

The Post-y Spring 2009

Semi-annual Newsletter of the Society of Toxicology Postdoctoral Assembly

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Message From the Outgoing Chair

Heather S. Floyd

This has been a great year for the PDA and we have many accomplishments this year. Our Councilor worked diligently to establish postdoc representation throughout Specialty Sections, Special Interest Groups, and Regional Chapters. Many of these representatives have also volunteered for various postdoc events throughout the year. The Annual Meeting was extremely successful with many well-attended postdoc events. We received positive comments and feedback about the Postdoctoral Luncheon, especially regarding the Postdoctoral Publication Awards. We received high-quality scientific publications making the decision extremely difficult. At the Luncheon we were able to distribute very generous door prizes from various companies. For the first time, we also co-sponsored a scientific session with SAC, highlighting the work of four early-career scientists in the field of epigenetic, gene environment inter-actions. We also sponsored a career session which provided informative talks regarding career opportunities and transitions in toxicology. Beyond the Annual Meeting, we have recently developed a Facebook page for SOT members who are postdocs to facilitate networking between SOT postdoctoral members. The numbers are growing so make sure to add us as a group to your Facebook page.

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www.toxicology.org

Meet your new PDA officers for 2009-2010

Chair — Betina Lew

Co-Chair – Sarah
Campion

Councilor – Lauren
Aleksunes

Secretary – Alison Harrill

Treasurer – Patrick Shaw

Council Liaison –
Patricia Ganey

Please find out more
about them on the SOT
Web site:

<https://www.toxicology.org/ai/spd/PD-Officers.asp>

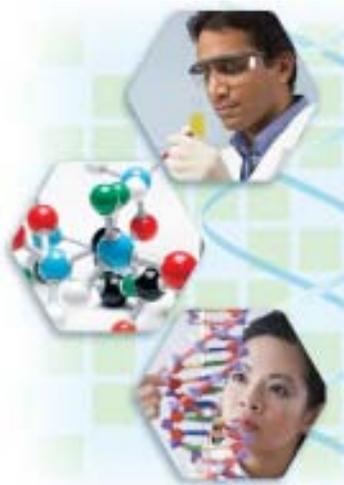


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Message From the Outgoing Chair, *Continued from page 1*

Our Secretary/Treasurer organized our first career-based Web seminar in order to disseminate career advice for early career scientists in a venue other than the Annual Meeting. We are proud of the progress we have made in the 2008-2009 year.

It has been an honor and privilege to Chair this board. I would like to extend many thanks to the 2008-2009 PDA board, Betina Lew, Vice Chair, Valerie Mitchell, Secretary/Treasurer, and Lauren Aleksunes, Councilor. I would also like to thank our SOT liaison Betty Eidemiller and our SOT Council Representative Ron Hines for their mentorship and contributions to the board. The new board was also very involved at the 2009 Annual Meeting and has been extremely influential over the past few months. Finally I would like to thank the SOT postdocs who stepped up this year to write articles for the Post-y, volunteer at the Annual Meeting events, and represent the PDA on various boards throughout the society. None of these accomplishments would have been possible without the contributions of many people.



Message From the Incoming Chair

Betina Lew, Chair

Greetings! My name is Betina Lew and I am delighted to serve as the chair for the SOT PDA 2009-2010. It's been a pleasure to work for the PDA as the Vice-Chair during the past year, and it gave me a great opportunity to learn a little bit more about the SOT and the PDA. We had an extremely productive year and I would like to thank all of the outgoing board members for the exceptional job they did and their dedication to the PDA. The PDA board worked as a team, always very well assisted by Ron Hines (Council Liaison) and Betty Eidemiller (SOT Staff Liaison), and was therefore successful in organizing a broad range of events focusing on SOT postdoc career development and networking. I would like to explicitly express my appreciation to Heather Floyd, 2008-2009 chair, for her wonderful job as a leader and for her guidance during the past year.

The [new PDA board](#) is already working hard to maintain the excellent level of events that are already well established and becoming a tradition in our community. The Luncheon at the Annual Meeting is always a success and provides a great opportunity for postdocs to network and meet their peers. We will continue to try to make improvements to the event, based on your feedback from the Baltimore surveys.

The Best Postdoctoral Publication Award has already become a tradition, and is an enormous success due to the many quality applications. We will therefore promote the award again this year, and the rules and deadline for application will be announced along with the details of the other SOT awards. Once again the PDA is working on putting together an educational/informational and a scientific session during the 2010 Annual Meeting in Salt Lake City. In addition to the events at the Annual Meeting, we will also have events during the year. For example, we are planning on at least two Web-based seminars in career development for young scientists.

One of the main goals of the PDA for this year is to improve the communication between postdocs and SOT.

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Message From the Incoming Chair, *Continued from page 2*

The PDA provides a voice for all the postdocs and early career scientist in our community and we would like to hear from you. To facilitate communication we now have a group at Facebook named "Society of Toxicology Postdocs" which we invite you to join at <http://www.facebook.com/home.php#/group.php?gid=73964216810>.

In addition, our surveys serve as a great tool to better understand the needs and expectations of the postdocs. Generally, during the year we conduct two surveys and it is based on your answers that we decide on different themes of sessions to present, and the main priorities and goals to be achieved during the year and at the Annual Meeting. Please provide us your feedback on the surveys, as they are important for all of us!

In addition, we would like to invite you to write articles for the next fall edition Post-y. If you have anything on your mind that you would like to share, please let us know. You can send your articles directly to my e-mail betina_lew@urmc.rochester.edu. Also, feel free to use this e-mail address to bring to our attention any suggestions that may improve our work or if you want to volunteer to work with us. I would like to thank you for your participation and am looking forward to serving as the PDA chair.

Postdoctoral Fellows at SOT are Making History

Michele La Merrill

Did you know the PDA has only existed since 2005? Did you attend the 3rd annual PDA luncheon in Baltimore, MD? It was fantastic! The lunch itself was catered, free, and accommodated dietary restrictions. As a vegetarian on a tight travel budget, I found this very appealing. However, this paled in comparison to the diverse array of door prizes that the PDA provided for attendees. The PDA board was thoughtful enough to request that only persons that had use for some of the highly specialized door prizes should put their name in those drawings. I won 12 metabolomic assays from Metabolon, which allows me to test a remaining hypothesis from my predoctoral research. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the PDA for the lunch and door prizes, and to thank Metabolon and the other companies that donated to the PDA.

Dr. George Corcoran, Past President of the SOT, gave a very inspiring speech about the increasingly important contributions that postdoctoral fellows make to SOT. Dr. Corcoran said,

"I close with a challenge. The asset that is frequently used to characterize gifted professionals at the early stages of their careers is POTENTIAL. I challenge each of you not to be restrained by what some may consider a lack of experience. I must say that I understood my potential when I was at your stage in my career. But too often, I allowed myself to be limited or limited myself by hearing and believing in those limitations...Be everything

you can be, convert your potential energy into kinetic energy, be a leader, be a role model, move us to a powerful and productive future."

This is a historic time for postdoctoral fellows at SOT and you should really be a part of it. The PDA offers you opportunity to connect with other postdoctoral fellows, solidify relationships with previous colleagues, stay abreast of initiatives at SOT, meet the leaders of SOT, win door prizes and eat free food. What more do you need? Being a postdoctoral member is the last time you can easily participate actively in SOT because of your potential. Hereafter, participation in SOT is 100% about the realization of your potential. Participate actively!

Thanks to PDA Luncheon Sponsors

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Bioresources	KU Medical Center

2009 Early Career Scientific Session

Heather Floyd



For the first time, PDA collaborated with Student Advisory Council (SAC) to create the first scientific session highlighting the research of early career scientists. It was a pleasure to work side-by-side with SAC in planning this event. The session, "Gene-Environment Interactions: Epigenetic Pathways in Chronic Disease Promotion and Progression" was well attended and proved to be an exciting milestone for early career scientists. The speakers were Adermi Dosunmu (Department of Biomedical and Pharmaceutical Sciences, University of Rhode Island, Kingston, RI), Carlos Guerrero-Bosagna (School of Molecular Biosciences, Washington State University, Pullman, WA), Wan-Yee Tang (University of Cincinnati College of Medicine, Cincinnati, OH), Donna Ray (University of Michigan Medical School, Ann Arbor, MI). This talented group of speakers did an excellent job and I would like to thank them for their willingness to share their research at this session. This is a great achievement by both the PDA and SAC, demonstrating the support extended by SOT toward the future of toxicology as well as allowing early career scientists the chance to display their accomplishments. Since the session was so well received, we collaborated with SAC to submit a research symposium session for the next meeting addressing alterations to the MAP Kinase signaling in toxicity.

Development of a Gordon Research Seminar For Toxicology Students and Postdocs: Planning and Proposal Stage

Lauren Aleksunes, PDA Councilor

Have you ever attended a Gordon Research Conference? Did you feel intimidated by the knowledgeable and experienced scientists in attendance? If you answered yes, you are not alone. The Gordon Research Conferences recognize that students and postdoc fellows may not be getting the full benefits of attending their meetings.

For those who have never attended one, Gordon Conferences are informal five day meetings focused upon specific scientific topics. Most conferences are held on college campuses where attendees share dorm rooms and eat meals together (~70-150 attendees per conference). Because the research presented at these meetings does not appear in a published abstract book, scientists are more likely to share their recent and intriguing scientific advances. A list of conference topics can be found on the Web site: <http://www.grc.org/>. I have attended a few meetings including "Drug Metabolism" as well as "Mechanisms of Toxicity." From these meetings, I have established strong collaborations and networks and learned much that later influenced my research projects.

However, I always felt that additional attention could have been placed upon students and postdocs that would encourage us to more actively participate in the scientific discussions and debates.

Apparently, I was not alone in these feelings. During the past year, the Gordon Conferences have initiated "Gordon Research Seminars" that are two day sessions held prior to the normal conferences. These seminars are for students and postdocs and are guided by just a couple of established scientists (<http://www.grc.org/students.aspx>). Attention is placed upon career development as well as scientific and professional networking for young investigators. The students and postdocs have opportunities to present research findings during the two day seminar. Following the seminar, attendees participate in the conference where their research reaches an even greater audience of scientists.

The SOT Postdoctoral Association Board has approached the organizers of the "Mechanisms of Toxicity" conference about the development of a Gordon Research Seminar for toxicology students and postdocs. The coordinators of this conference are very enthusiastic about our request and are working with us to design a seminar for the 2011 Gordon Conference. Because we are in the early stages of putting together our proposal, the PDA Board would like to hear from you. Please e-mail me your ideas and suggestions for this seminar (laleksunes@kumc.edu).

Highlights from the National Postdoctoral Association Annual Meeting

Betina Lew, PDA Chair

The seventh annual meeting of the National Postdoctoral Association (NPA) was held at the end of March 2009, in Houston, Texas. The majority of the talks and poster sessions took place at the University of Texas Cancer Center, however the conference was hosted by a large number of institutions located in Texas, such as Baylor College of Medicine, Rice University, The University of Houston, The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston, The University of Texas M. D. Anderson Cancer Center, The University of Texas M. D. Anderson Cancer Center Office of Student and Alumni Affairs and The University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston. The extensive collaboration between such highly regarded institutions reinforces the importance of NPA values, which include:

- Postdocs make invaluable contributions to the research enterprise
- Postdocs share personal responsibility for the progression and outcome of their careers
- Disparities within the postdoctoral community should be corrected to the maximum extent practicable, while recognizing the unique needs of each stakeholder
- The US research community should make every effort to attract the best and brightest men and women
- from all groups, including international scholars, underrepresented minorities, and persons with disabilities

The main meeting opened Saturday with an address given by Stacy Gelhaus, PhD, the current chair of the NPA Board of Directors, during which she highlighted some of the accomplishments of the organization from 2003 through 2008. Dr. Gelhaus noted that, since its inception in 2003, the NPA has assumed a leadership role in addressing the many issues facing members of the postdoctoral community. Some of the accomplishments of the NPA that were mentioned include: providing effective advocacy on issues affecting postdocs; for example, the NPA submitted a white paper calling for policy changes within the National Institutes of Health (NIH), including the establishment of expanded career transition funding mechanisms. As a result, the NIH established the Pathways to Independence award to help postdocs successfully transition to tenure-track faculty positions. Dr. Gelhaus also presented some interesting facts and data about postdocs in the US:

- Postdocs are responsible for a large proportion of the research output of institutions
- 43% of the primary authors who published research articles in *Science* were postdocs
- A large number of grants to principle investigators are based on research completed by postdocs in their labs; in addition, postdocs are responsible for some or all of the grant writing in many labs

Data regarding diversity:

- 68% of all postdocs in science, engineering and health fields at academic institutions are male
- 32% are female
- Only 7.4% of postdocs who obtained their doctoral degree in the US were under-represented minorities
- 55% of postdocs working in doctoral degree-granting institutions were non-US citizens/temporary visa holders; 45% were US citizens/permanent residents

The majority of postdocs will pursue, out of choice or necessity, non-academic careers:

- In 2003, 19.8% of science and education (S&E) degree-holders who received their degrees in the previous 4-6 years were in tenure-track or tenured positions at 4-year institutions of higher education
- The share of recent doctoral degree-holders hired into full-time faculty positions fell from 74% to 44% from 1972 to 2003. At research universities, the decline was from 60% to 31%. Conversely, the overall share of recent S&E doctoral degree-holders who reported being in postdoc positions rose from 13% to 34% overall, and from 22% to 48% at research universities.

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WANTED: Career Development for Toxicology Positions

Lauren Aleksunes, PDA Councilor

The PDA heard your requests for more career development initiatives in our last SOT postdoc survey. At the 2009 Annual SOT Meeting in Baltimore, MD, the PDA, in partnership with the Toxicologist of African Origin Special Interest Group, sponsored an informational session entitled "Career Opportunities and Transitions in Toxicology." Despite our session being placed later in the SOT itinerary (late Wednesday afternoon), the turnout for our session was fantastic. CRAD registered 199 attendees for our 90 minute session with early career scientists (less than 5 years of toxicology experience) accounting for greater than 60% of attendees. Speakers represented diverse career sectors and included James Lamb (Exponent Consulting), Myrtle Davis (National Cancer Institute), Nancy Gillett (Charles River Laboratories, Inc.), David Jacobson Kram (U.S. FDA), Jerry Hjelle (Monsanto Company), and Michael Dourson (Toxicology Excellence for Risk Assessment). At the end of the individual talks, the speakers answered questions during an interactive panel discussion. The survey responses for our session were very complimentary and the ideas put forth from attendees will be used to design and develop future career workshops. Thank you again for the great attendance at the PDA informational career session.



Speakers in the session included, from left to right, Nancy Gillett, Myrtle Davis, James Lamb, Michael Dourson, David Jacobson Kram, and Jerry Hjelle.



Career Corner

Jeff Tepper, Consultant

This article is reprinted with the permission of Northern California SOT. The article was featured in the Northern California SOT newsletter.

Are you interested in being a toxicology consultant? It was a career path that I had been thinking about for a number of years. Finally, over a year ago, I took my first steps towards consulting as a full time occupation. By way of introduction, I've been working in the pharmacology/toxicology arena for more than 25 years. My skills were honed as a Research Scientist working with the US EPA, a Senior Scientist in the Immunology Dept. at Genentech, the Director of Pharmacology at Bayer Biotechnology, a VP of Pharm/Tox at Catalyst BioSciences and as a Co-Founder of Aerovance, a biotech company. During those years, I also had the opportunity to serve as a consultant to various government, academic, contract research organizations and biotech companies. But in those jobs, it was always "in addition" to my regular full time job. So despite those experiences, I was still nervous about whether I could "make it" as a consultant. This is called "consultant's angst," as I learned at a great course offered by the Round Table of Toxicology Consultants (RTC). Most consultants, even those with many years of experience, still feel it. It is primarily the concern of when the next job will come.

Other than worry, what do toxicology consultants do? So far, what I've been doing is helping companies design, implement and oversee their pharmacology/toxicology programs, as well as, writing and reviewing reports, publications, investigator brochures and INDs. I've also been involved in troubleshooting problems with studies, impurities and helping select delivery devices. Really, I do pretty much the same kind of work that I did when I was at a company, except that now the work comes from many companies. It is learning about new products, new indications and meeting new people that I find so exciting about this career. I have toxicology consultant friends who also work on legal cases, but I've not tried that yet. However, as a consultant, I think you need to be prepared to do anything a client wants, as long as you feel it is within your scope of knowledge (or you



have knowledgeable friends who are willing to help!). I've always tried to be very upfront with clients about what I can and can't do.

As in any job, being a consultant has its pros and cons. First, it does require diligence, because it can be easy to find distractions when working from home. Since I had worked from home at least one day a week for the last seven years, I was pretty sure that wouldn't be too much of a problem. Having a comfortable chair and being cozy with your computer are necessities. I find that I spend most of my day either reading or typing into my computer. Most communication transpires via e-mail, with only limited human interaction. Being an extrovert, the lack of communication with people on a regular basis has been a downside for me. To combat loneliness, I try to spend some time each day networking. Having flexible work hours is great, but you need to be very mindful of client deadlines and crunch periods. Since your business is almost solely dependent on your reputation, it is best if your client's schedule is your schedule. I do miss seeing projects/programs come to a conclusion, but if you do a good job, your clients may reappear allowing you to find out what happened. You can do a lot of traveling if you want, but I know consultants who claim to never travel. People always seem to be interested in how much money consultants make. In a survey taken by the RTC, the median income of 79 established consultants was between \$150,000 and \$200,000 (of course, your results may vary). Overall, I'm enjoying my experience and would be happy to chat with anyone about different careers in toxicology. You can contact me at TepperTox@aim.com or give me a buzz at (510) 717-1413.

View From the Top: An Interview with Dr. John Doull

Ronnie Yeager

When asked to contribute to the upcoming issue of the Post-Y newsletter on behalf of the Central States Chapter, I thought this would be an outstanding opportunity to interview one of the most recognizable members of our chapter, Dr. John Doull. At present, Dr. Doull is Professor Emeritus of Pharmacology at the University of Kansas Medical Center in Kansas City, KS. He was recently awarded the first Founders Award by the Society of Toxicology for his distinguished and productive career in toxicology.

We have all read the textbook...Casarett and Doull's toxicology textbook is widely regarded as the gold standard of textbooks in the field of toxicology. In this interview, Dr. Doull discusses a range of topics from the 1st edition of Casarett and Doull's to the early days of SOT up through the planning for the upcoming 50th anniversary in 2011. He offers great advice to young scientists and stresses that toxicologists have a social responsibility that cannot be forgotten.

Below are the questions and answers from my discussion with Dr. John Doull.

Q: What is your education background and who or what got you interested in science?

A: I first became interested in science, in particular chemistry, in high school. I had a great high school chemistry teacher and that is why I pursued a Bachelor's Degree in Chemistry from Montana State University in Bozeman, MT. After finishing at Montana State, I entered the Pharmacology graduate program at The University of Chicago. Upon completing my Ph.D. in Pharmacology, Dr. Eugene Maximilian Karl Geiling, the chair of the Pharmacology department, approached me about pursuing an M.D. [Dr. Geiling worked with John Jacob Abel, the founder of ASPET and The Journal of Pharmaceutical and Experimental Therapeutics]. He told me that if I was going to teach in a medical school that I should have an M.D. I told him that I would have to think about pursuing an M.D. and he told me that I could take the weekend to think it over, but that I was already scheduled for my first Medical School course the following Monday.

Q: Can you describe the need for toxicology textbooks at the time you organized the 1st edition of Casarett and Doull's toxicology textbook?

A: There were a few toxicology textbooks available before Casarett and Doull's. However most of the books focused on specific agents, such as metals or pesticides. In fact, Dr. Kenneth DuBois (University of Chicago) had a textbook that was quite good, and it's a shame that he never had a chance to follow-up with another book. Lou Casarett and I were on the toxicology study section and we organized the first edition of Casarett and Doull's toxicology textbook. [Dr. Doull pulled the 1st edition of the textbook (© 1975) from a book shelf in his office, and reviewed the table of contents recounting the background and contribution of the individuals who authored the first chapters of this historic book. Casarett and Doull's toxicology textbook is now available in the 7th edition, and is edited by Dr. Curtis Klaassen].

Q: How has biomedical research changed during your lifetime?

A: Many scientific fields, including medicine, have become more fractionated. In the past, science education and research were more comprehensive. You had an idea of what people in other scientific disciplines were studying. I'm afraid that if people focus solely on their own specific research projects, that we will lose comprehensive concern for large-scale scientific issues.

Q: Each year, the Central States Chapter honors the accomplishments of a scientist with the John Doull Award. What do you feel are the characteristics of a successful nominee for an award in your name?

A: The primary criterion is distinction in the field of toxicology. In addition, it is great that the award winner is from the Midwest or has roots in the Midwest. That makes this award special to the Central States Chapter.

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Risk Assessment Specialty Section Update

Jerry Campbell

The Risk Assessment Specialty Section reception in Baltimore was well attended as usual. A lively point-counterpoint discussion of the low dose linear extrapolation for non-cancer risk assessment issues raised by the recent White et al. (2009) article in EHP included presentations by Lorenz Rhomberg and Gary Ginsberg. This debate is of critical importance to the society as a whole as it will likely influence regulatory decisions, the direction of research dollars and the relevancy of toxicology well into the 21st century. Perry Gehring Awards were given for the best graduate student abstract (M. Valcke, "An assessment of the impact of exposure route on the interindividual variability factor (IVF) for drinking water contaminants (DWCs)") and best postdoc abstract (S. Auerbach, "Independent validation of gene expression-based hepatocarcinogenicity prediction models"), and other RASS awards include the best abstract award (C. Mori), best paper advancing the science of risk assessment (Andersen et al., 2008, Toxicol Sci 105(2):368-83) and best paper demonstrating an application of risk assessment (Ginsberg et al., 2008, J Toxicol Environ Health, 71(3):166-95). This year Michael Bolger received one of SOT's most prestigious awards, the Arnold J. Lehman Award, for his major contributions to risk assessment.

One of highest profile activities of RASS is the ongoing RASS teleconferences. Annie Jarabek at U.S. EPA has been instrumental in continuing this monthly series highlighting important concepts to toxicology as a whole. Over the past year presentations from a number of prominent risk assessors and toxicologist were given including topics such as dose response, cumulative risk, life stage susceptibility, PK/PD modeling, challenges in predicting multiroute exposures and toxicology testing in the 21st century (based on the NAS report). Presentations for the last year can be downloaded from The RASS website.

A final note: In an attempt to foster discussions, RASS encourages all members to use the Risk Assessment Forum at <http://www.toxicology.org/ai/news/toast.asp?sub=show&action=topics&fid=29> for any questions and issues related to risk assessment. Contact me at Jcampbell@thehamner.org .

Mixtures Specialty Section Update

Eva McLanahan

The Mixtures Specialty Section (MSS, founded 2006) aims to serve as the focal point for interaction of members of the Society of Toxicology interested in mixtures toxicology. The MSS develops, proposes, and conducts scientific programs and educational activities that emphasize the latest developments in mixtures toxicology. At the 2009 Annual Meeting in Baltimore, MD, the MSS organized and sponsored a Continuing Education course titled "Current Approaches in Mixture Risk Assessment" that had over 150 attendees. In addition, the MSS sponsored one workshop and endorsed a historical highlight, a roundtable, a regional interest session and three symposia.

Several awards were presented at the MSS reception Monday, March 16, 2009. Kim de Bruijne (University of North Carolina) won the *Journal of Applied Toxicology* Award for best student presentation in mixtures for work titled, "Comparing the toxicity of fresh and aged biodiesel and diesel exhaust using separate particle and gaseous exposure systems." Sami Haddad (Université du Québec à Montréal) was awarded the MSS Best Abstract Award (sponsored by John Wiley & Sons Publishers) for his abstract titled, "Pharmacokinetic interactions between bisphenol A and naproxen in humans."

ATTENTION Postdocs! For the 2010 SOT meeting in Salt Lake City, the MSS will be accepting nominations for the best postdoc presentation and the best student presentation. The MSS Wiley Best Postdoctoral Presentation winner will receive a plaque, cash prize, and a gift certificate from John Wiley Publishers. For more information will be please check for updates at the MSS Web page (<http://www.toxicology.org/isot/ss/Mix/index.asp>).

The MSS also congratulates and welcomes Cynthia Rider, the new 2009-2010 postdoctoral representative for the Specialty Section.

Putting Toxicology to Public Health at the Occupational and Public Health Specialty Section

Michele La Merrill

You probably hear about research translation and bench side-to-bedside work frequently. Now more than ever, the science and regulatory communities are emphasizing that basic research, such as toxicology, must strive to integrate with clinical and public health research to more quickly and effectively increase societal quality of life. While many toxicology postdoctoral fellows have developed collaborations with clinical and public health research, many more have not. However, it is clear that fellows without these collaborations would also like to see the relevance of their work in society. Perhaps you are not actively involved in translational collaborations because your own mentors do not know researchers in a translational field. Maybe the basic research angle being investigated doesn't have an immediate and obvious translation. Or perhaps your programs offer no mechanisms to be exposed to both basic and applied toxicology research.

For those fellows who want their work to be an informative contribution to toxicology, OPHSS is

their specialty section! OPHSS membership allows for informal networking with occupational and public health scientists who have toxicology at heart. Interactions with the OPHSS membership may be the gateway to applied toxicology collaborations of variable scope. Through your colleagues at OPHSS, you may learn what questions must be answered in your field of basic toxicology research in order to make an important decision, or simply what dose and route of exposure would corroborate best with current applied toxicology research. By understanding the context of your work in occupational and public health, you will design higher impact studies, and gain the satisfaction of knowing your toxicology research makes a difference in people lives. At the SOT meeting, the OPHSS business meeting is a luncheon that also features a keynote translational toxicology research presentation. Mark your calendar to attend the OPHSS luncheon at the 2010 SOT Annual Meeting to begin getting the most out of OPHSS. Are you already reaping the OPHSS benefits of applied and basic toxicology interactions? We want to hear from you! Please share how your research involves both applied and basic toxicology research and you will be featured in an upcoming OPHSS newsletter.

For more information about OPHSS, you can contact me at Michele.LaMerrill@mssm.edu

Carcinogenesis Specialty Section Update

Susan Tilton

The Carcinogenesis Specialty Section (CSS) had an active year at the 2009 SOT Annual meeting. CSS was the primary sponsor of two symposia including "Nitrate and Oxidative Stress in Toxicology and Disease" and "Epigenetic Implications for Toxicology." CSS also endorsed several other symposia, workshops, roundtables, and a continuing education course. The annual CSS reception, which was held at the Convention Center in Baltimore, MD, was a wonderful opportunity to socialize and network with colleagues. We would like to congratulate our first-place postdoctoral award winner, Xuefeng Ren of UC Berkeley for the abstract titled "*Alteration of H4K16 acetylation via Sas2 in yeast and MYST1 in humans is associated with increased sensitivity of arsenic toxicity.*" Xuefeng received a plaque and \$500 cash prize at our annual reception and will be the CSS

postdoctoral representative during the 2009-2010 year. CSS would like to encourage postdoctoral fellows to submit their abstracts to our specialty section for award consideration in 2010. To qualify, your work must be related to the field of carcinogenesis. The due date for submission will be in October-November 2009. To find out more information, check out the CSS Web site at <http://www.toxicology.org/ISOT/SS/carc/home.html> or contact Susan Tilton at stilton@fhcrc.org.



North Carolina Regional Chapter Update

Brante P. Sampey

The North Carolina chapter of the SOT (NCSOT) is an amazingly diverse group of scientists with interests in the field of toxicology. Currently, the NCSOT membership is just over 200 with individuals representing academia, industry, government and contract research organizations. Our presidential succession is equally diverse with the past president coming from GSK/RTI, the current president representing the EPA, the vice president from NCSU, and the VP-elect from the Hamner Institute. One thing that is consistent among all of these leaders is their interest in supporting and promoting postdoctoral training and career development. In a recent NCSOT newsletter Dr. Thomas was quoted as saying the NCSOT plays a major role in "...encouraging the next generation of scientists. NC SOT has a critical mission of fostering the development of young scientists. Many of us are involved directly in pre- and postdoctoral training. All of us have an obligation to encourage the intellectual and professional growth of trainees." It is clear from these remarks that the current president (and past presidents) of the NCSOT consider its postdoctoral scholars as valuable assets to the society.

The Fall NCSOT Meeting is in early preparation and will once again present many opportunities for postdocs from across the state. The topics of our regional meetings always address current topics of interest to all, regardless of your chosen field of study. The Fall Meeting recruits top local and national scientists who speak on a spectrum of issues related to the meeting topic, which accommodates the broad interests of the chapter's membership. For postdoctoral scholars, the Fall Meeting is also a great forum to win money! I would like to encourage all NCSOT postdocs (with less than 5 years postdoc experience) to apply for the Presidents Award for Research Competition (PARC). PARC winners receive a \$500 prize and are invited to give a brief presentation of their work at the Fall NCSOT Meeting, and the runner-up receives a cash award as well. This is an excellent way to make your work stand out in the Tox community, and your topic does need not coincide with the topic of the Fall Meeting. Last year's winner of the PARC was Dr. Eric Tokar (NCI at HIEHS) who gave a short talk pertaining to his research on arsenic-induced malignant transformation. The second and third place winners of the PARC were Dr. Scott Auerbach (NTP, NIEHS) and Dr. Brante Sampey (UNC-CH), respectively. The submission deadline for the PARC will be prior to the meeting, so keep watch for the PARC announcement on the NCSOT website (below).

Finally, can you say NETWORKING?! The NCSOT and particularly the Fall Meeting brings together some of the top local scientists in the field from academia, government, and industry. In addition to the advantage of a (smaller) Regional Chapter meeting, the NCSOT is once again hosting a discussion panel on careers in toxicology for graduate students and postdocs, a career development program established by former NCSOT President Dr. Brenda Faiola. This free pizza luncheon offers a relaxed environment where you can learn details of careers in toxicology from established scientists in diverse fields. Details on the Fall Meeting and how to apply for the PARC honors will soon be posted at <http://www.toxicology.org/isot/rc/nc/ncsot.htm>.

Get involved with North Carolina's local toxicologist network and take advantage of the diversity of its members. For those of you who have not yet joined NCSOT, you may apply for membership on-line or when you register for the Fall Meeting. Cost for postdoctoral membership is nominal (\$5/year) and the benefits of membership in the NCSOT are only limited by your efforts. Come and join your local peers for a day of food, conversation and science at the Fall Meeting on the EPA/NIEHS campus in the Research Triangle Park.

Please feel free to e-mail me with any questions you may have.
Brante Sampey, Sampey@email.unc.edu



Pacific Northwest Regional Chapter Update

Susan Tilton

PANWAT (Pacific Northwest Association of Toxicologists, a.k.a. the PNW Regional Chapter) would like to encourage SOT postdocs in the Pacific Northwest to become members of our Regional Chapter and participate in the annual PANWAT meeting. We have recently expanded our chapter to include members in Alaska, Montana, Idaho, Washington, Oregon and the Vancouver, Canada, area. At the 2009 SOT Annual Meeting, PANWAT held a joint reception with the Northern California Chapter at the Hilton hotel in Baltimore, MD. This event included a wine raffle sponsored by NorCal and was a wonderful opportunity to socialize and network with friends and colleagues all along the west coast.

Our chapter holds a meeting each fall at different locations across the region. The 25th Annual Meeting held last September at Oregon State University CH2M Hill Alumni Center in Corvallis, OR, was a success with a large turnout of students and scientists from diverse backgrounds. The meeting covered all aspects of modern toxicology ranging from environmental to molecular toxicology with prime focus on human health. Our next meeting will be held in Seattle, WA, and our theme will be 'Drug Safety and Toxicology in Drug Development'. Students and postdocs are awarded cash prizes for best oral and poster presentations. These meetings are a great opportunity to network with scientists in our area so please check our Web site for updates and detailed information.

On a final note, the PANWAT Web site was redesigned this year and now includes a specific page for students and postdocs (Student & Post-doc Corner) with information on career resources and on how to become more involved in SOT and PANWAT. We are encouraging our members to post regional job and internship opportunities through our newsletter, which will be posted on our Web site. Our site is also a good resource for linking to membership renewal forms, the chapter directory, annual meeting programs and general information about our region and members. Bookmark our link at <http://www.toxicology.org/isot/rc/panwat/index.asp>. Please contact Susan Tilton at stilton@fhcrc.org if you have any questions.

Ohio Valley Regional Chapter Update

Raja Settivari

The Ohio Valley SOT (OVSOT) Regional Chapter strives to be a forum for the exchange of information and ideas among toxicologists in our region, which includes Indiana, Kentucky, Ohio, and West Virginia. Ohio Valley SOT has been a very successful and active local chapter of SOT. One of the highest priorities for OVSOT is to encourage and support the participation of local undergraduate and graduate student members in their research endeavors and giving them an opportunity to present their research at the annual meeting. With the help of financial support from our regional sponsors, Ohio Valley SOT sponsored two travel awards for 2009 SOT meeting, the Battelle Minority/Women Travel Award and the best Ph.D. student oral presentation. The second award also determines a seat on the executive council as the OVSOT student representative.

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Women in Toxicology Special Interest Group Update

Sarah Campion, PDA Co-Chair

At the SOT 2009 Annual Meeting WIT sponsored a number of successful sessions, including two roundtable sessions discussing the National Children's Study and how to set a safe starting dose in initial clinical trials with biotherapeutics. WIT has submitted several proposals for the 2010 meeting concerning women's health, gender differences, and minority issues, which should prove to be great additions to the 2010 Annual Meeting program. The 2009 meeting in Baltimore marked the first awarding of the WIT Vera W. Hudson and Elizabeth K. Weisburger Scholarship Fund Student Award. Elizabeth K. Weisburger, a 35-year SOT member and role model for other women scientists, resides in the Baltimore area and was able to attend the WIT reception at the 2009 meeting. Her attendance and speech were the highlights of the reception.

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Highlights from the National Postdoctoral Association Annual Meeting, *Continued from page 5*

With these data in mind, the conference attendees were encouraged to work further toward optimization of the years dedicated to postdoctoral training programs. In this regard, the meeting focused on showing the officers of the postdoctoral assembly (PDA) and postdoctoral offices (PDO) the importance of offering enough tools to postdoctoral fellows that will allow them to recognize their transferable skills and develop new skills that may be helpful as they set and pursue their career goals.

Saturday's main meeting included a presentation by Peter Fiske, Ph.D., President and CEO of PAX Mixer, Inc. and author of several books aimed to help scientists with career development. His talk, entitled *Putting your Science to Work: Creating New Options and Opportunities via the Postdoc*, presented practical career strategies and tactics that postdocs can use to increase their chances of finding a satisfying and fulfilling professional path. Dr. Fiske, with a dynamic and vivid lecture, pointed out the fact that most postdocs do not appreciate the value and transferability of the skills acquired during their postdoctoral years. He mentioned, for example that postdocs function well in varied environments, communicate well, are full of creativity, perform well in stressful situations, and are used to living within the constraints of a relatively low annual income. Dr. Fiske's advice in pursuing a successful career was that the postdoc should "think of science as a career and adopt the 80:10:10 rule: 80% of the time should be focused on key values (such as bench work, papers, grants, etc.), 10% should be focused solely on career development, while the remaining 10% should be used in self-promotion and networking." In addition, he mentioned that the skills that are truly important for personal development include: leadership, persuasion, humor, tact, understanding risk and rewards, investment and return, organization, sensitivity, drive, perspective, and creativity; these are skills that most people are able to learn. Dr. Fiske suggested a journal as a helpful tool in identifying true professional and personal passions and skills, and that conducting a self-guidance exercise to recognize them may be critical in career development and pursuit of happiness.

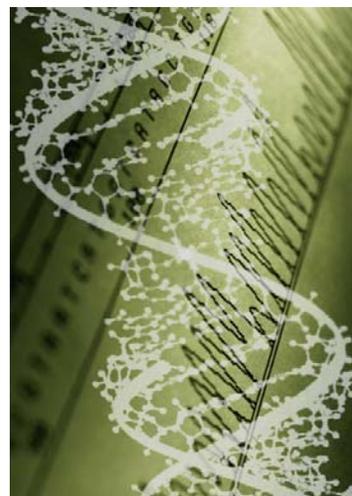
The afternoon keynote address was delivered by Nobel Laureate Peter Doherty, Ph.D., faculty member at St. Jude Children's Research Hospital in Memphis and the University of Melbourne, Australia, and author of several books including *The Beginner's Guide to Winning the Nobel Prize: Advice for Young Scientists*. During a brilliant presentation, Dr. Doherty offered sage advice regarding ethics in scientific research: "be ethical, be generous, recognize the contribution of competitors and give credit to those who came before you..."

The poster session held Saturday afternoon highlighted different postdoctoral programs established at institutions across North America. It was a good opportunity to learn more about creation of PDAs and PDOs in various institutions. In addition, some officers presented strategies for career development and responsible conduct of research (RCR) program for postdocs. According to the 2004 Sigma Xi survey, most postdocs have not had formal ethics training. This training is now required for all NIH trainees and (effective 10/01/2009) all National Science Foundation (NSF)-supported postdocs. Some of the RCR topics are:

- Misconduct – falsification, fabrication and plagiarism
- RCR-related decisions such as author lists, choosing which data to present, determining project ownership
- Data acquisition, management, sharing and ownership, conflict of interest and commitment, human subjects and animal welfare, publication practices and responsible authorship, mentor/trainee responsibilities, peer review, collaborative science, difficult conversation and communication.

The NPA provides RCR resources at <http://www.nationalpostdoc.org/publications/rcr> .

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Highlights from the National Postdoctoral Association Annual Meeting, *Continued from page 13*

Sunday's plenary session featured a panel discussion on the value of individual development plans (IDPs), with representatives from the Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology (FASEB) and institutions that have implemented mandatory IDPs. Philip Clifford, PhD, Associate Dean for Postdoctoral Education and Professor of Anesthesiology and Physiology, Medical College Wisconsin, was the moderator for the session. Jennifer Hobin, PhD, presented data about IDPs and justification of the usage of such plans. *IDP* was created in 2002 by the FASEB training subcommittee (Julian Preston and Phil Clifford). It represents recognition that career opportunities for scientists were changing, and that there was a need for increased attention to career and professional development for postdocs. IDP is a "framework" or "planning process" for identifying short and long-term goals, and includes helpful steps for achieving them, such as clarifying expectations and milestones and facilitating communication between postdocs and mentors. IDP is an NPA recommended practice and various institutions are tailoring IDPs to suit their unique needs. One of the biggest concerns identified during IDP development was that faculty were not engaged in the program. In addition, almost 60% of the postdocs who participated in the survey conducted by NPA were not familiar with IDPs. Less than 50% of the postdocs that were familiar with the IDP concept actually developed an IDP.

In addition to plenary and poster sessions, a variety of interactive workshops on Saturday afternoon and Sunday morning included managing your relationship with your supervisor, rational career planning for scientists, mentoring trainees in communication skills, responsible conduct of research, and campus perspectives on diversity.

Overall, the meeting was very productive, dynamic and interactive. Our PDA for SOT is focused on adopting further career development practices for postdocs. Currently, our committee presents an annual award for best postdoctoral publication, provides a career development session at each Annual Meeting, and most recently, has developed a webinar in career development and a blog to facilitate communication between officers and postdoc members of SOT. The topics developed and discussed at the NPA annual meeting resulted in much insight on how we can improve our commitment to, and methods for, promoting career advancement and success of postdocs in toxicology.

Useful links and resources for postdocs:

<http://www.nationalpostdoc.org>

Put your science to work – Peter Fiske

The pathfinder: how to choose and change your career – Nicholas Lore

The 250 job interview questions you'll most likely be asked – Peter Veruki

Don't forget: if you are job hunting, the SOT Web site has a job bank that is FREE for members!

GOOD LUCK!

*The author acknowledges Dr. Loretta Collins, science writer, for her review of the text.



View From the Top: An Interview with Dr. John Doull, *Continued from page 8*

Q: *The Department of Pharmacology, Toxicology, and Therapeutics at the University of Kansas Medical Center (KUMC) invites three distinguished scientists to present seminars at the annual Doull Symposium. What started this annual tradition?*

A: At the time, we (KUMC) were primarily a pharmacology department, and Dr. Klaassen thought it would be a good idea to invite three toxicologists to give seminars in our department. Actually, I was brought to this department for toxicology. They (the department) wanted a program similar to that of The University of Chicago. To this day, we still invite distinguished toxicologists to speak at the annual Doull Symposium and then have a celebration in the evening at Dr. Klaassen's home.

Q: *What does a typical SOT meeting involve for you?*

A: I really enjoy attending the Merit Lecture. I can think back to the first few SOT meetings. There were only a few hundred members at the time. I remember sitting in the hallway of the hotel before I presented my first paper at an SOT meeting. I was approached by an older gentleman that asked about my research. He reassured me that I would do just fine. The older gentleman was Dr. Arnold Lehman, director of the FDA and one of the founders of SOT. This year at SOT I had to go to many committee meetings to plan for the upcoming 50th anniversary of SOT in 2011. We are working on a book that outlines the historical merits of SOT and contains a collection of essays from past SOT presidents.

Ohio Valley Regional Chapter Update, *Continued from page 12*

The 2009 Society of Toxicology was a great success for the Ohio Valley SOT Regional Chapter. Members of OVSOT won a few awards sponsored by the Society of Toxicology at the 2009 SOT Annual Meeting (Best poster award from the Neurotoxicology Specialty Section of SOT and young investigator merit award from ASIO, Special Interest Group of SOT). OVSOT had a fun mixer at the SOT meeting on the 17th of March at a local pub and has already discussed a location for the mixer at next year's SOT meeting.

OVSOT held its first ever election for a postdoctoral representative and the executive council voted to appoint me to serve immediately. I have enjoyed serving as the first postdoctoral representative and am excited to begin to officially serve my full term for OVSOT. You can contact me at settivari@gmail.com. I look forward to contributing significantly to its long-term goals.

Women in Toxicology Special Interest Group Update, *Continued from page 12*

Her memories of Vera W. Hudson, in honor of whom this award was established, along with stories detailing her career path and decisions, provided inspiration for young female scientists. While the Vera W. Hudson and Elizabeth K. Weisburger award is only for graduate students, the WIT Student Achievement Award is open to postdocs. I encourage postdocs to apply for this award for the 2010 meeting in Salt Lake City. Details about this award can be found on the WIT Web site: <http://www.toxicology.org/isot/SIG/WIT/index.asp>. If anyone is looking to become more involved in SOT, and also WIT, we are seeking a new postdoctoral representative for 2009-2010. If you are interested please contact me, Sarah Champion, Sarah_Campion@brown.edu, or any other PDA board member.



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