Andover, NH

\***Nihar Kinarivala**, Fadi Saadeh, Joelle Makoukji, Rose-Mary Boustany and Paul C. Trippier. "Design, Synthesis and Employment of Novel Chemical Probes for Neuroprotective Target Identification".

**North American Vascular Biology Organization Vasculata**  
July 24-27, 2017 \* Chicago, IL

\***Md Sanallah Sajib**, Fatema Tuz Zahra, Jee Hyun Park, Paul Tullar, Sanjay K. Srivastava, Ulrich Bickel, and Constantinos M. Mikelis. "Endothelial cytoskeletal reorganization is mediated by the RhoA/ROCK pathway during cancer metastasis".

\***Fatema Tuz Zahra**, Md Sanallah Sajib, Mohd Nazmul Hasan Apu, Paul Tullar, Michail S. Lionakis, Constantinos M. Mikelis.

"Participation of RhoA in basic fibroblast growth factor (bFGF) –induced Angiogenesis".



FALL 2017 CONFERENCES



*Division of  
Medicinal  
Chemistry*

*254th National ACS Meeting*

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS  
**MD Anderson  
Cancer Center**

Symposia on Cancer Research  
Houston, TX \* October 5-6, 2017



**2017  
PISA**

Pathobiology for Investigators, Students & Academicians

**Genome and Environment:  
Implications in Development, Regeneration, Injury,  
Immunity, and Malignancy**

September 25-27 • Pittsburgh, PA

#PISA2017

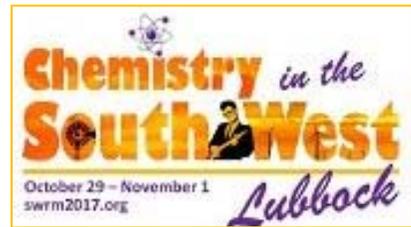
**BMES 2017** [www.bmes.org](http://www.bmes.org)

2017 BMES Annual Meeting  
October 11-14, 2017  
Phoenix, Arizona



**Chemistry in the  
South West**

October 29 - November 1  
[swrm2017.org](http://swrm2017.org) *Lubbock*




**μTAS 2017**  
SAVANNAH • GEORGIA  
OCTOBER 22-26, 2017

5TH ANNUAL  
GENDER-SPECIFIC  
MEDICINE  
& Women's  
HEALTH SYMPOSIUM



*Laura W. Bush*  
Institute for Women's Health  
TTUHSC \* Lubbock, TX  
October 27, 2017

**SfN** SOCIETY for NEUROSCIENCE *Washington, DC*  
*November 11-16, 2017*

**2017 AAPS ANNUAL  
MEETING AND EXPOSITION**

NOVEMBER 12-15, 2017 | SAN DIEGO



**INSIDE 3D PRINTING™**  
CONFERENCE & EXPO

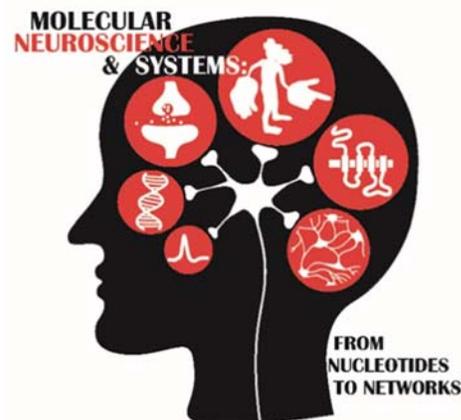
DECEMBER 4-5, 2017  
SAN DIEGO, CA  
"STRATEGIES FOR THE  
3D ECOSYSTEM"

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## The 29th Annual Student Research Week,

hosted by the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center (TTUHSC) Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences (GSBS) in Lubbock, was held **March 7-10, 2017**. The theme this year was **"Molecular Neurosciences & Systems: From Nucleotides to Networks"**, and eight (8) poster entries from junior and senior basic science researchers were presented by our GPPS students. **Keynote Speakers** were: **Jon Kaas, Ph.D.**, Distinguished Centennial Professor of Psychology, Associate Professor of Cell and Developmental Biology, and Professor of Radiology and Radiological Sciences at Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN; and **Susan Slaughaupt, Ph.D.**, Professor of Neurology at Harvard Medical School and the Massachusetts General Hospital Center for Genetic Research, as well as the inaugural Scientific Director of the MGH Research Institute.



### GPPS PRESENTERS:

**Podium Presentation:** **Nehal Gupta**, Parul Gupta, Sanjay Srivastava. "Penfluridol Reduces Paclitaxel Resistance in Breast Cancer by Inhibiting HER2/ $\beta$ -Catenin Signaling".

**Laxmi Iyer**, Yong Zhang and Thomas Thekkumkara. "Tannic Acid is a Tissue-Specific Dual Modulator of Angiotensin Type 1 Receptor and Low-Density Lipoprotein Receptor in Rat Aortic Vascular Smooth Muscle and Liver Epithelial Cells: An Insight into the French Paradox".

**Yoon Jung Lee**, Alejandra Fernandez, James Stoll. "A triheptanoin-containing diet reduces spontaneous electrographic seizures in pilocarpine-induced epileptic mice".

**Page, Shyanne**; Patel, Ronak; Munsell, Allie; Al-Ahmad, Abraham. "The ischemic blood-brain barrier in a dish: Use of patient-derived stem cells to model the response of the neurovascular unit to oxygen-glucose deprivation stress".

**Sharavan Ramachandran** and Sanjay K. Srivastava. "Capsaicin suppresses pancreatic tumor growth by inhibiting tumor metabolism".

**Md. Sanaullah Sajib**, Fatema Tuz Zahra, Jee Hyun Park, Paul Tullar, Sanjay K. Srivastava, Ulrich Bickel, and Constantinos M. Mikelis. "Endothelial cytoskeletal reorganization through RhoA/ROCK pathway is required for cancer cell metastasis".

**Heidi Villalba**, Bhuvaneshwar Vaidya, Ali Sifat, and Thomas J. Abbruscato. "The Effects of Myo-Inositol During Ischemic Stroke: In-Vitro and In-Vivo Studies."

**Fatema Tuz Zahra**, Md Sanaullah Sajib, Mohd Nazmul Hasan Apu, Paul Tullar, Michail S. Lionakis, Constantinos M. Mikelis. "Participation of RhoA in basic fibroblast growth factor (bFGF)-induced angiogenesis".



Daniela Rolph, Heidi Villalba, Shyanne Page, Joey Greene, Dr. Thomas Thekkumkara and Yoon Jung Lee do some serious clowning.

Students participated in "Red Nose Day" to raise funds with Walgreens to help the High Plains Food Bank's Kids Café feed needy children.



Graduate students Heidi Villalba, Joey Greene, Daniela Rolph, Yoon Jung Lee and Shyanne Page team up to help.

## Sixteenth Annual **School of Pharmacy Research Days** June 15-16, 2017

This year, faculty members, graduate students, post-docs and residents again converged at the Amarillo Civic Center Heritage Room in Amarillo, TX to showcase their research during the Sixteenth Annual School of Pharmacy Research Days held Thursday-Friday, June 15th-16th.

**Keynote Speakers** were: **Edith Nutescu, Pharm.D., MS, FCCP**, Director of the Center for Pharmacoepidemiology and Pharmaco-economic Research Pharmacy Systems, Outcomes and Policy at the University of Illinois in Chicago; **John DiGiovanni, Ph.D.**, Professor and Coulter R. Sublett Endowed Chair of the Division of Pharmacology and Toxicology, College of Pharmacy, Director of the Center for Molecular Carcinogenesis and Toxicology, and Associate Director for Basic Research at the Life STRONG Cancer Institutes, Dell Medical School at the University of Texas at Austin, College of Pharmacy; and **Laurent Salphati, Ph.D.**, Principal Scientist, Genentech. **Distinguished Speakers** were: **Irene La-Beck, Pharm.D.**, Assistant Professor, Department of Immunotherapeutics and Biotechnology, School of Pharmacy, TTUHSC Abilene; and **Hiranmoy Das, Ph.D.**, Professor, Department of Biomedical Sciences, School of Pharmacy, TTUHSC Amarillo.

Podium presentations were given Thursday and Friday afternoon by selected individuals, and the annual dinner and social were held Thursday evening in Amarillo Civic Center's Grand Plaza. Presentations were judged Thursday afternoon, and awards were presented Friday afternoon to complete the event, with 14 presentations and 48 poster entries from students and residents. Three of our GPPS graduate students gained recognition and were awarded during the final ceremony. This event provides opportunity for researchers from all four campuses of the School of Pharmacy to come together and share their research, building toward future collaborations and friendships.

### Best Podium Presenters:

#### → **Senior Graduate Student Category:**

- Kshitij Verma

#### → **Junior Graduate Student Category:**

- Bader Huwaimel
- Md. Sanaullah Sajib

### Podium Presentations:

- **Faleh Alqahtani**, Raktima Bhattacharya, Ekram Ahmed Chowdhury, Reza Mehvar, Ulrich Bickel. "Refining the method of studying BBB permeability of [<sup>13</sup>C] sucrose and the evaluation of BBB integrity under different anesthetic agents".
- Hezhen Wang, **Bader Huwaimel**, Kshitij Verma, James Miller, Todd Germain, Nihar Kinarivala, Dimitri Pappas, Paul S. Brookes, and Paul C. Trippier. "Design and Synthesis of Mitochondrial Complex II Inhibitors Derived from Atpenin A5 for the Treatment of Cancer".
- **Mohammad A Kaiser**, Ravi K. Sajja, Shikka Prasad, Vikrant Vijay, Varsha Desai, Luca Cucullo. "Profiling Nrf2 regulated mitochondria-specific transcriptomics in Blood-Brain Barrier endothelium: Towards a mechanistic insight into drug toxicity".
- **Ali Keshavarz**, Taslim A. Al-Hilal, and Fakhru Ahsan. "Preparation of a precise microfluidic platform mimicking the respiratory tract bifurcations to study anti-asthmatic drug efficacy".
- **Yoon Jung Lee**, Alejandra Fernandez, James Stoll. "Anticonvulsant effects of physical activity in a mouse chronic corneal kindling model".
- **Hanumantha Rao Madala**, Surendra Reddy Punganuru, Francis Ali-Osman, Kalkunte Srivenugopal. "Development of stable and brain-penetrating disulfiram nanoparticles: Characterization and efficacy in glioma cell culture models".

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(SOP Research Days, cont'd from page 11)

**Podium Presentations (cont'd):**

- **AGM Mostofa**, Hanumantha Rao Madala, Surendra R. Punganuru, Kalkunte S. Srivenugopal. "The S-phase checkpoint function of MGMT provides an unexpected rational route to profoundly increase the efficacy of anticancer antimetabolites in cell culture and xenograft models".
- **Md. Sanauallah Sajib**, Fatema Tuz Zahra, Jee Hyun Park, Paul Tullar, Sanjay K. Srivastava, Ulrich Bickel, and Constantinos M. Mikelis. "Endothelial cytoskeletal reorganization is mediated by the RhoA/ROCK pathway during cancer metastasis".
- **Sreedhar Reddy Suthe**, Liang Feng, Hang-Ping Yao, Ruiwen Zhang, and Ming-Hai Wang. "A novel antibody-drug conjugate targeting RON-receptor as a therapeutic strategy for treatment of triple-negative breast cancer [TNBC]".
- **Kshitij Verma**, Tianzhu Zang, Trevor M. Penning, and Paul C. Trippier. "Design, synthesis and evaluation of small-molecule inhibitors of AKR1C3 to manage castration resistant prostate cancer (CRPC) and acute myeloid leukemia (AML)".

**Graduate Student Poster Presenters:**

- **Faisal F. Alamri**, Abdullah Al Shoyuib, Abbie Biggers, Srinidhi Jayaraman, Vardan T. Karamyan. "Von Frey and forepaw grip strength tests for assessment of Long-Term sensorimotor impairment after experimental stroke".
- **Md. Ashraf-Uz-Zaman**, Nehal Gupta, Abul Mohammad Kaiser, Luca Cucullo, Sanjay K. Srivastava, Nadezhda German. "Structural modifications of Penfluridol targeting reduction in CNS activity".
- **Carl J Greene**, Daniela N Rolph, Suman Kanji, Manjusri Das, Matthew Joseph, Reeva Aggarwal, and Hiranmoy Das. "Formulating topical application method of stem cells products for diabetic wound therapy".
- **Nehal Gupta**, Parul Gupta, Sanjay K. Srivastava. "Inhibition of HER2/beta-Catenin signaling by Penfluridol overcomes resistance to paclitaxel in breast cancer".
- **Anwar Hossain**, Md. Sanauallah Sajib, Ronak Patel, Abraham Al-Ahmad, Constantinos Mikelis, Nadezhda German. "Effect of the disulfide bridge in gliotoxin on the biological activity of the molecule".
- **Laxmi Iyer**, Yong Zhang and Thomas Thekkumkara. "Tannic acid is a tissue-specific dual modulator of angiotensin type 1 receptor and low-density lipoprotein receptor in rat aortic vascular smooth muscle and liver epithelial cells: an insight into the French Paradox".
- **Ahmed Morsy**, Nihar Kinarivala, Hezhen Wang, Paul C. Trippier. "Small molecule ABAD inhibitors as a therapeutic strategy in Alzheimer's Disease".
- **Shyanne Page**, Ronak Patel, Abraham Al-Ahmad. "Modeling the ischemic blood-brain barrier in a dish using patient-specific induced pluripotent stem cells".
- **Sharavan Ramachandran** and Sanjay K. Srivastava. "Capsaicin: A negative regulator of the Warburg effect in pancreatic cancer".
- **Daniela N Rolph**, Carl J Greene, Manjuri Das, Matthew Joseph, Reeva Aggarwal, and Hiranmoy Das. "Directed differentiation of human dental pulp-derived stem cells towards osteogenic lineage using small pharmacological compounds".
- **Ali Sifat**, Bhuvaneshwar Vaidya, and Thomas J. Abbruscato. "Nicotine & e-cigarette exposure alters brain glucose utilization in ischemic stroke".
- **Heidi Villalba**, Bhuvaneshwar Vaidya, Taylor Liles, Luca Cucullo and Thomas J. Abbruscato. "Determining the potential neuroprotective role of myo-inositol in pre-clinical models of cerebrovascular injury: stroke and/or cigarette smoke exposure".
- **Fatema Tuz Zahra**, Md. Sanauallah Sajib, Mohd Nazmul Hasan Apu, Paul Tullar, Michael S. Lionaskis, Constantinos M. Mikelis. "Basic fibroblast growth factor (BFGF)-induced RhoA activation regulates angiogenesis".

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(SOP Research Days, cont'd from page 12)



**SCHOOL OF PHARMACY CELEBRATION OF ACHIEVEMENT  
Graduate Student Association at Amarillo**

**April 21, 2017 Award Ceremony  
Honors for Students, Faculty & Staff**



Dr. Constantinos Mikeles (center) was presented the "Graduate Mentor of the Year" award by GSAA President, Heidi Villalba (left), and Benard Ogola (right).



Heidi and Ben presented the "Graduate Teaching Team of the Year (Physiology-Based Pharmacology)" award to (L-R) Drs. Luca Cucullo, Ulrich Bickel, Vardan Karamyan, Margaret Weis and Kalkunte Srivenugopal (not shown).



Heidi presented Benard Ogola with the "Outstanding GSAA Student of the Year" award.



Dr. Stoll (center) received the "Graduate Teacher of the Year (Biochemistry)" award, presented by Heidi and Ben.

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# AWARDS & SCHOLARSHIPS

- ❖ **Nehal Gupta:** Graduate Student Travel Support Award, Society of Toxicology, 56th Annual Meeting, Baltimore, MD, March 2017.
- ❖ **Nehal Gupta:** Abstract First Place Graduate Student Winner, 2017 Dharm V. Singh Carcinogenesis Awards Fund, Society of Toxicology 56th Annual Meeting, Carcinogenesis Specialty Section, Baltimore, MD; March 2017.
- ❖ **Nehal Gupta:** Sheldon D. Murphy Mechanisms SS Student Travel Endowment Award, Society of Toxicology, Mechanisms Specialty Section, Baltimore, MD; March 2017.
- ❖ **Bader Huwaimel:** Best Podium Presenter, Junior Graduate Student, Dept. of Pharmaceutical Sciences, School of Pharmacy Research Days, TTUHSC Amarillo TX; June 2017.
- ❖ **Md. Abul Kaiser:** Graduate Student Travel Support Award, Society of Toxicology, 56th Annual Meeting, Baltimore, MD, March 2017.
- ❖ **Yoon Jung Lee:** First Generation Scholarship, TTUHSC, October 2016.
- ❖ **Yoon Jung Lee:** Phonathon Scholarship, TTUHSC Student Government Association Phonathon Scholarship Committee, awarded February 2017. (to be applied Fall 2017).
- ❖ **Hanumantha Rao Madala:** Graduate Student Travel Support Award, Society of Toxicology, 56th Annual Meeting, Baltimore, MD; March 2017.
- ❖ **Hanumantha Rao Madala:** Dharm V. Singh Carcinogenesis Graduate Student Endowment Award - Second Place Abstract, Society of Toxicology, Baltimore, MD, March 2017.
- ❖ **Hanumantha Rao Madala:** Dr. Harihara Mehendale Graduate Student Best Abstract Award - Association of Scientists of Indian Origin, Society of Toxicology, Baltimore, MD, March 2017.
- ❖ **Jee Hyun Park:** Best Oral Presentation in Graduate Student Seminar for Fall 2016, Graduate Student Association at Amarillo, TTUHSC School of Pharmacy, Amarillo, TX; February 2017.
- ❖ **Jee Hyun Park:** American Association of Pharmaceutical Scientists travel award sponsored by Eli Lilly & Co., for AAPS National Biotechnology Conference; May 2017.
- ❖ **Sharavan Ramachandran:** Seahorse Bioscience Travel Award from Agilent Technologies, for American Association for Cancer Research, Washington, D.C.; April 2017.
- ❖ **Sharavan Ramachandran:** Amgen Travelship, for American Association of Pharmaceutical Scientists, National Biotechnology Conference, San Diego, CA; May 2017.
- ❖ **Md. Sanaullah Sajib:** American Association of Pharmaceutical Scientists BIOTEC Section Travel Award, AAPS National Biotechnology Conference (NBC), San Diego, CA; May 2017.
- ❖ **Md. Sanaullah Sajib:** Best Podium Presenter, Junior Graduate Student, Dept. of Pharmaceutical Sciences, School of Pharmacy Research Days, TTUHSC Amarillo TX; June 2017.
- ❖ **Md. Sanaullah Sajib:** North American Vascular Biology Organization (NAVBO) Vasculata Travel Scholarship, Vasculata 2017, University of Illinois at Chicago, Chicago, IL; July 2017.
- ❖ **Kshitij Verma:** Graduate Student Winner - Best Abstract Award - Fourth Place, Dharm V. Singh Carcinogenesis Awards Fund, Society of Toxicology, 56th Annual Meeting, Baltimore, MD; March 2017.
- ❖ **Kshitij Verma:** American Association of Pharmaceutical Scientists (AAPS) Drug Discovery and Development Interface (DDDI) Section Travelship, AAPS National Biotechnology Conference (NBC), San Diego, CA; May 2017.
- ❖ **Kshitij Verma:** Invited Presenter (expenses paid), National Institutes of Health/National Cancer Institute, Graduate Student Recruiting Program, Bethesda, MD; May 2017.
- ❖ **Kshitij Verma:** Best Podium Presenter, Senior Graduate Student, Dept. of Pharmaceutical Sciences, School of Pharmacy Research Days, TTUHSC Amarillo TX; June 2017.
- ❖ **Kshitij Verma:** American Chemical Society (ACS) Division of Medicinal Chemistry (DMC) Travel Award, ACS-DMC, Washington, D.C.; August 2017.
- ❖ **Fatema Tuz Zhara:** North American Vascular Biology Organization (NAVBO) Vasculata Travel Scholarship, Vasculata 2017, University of Illinois at Chicago, Chicago, IL; July 2017.

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This year, the ten-week **2017 Amarillo Biomedical Research Internship** kicked off on May 30th, with nine ABRI interns working in various School of Pharmacy labs in Amarillo and Abilene. Significant presentations from different backgrounds and perspectives were given throughout the summer by School of Pharmacy faculty and staff, and 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) Suyash Srivastava, Abbie Biggers, Delaney Farris, Marwa Abdel-Maguid (front, L-R) Madison Aragon, Sarah (Woods) Anderson, Sanjana Gangane



Suyash Srivastava



Abbie Biggers

**ABRI interns:**

- » Marwa Abdel-Maguid ~ Dr. Fakhru Ahsan, Pharmaceutical Sciences
- » Sarah (Woods) Anderson ~ Dr. Hiranmoy Das, Biomedical Sciences
- » Madison Aragon ~ Dr. Nadezhda German, Pharmaceutical Sciences
- » Gracie Abigail Biggers ~ Dr. Vardan Karamyan, Pharmaceutical Sciences
- » Delaney Farris ~ Dr. Paul Trippier, Pharmaceutical Sciences
- » Lee Fields ~ Dr. Devin Lowe, Immunotherapeutics and Biotechnology (Abilene)
- » Sanjana Gangane ~ Dr. Fakhru Ahsan, Pharmaceutical Sciences
- » Claire Shudde ~ Dr. Irene La-Beck, Immunotherapeutics and Biotechnology (Abilene)
- » Suyash Srivastava ~ Dr. Constantinos Mikelis, Biomedical Sciences



Dr. Paul Trippier and Delaney Farris

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(Continued on page 17)

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Ali and Bahar Keshavarz, Behnaz Lahooti, Ekram Chowdhury, Franz Hack, Yoon Jung Lee

**GPPS students and friends volunteered to help with 2017 Amarillo Marathon benefitting the Panhandle Cancer Cure Foundation.**



Yoon, Behnaz, Bahar, Ali, Franz

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**GSAA/AAPS BULLETIN BOARD**

**GSAA Officers for 2017-2018:**

President: **Nehal Gupta**  
 Vice President: **Yoon Jung Lee**  
 Treasurer: **Abdullah Al Shoyaib**  
 Secretary: **Sanaullah Sajib**  
 Historian: **Ekram Chowdhury**  
 International Representative:  
**Fatema Tuz Zahra**  
 Student Senate Representative:  
**Snehal Raut**



**2017-2018 Officers of the Amarillo AAPS Student Chapter**

Chair ♦ **Md. Abul Kaisar**  
 Chair-Elect ♦ **Laxmi Iyer**  
 Vice-Chair ♦ **Md. Sanaullah Sajib**  
 Treas./Sec. ♦ **Ahmed Alobaida**

**GSSA Members Participated Sp'17:**

- \*February**  
Bowling Night
- \*March**  
Panhandle Food Bank Garden  
Ski Trip, Taos
- \*April**  
Journal Club  
March of Dimes, March for Babies
- \*May**  
Graduation Party  
International Night

**Social & Community Service Events Planned for F'17:**

- \*September**  
Back to School Picnic, Thompson Park  
Ramps Across Texas, building ramps for handicapped
- \*October**  
Amarillo Heart Walk, American Heart Association  
Ice Skating Party
- \*November**  
Bowling Night  
Eveline Rivers Christmas Project, gift wrapping
- \*December**  
Christmas Garden of Lights, Amarillo Botanical Gardens  
Clothing Drive, Salvation Army, Goodwill

**GSAA Events**



**Ski Trip, Taos**



**Bowling Night**



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... more GSAA Events



International Night

March of Dimes, March for Babies



*Congratulations to Dr. Russell Snyder and his wife, Lauren, on the arrival of their new little boy this spring! Welcome to Everett!*

*Congratulations to Faisal Alamri and his wife, Alaa, on the birth of their baby boy this spring! Welcome to Fahad!*

*Congratulations to Brijesh Patel and his wife, Khyati, on the arrival of their new little boy this spring! Welcome to Aryan!*

