

The Post-y Spring 2010

Semi-annual Newsletter of the Society of Toxicology Postdoctoral Assembly

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Message From the Chair

Sarah Campion

My name is Sarah Campion, and I am delighted to serve as the 2010-2011 Chair of the SOT PDA. Over the past year I have enjoyed working with SOT postdocs, members of the PDA Board, and SOT Council and staff as the Vice Chair of the PDA. It was a pleasure to work with the outgoing board members who all did an excellent job over the last year. Throughout this productive year I have learned a lot about SOT and the PDA, and am confident that the PDA Board and all members of the Postdoctoral Assembly can work together over the coming year to plan more exciting activities to address the needs of postdocs within the Society.

We have already begun to plan events for postdocs throughout the year, as well as at the 2011 Annual Meeting. We hope to continue the series of successful webinars that the PDA has organized over the last year. These 3 career development based webinars were very well attended and continue to be a valuable resource for postdoctoral fellows where they are posted on our [Web page](#). We are already beginning to plan our first webinar this year which will address some of the issues faced by international postdocs. In order to continue to provide SOT postdocs with valuable information to meet their needs, we plan to develop additional webinar topics based on the feedback we receive through our surveys.

There are many other exciting events this year, including the second annual National Postdoc Appreciation Day on September 24, 2010. In addition, with the 50th Anniversary of SOT taking place at the Annual Meeting this year

the PDA has some special activities planned. We will of course continue our tradition of the PDA Luncheon, where the presentation of the Best Postdoctoral Publication Awards will take place. I encourage all postdocs to access the award description, rules and application deadline information on the SOT award website and to consider applying for this award.

One of the PDA's continuing goals for this year is to improve our lines of communication between the Board and postdoc representatives as well as among postdocs within SOT. We will continue to update our Facebook Group "Society of Toxicology Postdocs" and plan to begin using ToXchange to communicate with postdocs of the Society. In addition to these means of communication, if you have any questions or concerns or would just like to become more involved in PDA activities please contact me at Sarah_Campion@brown.edu.

Thank you all for your involvement with SOT and I look forward to serving as the PDA Chair for the upcoming year.



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Message From the Outgoing Chair

Betina Lew

This has been an extraordinary year for the SOT PDA, We have accomplished so much and many postdoctoral members were involved in the activities promoted by the Board, in the Annual Meeting and during the whole year! Our already traditional luncheon took place Tuesday at the Annual Meeting and received lots of positive feedback from our community. Once again three SOT postdoctoral members were awarded the Best Postdoctoral Publication Award. We received many applications, all of them of extremely high quality, reflecting the excellent scientific work that is being conducted by our trainees. The PDA also co-chaired a scientific session in which the postdocs presented their research. During the Annual Meeting we also sponsored a very well-attended career development session targeting early career scientists.

Beyond the Annual Meeting, we had the opportunity of offering three excellent web-based seminars: *Toxicology Career Strategies for Early Career Professionals*; *From Postdoc to Faculty: Climbing the Ladder of Academia*; and *From Graduate Student to Postdoc: Insight Across Career Paths*. In addition to promoting advancement of our trainees in toxicology, those activities also strengthen the relationship between the postdocs and more experienced SOT members.

It has been a pleasure and I feel very fortunate for having the opportunity of serving as the chair of the PDA. We are very proud of all the hard work and progress that the PDA Board has made in the year of 2009-2010. I would like to extend many thanks to the 2009-2010 PDA board, **Sarah Campion**, Vice Chair, **Alison Harrill**, Secretary, **Patrick Shaw**, Treasurer, and **Lauren Aleksunes**, Councilor. I would also like to thank our SOT liaison **Betty Eidemiller** and our SOT Council Representative **Patti Ganey** for their mentorship and contributions to the Board. The new officers were very involved at the 2010 Annual Meeting and have been extremely influential over the past few months. Finally I would like to thank the SOT SS, SIG, and RC postdoc representatives who worked along with the board officers in writing articles for the Post-y, volunteering at the Annual Meeting events, and representing the PDA on various boards throughout the Society. All of the accomplishments of the SOT PDA are fruits of a big team effort!



Meet the Board

Marie Fortin

The Postdoctoral Assembly Executive Board is constituted of 5 postdoctoral fellow members of the Society plus one the Council Contact. The Chair, **Sarah**, oversees the Postdoctoral Assembly activities and is the primary contact person. The Vice Chair, **Michele**, assists the Chair, prepares to serve as the next Chair and oversees the postdoctoral section of the Web site and the Best Postdoctoral Publication Awards. The Secretary, **Vijay**, records meeting minutes and serves as the point of communication to other committees and with the PDA representatives to other SOT Committees (e.g., Student Advisory, Membership, and Education). The Treasurer, **Marie**, monitors funds, conducts the annual postdoc survey, and assists with election procedures. The Councilor, **Anne**, serves as a point of communication for the postdoctoral membership to the Board, including oversight of the postdoctoral representatives from Regional Chapters, Special Interest Groups, and Specialty Sections. Michael Waalkes is the Council liaison this year and, Betty Eidemiller is our precious SOT liaison. Together, we look forward to serving the postdocs of the SOT and we hope to hear from you!



Sarah Campion



Michele La Merrill



Anne Loccisano



Vijay Kale



Marie Fortin

PDA Outreach: Developing Web-Based Seminars

Lauren Aleksunes and Alison Harrill

Web-based seminars (webinars) are becoming a popular way for groups to communicate and to attend seminars from the comfort of their computer. The PDA has committed to sponsoring a few webinars throughout the year in order to provide resources for our membership and connect with postdocs outside of the Annual Meeting. The PDA produced several successful webinars this year on a variety of career development topics for early career scientists. Topics for this year included an overview of careers in industry, information on postdoctoral fellowships in different sectors, and how to prepare for a career in academia. These webinars continue to be a resource for SOT members and can be accessed online at <http://www.toxicology.org/ai/spd/PD-Resources.asp#Documents>.

Because of the great success of these webinars, the PDA recently organized an online meeting to instruct officers of the Student Advisory Council as well as the new PDA Assembly representatives and Board members on how to develop a webinar. A number of key steps including technical aspects, audience and speaker identification, costs of hosting a webinar, and advertising were addressed. While this meeting was limited to current officers, the PowerPoint slides and a recording of the webinar will shortly be posted to the PDA Web site where it will be accessible to all SOT members. If you are considering producing or participating in an SOT-sponsored webinar, we encourage you to refer to this brief training session.

The next time you are thinking about outreach programs for your Regional Chapter, Specialty Section, or Special Interest Group, consider organizing a webinar – it may save you money and extend the reach and longevity of your message. In addition, if there are topics that you would like to see developed into a webinar that would be relevant broadly to postdoctoral fellows, we invite and encourage you to submit these to the current PDA secretary (Vijay Kale; kalev@muscc.edu).

Career Development Session at the 2010 Annual Meeting

Betina Lew

The PDA sponsored a very successful Career Development Session at the 2010 Annual Meeting named: "Where Do I Go Now: Rational Career Development Planning for Early-Career Scientists". The session was co-chaired by Betina Lew (University of Rochester, Medical Center) and Amy Wang (US EPA) and was attended by more than 200 people. The speakers--Kristen Keefe (University of Utah, Salt Lake City, UT), Douglas Wolf (U.S. EPA, Research Triangle Park, NC), Lori Conlan (NIH, Bethesda, MD), James Popp (Stratxon LLC, Lancaster, PA) and Carol Shreffler (NIEHS, Research Triangle Park, NC)--focused on providing early career scientists with tools to identify, improve, and leverage their skills, easing the complicated process of transitioning from postdoctoral training to a permanent position.

Did you miss the session? No problem, we tapped it for you and it is available at: <http://www.toxicology.org/ai/SPD/PD-whereidoigo.asp>

A Satisfying 2010 Luncheon

Marie Fortin

The 2010 SOT Postdoc Luncheon held on the Tuesday of the Annual Meeting was greatly appreciated by the attendees. Despite a scheduling conflict with the NIH Brown Bag Lunch and overlap with the poster session, a nice number of postdocs took advantage of this opportunity to mingle with other postdocs, to meet the representatives from the Regional Chapters, Specialty Sections, and Special Interests Groups and the officers of the PDA Board. The quality of the meals impressed many and so did the quality of the door prizes.

During the Luncheon, the recipients of the PDA Best Postdoctoral Paper Awards were announced and Betina Lew, 2009-2010 PDA Chair presented the plaques to Nicholas Radio, Manabu Nukaya, and Bret Bessac.



We are already looking forward to the next Luncheon in Washington D.C.

SOT-PDA International Postdoctoral Survey Report

Sudheer Beedanagari

Securing a doctoral or postdoctoral researcher position in one of the US research institutes is a goal of many international students. As rewarding as the experience can be for international scholars, it can also be a daunting experience. Being an international student myself, I realized the number of challenges include cultural, lingual, legal, and behavioral battles you have to overcome before you achieve your dream of securing a permanent position of your choice. In order to help the numbers of SOT-affiliated international students and the postdoc community, the SOT PDA Board has established an *ad hoc* task force to address the issues and challenges that international scholars face. As a team we designed a survey by providing six potential topics that are of interest to international scholars that they might like us to address and we requested them to rank those topics based on their merit. Based on the survey results and from the extensive feed back we received from the survey, international scholars would like to know more about the following three topics, and these will be included as part of a series of programs SOT PDA is planning for the future and at SOT Annual Meetings.

- Transition of an international postdoc to permanent position (number of years as a postdoc, multiple postdoc positions, negotiating salary, approaching your mentor about leaving, relocation, visa status, preparing CV)

- Succeeding in your postdoc as an international scientist (communicating with advisor, career versus technical skills development, work-family balance, workload)

- Visas for postdoc and permanent positions (types of visas, green card sponsorship, sources of information about visas)



The SOT PDA team is in the process of drafting strategies as in how to effectively address these topics through a series of seminars and panel discussions to help the SOT-affiliated international scholars. We are anticipating that we can address at least one or two of these topics before the next annual SOT meeting. I thank the SOT PDA board, International Task Force committee and Betty Eidemiller who were instrumental in achieving this challenging task.

Published an Amazing Paper?

Michele La Merrill

The Postdoctoral Assembly (PDA) of the Society of Toxicology is pleased to announce the Best Postdoctoral Publication Awards (BPPA). These awards were created to recognize talented postdoctoral researchers who have recently published exceptional papers in the field of toxicology. Applications are reviewed by the PDA Board and a committee containing appropriate scientific expertise. The review process follows National Institutes of Health (NIH) conflict of interest policy, confidentiality, and nondisclosure policies. Three awards, each consisting of a plaque and a \$100 cash award, will be presented at the PDA Luncheon during the 50th Anniversary SOT Meeting.

Further information on application materials can be found at: <http://www.toxicology.org/ai/spd/PD-PubAwardAnn.asp>. If you have questions about the BPPA, please e-mail michele.lamerrill@mssm.edu.

Eligibility for 2011 Award Nominations

- The research reported in the paper was conducted while the applicant was engaged in a postdoctoral research experience

- Member of SOT or membership application submitted by award application deadline

- First author on a peer-reviewed paper published on-line or in print, or in press, between June 1, 2009 and October 1, 2010

- Application supported by letter from the research advisor

- Only one paper may be submitted by each applicant

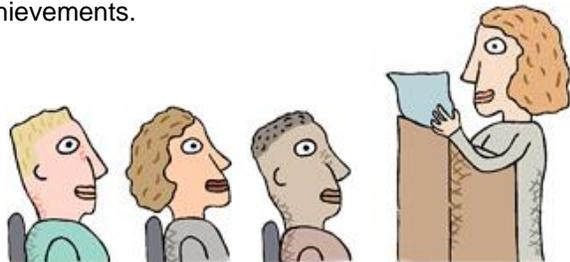
- Leaders of the PDA are eligible but applicants will not participate in the award determination

Applications are due by midnight Eastern Standard Time on October 9, 2010.

The Postdoctoral Assembly and the Student Advisory Council Symposium

Michele La Merrill

In the past several years, the Postdoctoral Assembly (PDA) and the Student Advisory Council (SAC) have worked together to develop a scientific session for the SOT Annual Meeting. The goal of the PDA and SAC in developing symposiums is to provide postdoctoral fellows and students ample opportunity to share their cutting edge research at national SOT meetings. For the 2010 SOT meeting the PDA-SAC put together a very successful full-length symposium on MAP kinase signaling research conducted by postdoctoral fellows and students. The PDA-SAC session has been an unique opportunity for junior toxicologists to present their research and gain recognition for their scientific achievements.



This year, the PDA and the SAC are continuing their tradition of collaboration. For the 2011 SOT meeting, the PDA and SAC have organized another exciting symposium entitled “Developmental Exposure to Environmental Toxicants: From Persistent Toxicities to Diseases.” The symposium is centered around the growing field of developmental toxicology and encompasses a wide range of environmental toxicant exposures and disease outcomes. The talks will highlight the mechanisms underlying persistent pathologies and diseases in endocrine, immune, nervous, metabolic, and reproductive systems following exposures to toxicants during development. For instance, deregulation of these pathways may lead to chronic diseases, such as obesity, diabetes, cancer, and cardiovascular disease, which altogether are responsible for the majority of deaths in the United States. Each presentation will focus on a different target tissue and toxicant to highlight both the breadth and the depth of our most cutting-edge research in the toxicities and molecular mechanisms that support this emerging paradigm. This symposium will not only provide students and postdoctoral fellows an opportunity to present their novel research, but will also draw attention to the integral and expanding field of developmental toxicology. We look forward to seeing you at the symposium. Do you have an idea for the topic of the 2012 PDA-SAC collaborative session? We want to hear from you! Please e-mail me at Michele.lamerrill@mssm.edu with your session topic ideas.

PDA 2011 Education and Career Session

Anne Loccisano

Want to learn how to write effective grants and publications? Or just want to sharpen your scientific writing skills to communicate better?

As toxicologists, we have to communicate our ideas to obtain funding and write about the science we do. It is essential that we be able to articulate new ideas in the form of grants and to disseminate the results of the research in the form of scientific publications; thus, effective communication through writing is fundamental. It's crucial for early career scientists to learn effective writing skills early on. Publishing is imperative, and in academic or non-profit sectors, obtaining sufficient funding is a necessity, especially when establishing a career and reputation. However, most scientists do not receive any training in writing. Writing skills are usually learned by following the style of a mentor or other authors.

Our yearly surveys have indicated that scientific writing is a recurrent concern of our membership and the Annual Meeting is a wonderful opportunity to provide graduate students, postdocs, and other early career scientists with applicable knowledge that they can use immediately. In response to the survey results, the PDA has organized a writing session for the 2011 meeting. The session will feature three speakers with extensive experience in publishing, writing, and reviewing grants, including an editor from a high-impact journal, a reviewer from a major funding agency, and a faculty member with an impressive number of funded grants and published articles.

This session will present to the participants how to prepare an application, including who to talk to at the NIH for guidance. It will provide them with a scientific editor's perspective on the general approaches that enhance the publication success of scientific papers. The essential components of scientific writing will also be reviewed.

Plenty of interactions between the participants and the featured speakers will be allowed and the talks will be tailored toward the needs of emerging scientists. Our aim is to provide graduate students, postdocs, and other early career scientists a handle on the skills that are necessary for good communication, both in the context of grant writing and for journal publication.

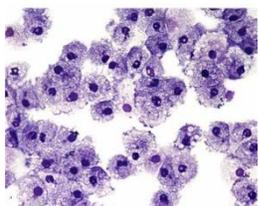
We look forward to seeing you in Washington, DC!

Announcing the 2011 Gordon Research Conference on Cellular and Molecular Mechanisms of Toxicity

Lauren Aleksunes

Are you looking to advance your training in toxicology, meet highly regarded scientists in the field, and have an opportunity to share your research accomplishments? If so, mark your calendar! There will be a Gordon Conference on "Cellular and Molecular Mechanisms of Toxicity" from August 7-12, 2011 at Proctor Academy, NH. Gordon Conferences are small, week-long meetings (typically less than 200 people) held around the world on focused research areas.

The 2011 Gordon Conference on Cellular and Molecular Mechanisms of Toxicity will present cutting edge mechanistic toxicological research underpinning key innovations in environmental, pharmaceutical, and industrial sciences and heralds an exciting period in the quest to predict and circumvent adverse drug and toxicant reactions. The Conference will feature a wide range of topics, such as inflammation and repair/adaptation, non-coding mRNAs, epigenomics, hepatotoxicity, neuroinflammatory diseases, individual susceptibility/adaptation together with new models of *in silico* and *in vivo* predictive toxicology.



The Conference will bring together a collection of investigators who are at the forefront of their field, and will provide opportunities for junior scientists, postdoctoral fellows, and graduate students to present their work in poster format and exchange ideas with leaders in the field. Some poster presenters will be selected for short talks.

The collegial atmosphere of this Conference, with programmed discussion sessions as well as opportunities for informal gatherings in the afternoons and evenings, provides an avenue for scientists from different disciplines to brainstorm and promotes cross-disciplinary collaborations in the various research areas represented.

Applications will be online at www.grc.org from Feb 1, 2010, and will be accepted until July 17, 2011. Limited funds may be available for student and postdoctoral fellow cost sharing!

For further information, please visit the conference website at: <http://www.grc.org/programs.aspx?year=2011&program=toxicity>.

The Gulf Oil Spill: a Toxic Legacy?

Marie Fortin

On April 20th, 2010, an explosion on the Deepwater Horizon drilling rig unfortunately led to the death of several crew members and injured many others. Aside from the human tragedy, oil has since been spilling in the Gulf of Mexico.



Picture taken by Nasa's satellite Terra
<http://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/NaturalHazards/view.php?id=44295> visited 6/15/2010

Recent estimates evaluate the flow to lie between 35 and 60 thousand barrels a day.¹ This situation surely affects us and the environment in many more ways than we can currently grasp. Of course, there are the ecological and economical catastrophes and their immediate effects on marine and coastal habitats and fisheries and tourism, respectively. Will there be persistent consequences? Is complete recovery a possibility?

Nobody would argue this oil isn't toxic, but how toxic is it? Oil composition varies from region to region, but polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAH) are common components. Following the 2006 oil spill in the Philippines, PAH levels were found to be elevated in shellfish and fish.² Could the Gulf spill result in a never-seen-before food chain contamination? What about the acute exposure of the clean-up workers, often young and not exhaustively trained?

Toxicologists will probably hear about, and research, the effects of this disaster for years to come.

¹<http://www.doi.gov/news/doinews/Update-6-15-2010-The-Ongoing-Administration-Wide-Response-to-the-Deepwater-BP-Oil-Spill.cfm> visited 6/15/20.

²Uno S et al. Environ Monit Assess. 2010 Jun;165(1-4):501-15.

For more information the Science Magazine has put together a very interesting and well documented Web page: <http://news.sciencemag.org/oilspill/>

National Postdoctoral Association Annual Meeting

Sarah Campion

The 8th Annual Meeting of the National Postdoctoral Association (NPA) was held from March 12th-14th in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The conference was hosted by several Philadelphia area institutions, with the sessions being held at the University of Pennsylvania and the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia. The NPA Annual Meeting is the only national venue dedicated to the postdoctoral community. The mission of the NPA is to advance the U.S. research enterprise by maximizing the effectiveness of the research community and enhancing the quality of the postdoctoral experience for all participants.

Just prior to the NPA meeting, from March 10-11, the NPA National Summit on Gender and the Postdoctorate was held in Philadelphia. The first meeting of its kind, the Summit was organized with the following goals:

- To examine the unique challenges faced by women as they seek to make the transition from postdoc to faculty.
- To consider the key factors influencing postdoc women's decisions to pursue a career in academic science and engineering.
- To share promising practices and success stories for retaining postdoc women in the academic pipeline.

Following this summit, the NPA meeting was opened with a welcome from Stacy Gelhaus, the current chair of the NPA Board of Directors, who highlighted some of the recent work and accomplishments of the NPA. She also recognized President Obama's 2011 budget increase in the amount allocated to NRSA training stipends (6% increase), which recognizes the important and essential contribution of new scientists to the U.S. research enterprise. The first ever Ewing Kauffman Foundation Postdoctoral Entrepreneur Awards were then presented by Sandra Miller, Director of Advancing Innovation at the Kauffman Foundation, to Stephen W. Turner, chief technology officer of Pacific Biosciences, and Antonio R. Webb, co-founder, senior scientist, and lead development engineer of VesselTek. These awards are part of the Kauffman Foundation's ongoing effort to harness the entrepreneurial potential of postdoctoral researchers and scientists throughout the United States.

The opening address on Friday morning was followed by the first of two "Innovation in Action"

discussion sessions. This session consisted of facilitated roundtable discussions with the goal of sharing information and successful strategies for addressing the needs of postdoctoral trainees. Discussion topics included "Communication Among and To Postdoctoral Scholars" and "Building and Retaining Interest in Postdoctoral Development Activities." The small group discussion format of this session was very effective and made this session very valuable. Participants were able to share ideas and problems they have faced when trying to address postdoc needs and get postdocs more involved in activities.

After this discussion session, Lorraine Tracy, Vice Chair of the NPA Board of Directors, presented information about the NPA Committees for the first Plenary Session of the meeting. This session helped to familiarize meeting attendees with the tasks of the four NPA Committees, including the past accomplishments and future endeavors. The four NPA Committees are Advocacy, Meetings, Outreach, and Resource Development. For further information about these committees and about how to get involved see <http://www.nationalpostdoc.org/about-the-npa/our-leadership-a-governance/4-committees-and-officers>.

These sessions were followed by a poster session, for which 23 posters were submitted. These posters highlighted the work being done by different postdoctoral associations (PDAs) and postdoctoral offices (PDOs) at institutions throughout the United States. These posters provided an excellent look at the activities of other groups around the country.

The 2nd Plenary Session, which took place at the end of the day on Friday, addressed the issues that postdocs face when transitioning from academia to industry. This session took the format of a panel discussion, with three panelists from different backgrounds. Mehendra Rao, Vice President of Stem Cell Research, Life Technologies, provided a perspective of what a company looks for in a potential employee, while Michelle Sabourin, an early career scientist at Life Technologies, shared her experiences with successfully finding a job in industry and succeeding in that position. James Sterling from the Keck Graduate Institute of Applied Life Sciences presented information about the Keck Graduate Institute's professional master's program for postdoctoral fellows with backgrounds in science and engineering.

National Postdoctoral Association Annual Meeting (cont'd)

The keynote address for the meeting was given on Saturday afternoon by Dr. Francis Collins, Director of the NIH. He spoke about his previous work on human globin gene expression and his experience as a postdoctoral scholar. He commended the NPA for its work and initiatives, including the development of the NPA Core Competencies and its support of international postdoctoral scholars. During his inspirational address he informed the postdoctoral scholars in the audience that "You are a larger force than you realize in terms of influencing the decision-makers."

A Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) Workshop was held on Saturday afternoon following Dr. Collins' address. The MBTI is a personality assessment tool for understanding individual differences and uncovering new ways to work and interact with others. During this session the MBTI was used to help all participants understand how they relate to others, ourselves, and the world around us in order to enhance individual and team performance at work, develop leadership skills, and reduce conflict in the workplace through improved interactions. The understanding gained from this workshop is of great benefit to professional career development.

This meeting was extremely informative and a pleasure to attend. I would strongly encourage anyone who is able to attend next year to do so because you can get good ideas not only for activities for the SOT PDA, but also for postdoc associations at your own institution. The 2011 Annual NPA Meeting will take place at the National Institutes of Health Campus in Bethesda, Maryland from March 25-27, 2011.

Highlights of the SOT Member Network

Alison Harrill and Anne Loccisano



During the latest SOT Annual Meeting in Salt Lake City, UT, SOT announced the launch of ToXchange, a professional network for SOT members. You may have taken advantage of the opportunity to have your picture taken for your ToXchange member profile and view a short tutorial at the Annual Meeting. Now that the proverbial dust has settled after the conference, you may be thinking – "What can ToXchange do for me and how do I use it?" This article is designed to highlight some of the features and functionality of the ToXchange system and to assist you in using the website.

The Premise. ToXchange was designed to improve the flow of information and the connectivity between SOT members outside of the Annual Meeting in a place that is secure and available only to members. The goal of ToXchange as defined by the Web site is to "increase collaboration of members through increased connectivity; increase the awareness of the value of toxicology and vision of SOT; provide SOT members more tools to help achieve their professional objectives; and improve the ability for SOT members to advocate for toxicology."

Key Elements. Each member can create a personalized profile called a MyPage. A MyPage is designed to be customized with professional information, CVs, and a profile photo. In addition, MyPages will be customizable with the addition of widgets and will eventually link to other networking sites in order to provide a single place to access all of your information.

Community Sites. In ToXchange, you can sign up for topic- or group-specific discussion groups and these will be listed on your MyPage profile. Under each community site there are a couple of useful links. Under the "forum" link, you can start a discussion, ask questions, or post comments. The PDA encourages use of this feature to facilitate discussions and relationships among our membership. Under the "file libraries" link, documents can be posted for sharing. These documents can include meeting minutes, proposals, or even photos from the Annual Meeting or other events that you would like to share.

Getting Help. There are printable instructions and user demonstrations on how to use each feature and these are available on the ToXchange Web site. Browsing through the help section can assist you with finding applications, and we highly encourage you to take a brief look at the help content. You may find additional features that will be of benefit to you.

Security. All material posted to ToXchange is encrypted. This safety feature was put into place to protect your personal and professional information.

Development. Some user tools are currently under development. SOT is making strides to continually improve and update ToXchange in order to provide a useful and lasting resource for SOT members.

For more information on ToXchange and to create or edit your myPage, please visit (<http://toxchange.toxicology.org/p/us/in/>).

A Brief Tutorial on the SOT Online Job Bank

Alison Harrill

The SOT Career Resource and Development (CRAD) Committee provides a unique resource for employment opportunities year-round via the Job Bank website. The site was designed to enable employers to post job opportunities that are accessible by toxicologists. Importantly for job seekers, posting your curriculum vitae (CV or resumé) and searching employment opportunities is free for SOT members. In order to assist you with utilizing the Job Bank, we offer answers to some common questions.

1. How can using the SOT Job Bank benefit me vs. other job seeking Web sites?

While other sites are great resources as well, the SOT Job Bank is unique in that it is specific for the Toxicology-related disciplines. Candidates can search positions that are specific to their expertise and that are located in their desired geographical location.

2. How do I get started?

You can log into the system with your SOT username and password. The Job Seeker login site is <http://www.toxicology.org/ai/newcrad/jobSeeker/login.aspx>. For those postdocs who are not members of SOT, there is a fee of \$45 (\$30 for students). For nonmembers who pay the access fee, registrations are valid for six months and include unlimited use during that time. Once you have logged into the system, you can begin inputting your information via the drop-down menus.

3. What information will be posted by potential employers?

The CRAD Web site outlines a few of the searchable fields, including years of experience, types of experience, areas of expertise, type of position, type of employer, salary, and geographical location. Once you find a position that interests you via the search function, you are then able to open the job announcement and read further the job requirements and summary.



4. What kinds of information can be placed on my candidate profile?

There are several types of information that you can add to your profile. These include, but are not limited to: contact information, geographical preferences, degrees and skills, certifications, years of experience, scientific disciplines learned, and language proficiency. You may also upload a copy of your CV in pdf or Word format.

5. Can my information be kept private?

At certain points in your job search or career, you may wish to keep your profile private. One way in which you can do this is by selecting the “confidential” radio button on your profile. A second option is to register for the service and simply decline to create a profile. These two options will enable you to browse employment opportunities without being searchable to employers.

6. How will I be contacted?

Potential employers can contact you via e-mail that is generated within the Job Bank menus. Additionally, employers may contact you through traditional means using the contact information provided in your profile. The contact method is at the discretion of the user.

7. What types of employers use the Job Bank?

Employers that use the Job Bank come from diverse areas and encompass academic, governmental, industrial, and non-profit sectors. At the time of this article, there are 134 positions posted within the Job Bank system.

8. Where can I get more information?

The best place to start is the CRAD Web site, which includes links and a description of the Job Bank. While you're there, you can check out some of CRAD's other great programs, such as the Mentor Match service, which is designed to provide advice to early career scientists on career path selection and other topics.

The PDA wishes you the best of luck in your job search.

Ten Suggestions for Postdoctoral Training

Special Contribution by Yongbin Zhang

Postdoctoral training is a pivotal transition stage in your career development instead of a real job. How do you make the most of this 2-5 year short time of period? The following recommendations may help you advance your career potential and mature you from a dependent researcher to an independent scientist.

- 1. Set up goals.** Decide to work in basic or applied research; work in academia, industry or government as your long term goal.
- 2. Make a clear plan.** To achieve your goal, you may decide on an area of science to pursue and become an expert in that area.
- 3. Work independently.** Develop the projects independently with minor advice from the mentor, set up the milestone, and accomplish it.
- 4. Master skills.** Try to learn novel techniques as much as possible and broaden your scientific knowledge.
- 5. Communicate your accomplishments.** Present these at a conference, publish in peer-reviewed journals, and write reports.
- 6. Create a network.** Networking is important within or outside of your institution.
- 7. Apply for awards.** Apply for awards and fellowships in your research area.
- 8. Mentor junior scientists.** Mentor and teach the technicians or students in the lab.
- 9. Outreach activities.** Serve on a committee in local or public community; assist in organizing social events; attend seminars.
- 10. Seek critiques.** Get feedback from mentors familiar with your career goals.

Update on the Clean Air Act

Special Contribution by Mehdi Saeed Hazari

This year is the 40th anniversary of the Clean Air Act. Research programs supported by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Office of Research and Development (ORD) have focused on understanding air pollution and its health effects in order to better inform implementation of this legislation. The Clean Air Research Program has provided the agency with important scientific information and expertise, and has assisted in the determination and implementation of the nation's air quality standards ever since the EPA was established in 1970. The Program conducts a wide range of research, the findings of which are used to better understand the impacts of air pollution. Every five years new findings are synthesized to assess the adequacy of national standards and regulations. Air Science 40 will commemorate this achievement by highlighting past and present research, as well as propose future work which will address "the complex new challenges of air quality management, notably the multitude of pollutants in the air and the interactions between air quality and climate change."¹ The celebration includes Congressional briefings and a seminar series in Washington, D.C., with presentations by Dr. Daniel L. Costa, National Program Director for Air Research in ORD, and other notable scholars such as Drs. Arden Pope of Brigham Young University, Jonathan Samet of University of Southern California, and Joel Kaufman of the University of Washington. With co-sponsorship from the American Heart Association and the American Thoracic Society, some of these seminars will focus on the link between air pollution and cardiovascular disease, asthma and the socio-economic factors and trends which affect such health outcomes. Thus, this forum will provide a trainee or anyone interested in this important area of study with not only a comprehensive background of the science and where it stands today in terms of scientific achievement, but also future prospects for air quality management and human health. (This article does not represent EPA policy.)

¹ <http://www.epa.gov/airscience/focus-on-air-research.htm>

Most information for the article was derived from the EPA Clean Air Research Web site <http://www.epa.gov/airscience/index.htm>

SOT SIG American Association of Chinese in Toxicology (AACT)

Special Contribution from Janet Zang

Updates from the most recent AACT board meetings: The new board will continue working to increase the number of members, seek sponsorship, and develop more programs/activities to deliver better service to the members. In response to SOT's global initiative, the board also decided to increase collaboration with other professional associations, especially those in China.

The board urges SOT postdoctoral members of Chinese descent to join AACT-SIG in order to be entitled to the benefits which can be found at: <http://www.toxicology.org/isot/sig/aact/join.asp>. AACT-SIG is seeking a postdoctoral representative for the 2011-2012 term. Nominations can be sent to Dr. Diana Auyeung-Kim at taedi0611@gmail.com. Postdoctoral members are encouraged to apply for the 2011 AACT and Charles River Best Abstract Awards. An eligible applicant must be an active SOT and AACT-SIG member. More details about the awards can be found at: <http://www.toxicology.org/isot/sig/aact/criteria.asp>

Risk Assessment Specialty Section Update

Anne Loccisano

The Risk Assessment Specialty Section (RASS) reception at the SOT meeting in Salt Lake City, Utah, was popular and well-attended as always. The featured panel discussion on endocrine disruptor screening was led by Tammy Stoker, George Daston, and Bill Stokes. The discussion focused on how the results generated from this screening program can be translated to assess risk to human health. Topics reviewed by the panelists included the Tier 1 assays included in the USEPA's endocrine disruptor screening program, how these assays can be used for hazard identification and human health risk and mechanistic assessments, and what can be done to facilitate use of this data for regulatory purposes. These are important issues as many chemicals have been identified to disrupt the endocrine system's homeostasis in laboratory animals and wildlife, resulting in negative reproductive and developmental effects. Future concerns include how the results generated from the *in vitro* and *in vivo* assays will influence future research funding and regulatory decisions.

The RASS awards ceremony did not disappoint as it celebrated and honored the authors of the best abstracts and published papers at the 2010 SOT meeting. The awards presented were for the best overall abstract (C. Elcombe, "Nuclear Receptor (CAR/PXR) Humanized Mouse Models to Investigate Nongenotoxic Hepatocarcinogenesis"), the best paper advancing the science of risk assessment (A. Harrill, *et al*, 2009, *Genome Research*, 19(9), 1507), and the best paper demonstrating the application of risk assessment (J. DeSesso, *et al*, 2009, *J. Tox. Environ. Health*, 72(2), 94). Other prestigious and competitive awards included the Perry J. Gehring Award for the Best Student Abstract (K. Lu, *et al*, "Distribution and Molecular Dose of Inhalation-derived and Endogenous Formaldehyde DNA Adducts Support Causation of Nasal Carcinoma, but not Leukemia"), the Perry J Gehring Award for the Best Postdoctoral Abstract (A. Loccisano, *et al*, "Development of a Rat Gestation PBPK Model for PFOA/PFOS"), and the Robert J Rubin Award jointly offered by RASS and the Regulatory Specialty Section for applying mechanistic toxicology to risk assessment (D.T. Szabo, *et al*, "Toxicokinetics Differences Between Two Major HBCD Stereoisomers: Effect of Dose, Time, Repeated Exposure and Route"). Two of your elected RASS officers also were recognized for awards given by the SOT Awards Committee this year at the 2010 SOT Awards Ceremony. Ed Ohanian, the outgoing RASS President (2009-10), was recognized and received the honorable Arnold J. Lehman Award for his numerous

contributions. David Szabo, the RASS student representative, was awarded the Colgate-Palmolive Award for Student Research Training in Alternative Methods for his proposed project entitled "From Mice to Men: Generation of a Stereoisomer Specific Physiological Based Pharmacokinetic (PBPK) Model of the Flame Retardant Hexabromo-cyclododecane (HBCD)." For more information on RASS awards, please visit the RASS Web site.

One of our exciting activities is the monthly RASS teleconferences (telecons). Organized by Annie Jarabek at the USEPA, topics each month are relevant for anyone in the field of toxicology and have ranged from cumulative risk assessment, incorporating mechanistic information into risk assessment, and topics involving dose response. The last several telecons have focused on the key events in the development of a dose-response framework for the assessment of safe exposure levels for several categories of bioactive agents (previous telecon presentations can be found on the RASS Web site).

Finally, something for postdoctoral fellows to think about: a recent RASS officers' conference call made me think about future issues that we should be aware of as the next generation of scientists. I believe it is important, as early career scientists, to put toxicology into the context of risk assessment. Risk assessment is absolutely central to what we do as toxicologists--the goal of our discipline is to protect human health. We have all seen it on the news, read reports, or received those e-mail forwards from friends and family: scientific findings are often misinterpreted and/or overestimated when reported in the media. I believe we need to end this by framing data into context, keeping it relevant, and developing ways to translate it quantitatively and qualitatively for proper communication and decision making. Risk assessment is a methodological way to best address this issue. We should all begin thinking "today" how to translate our scientific data to the public of "tomorrow" in order to reduce misconceptions, improper communication, and junk science leading to incorrect conclusions and furthermore, extreme or unnecessary regulatory action. In conclusion, as we move up the ranks in our toxicological career, I believe we all need to begin thinking about generating innovative ways to communicate scientific findings in toxicology with the risk assessment process as the backbone of all of our decision making.

If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to contact me at ALoccisano@thehamner.org.

Postdoctoral Assembly Representatives

Learn more about your representatives—PDA [Representative Biographies](#)

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Hispanic Organization for Toxicologists	Enrique Fuentes-Mattei	sothq@toxicology.org	University of Puerto Rico
Korean Toxicologists Association in America	TBA		
Toxicologists of African Origin	TBA		
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Postdoctoral Assembly Representatives (cont'd)

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Toxicologic & Exploratory	Chidozie Joshua Amuzie	amuziec@dcpah.msu.edu	Michigan State University

Grants Announcements

Check [Important Links for Postdocs](#) for announcements like the one below.

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