



The Post-y

Fall 2006

Semi-annual Newsletter of the Society of Toxicology Postdoctoral Assembly

Greetings from the Chair

Jennifer Durringer

Hello SOT postdocs!

I hope you had an enjoyable summer and are embracing the change of seasons. Fall is a busy time of year at SOT, as planning goes into full swing for the Annual Meeting. The PDA has been hard at work planning exciting events for postdocs at the meeting in Charlotte including the first ever "Best Postdoctoral Publication Awards," a postdoctoral luncheon on Wednesday March 28th and distribution of Postdoctoral Assembly lapel pins to all PDA members. Be watching your E-mail for a listing of postdoc events.

In preparation for the annual meeting, I would like to encourage all postdocs to volunteer at the Annual Meeting in whatever capacity with which you are comfortable. You can become as involved as you want-these are great opportunities to network and take on a leadership role, if even for an after-



noon or a two hour time slot. More volunteer information can be found at www.toxicology.org/dotnet/volunteer.aspx.

Lastly, I would like to acknowledge and welcome all of the postdoctoral representatives elected thus far from the Specialty Sections and Regional Chapters. These are exciting times, as the PDA continues to grow and develop! If you would like to take on a leadership role within a Specialty Section, Regional Chapter or Special Interest Group, please contact the Presidents of those groups for more information. We can always use fresh ideas and help in completing the initiatives we take on.

Have a wonderful holiday season and I hope to see each of you at the meeting in Charlotte!

Jennifer Durringer, PDA Chair 2006-2007

Inside this issue:

- FIRST EVER BEST POSTDOCTORAL PUBLICATION AWARDS-APPLY TODAY! (pg. 2)
- Postdoctoral reps in Specialty Sections, Regional Chapters and Special Interest Groups (pg. 2)
- MUST ATTEND events for postdocs at the 2007 Annual Meeting (pgs 3-4)
- 2nd Annual Offsite Meeting held for PDA Board (pg. 5)
- Information on how to sign up for your FREE Specialty Section and Special Interest Group (pg. 5)
- International postdocs-establishing credit tips (pg. 6)

Postdoc Volunteers Needed for 2007 Annual Meeting

Kristen Mitchell

Are you looking for something a little different at next year's Annual Meeting in Charlotte? Do you want to increase your networking opportunities, broaden your knowledge, gain some mentoring experience, or take on a leadership role? If so, then consider volunteering for one of the many diverse functions, programs, and events at the 2007 Annual Meeting. Not sure where to start? Here is just a sampling of committees that are currently recruiting postdoc volunteers and would be happy to have you on-board.

The Continuing Education Committee seeks volunteers for the **CE courses** held on Sunday, March 25th. As a volunteer, you would be responsible for distributing course materials at the beginning of the course and completing other tasks as they arise throughout the course. This is an excellent way to meet new faces, plus you get to attend the CE course **for free!**

The Committee for Diversity Initiatives is looking for postdoc volunteers to participate in its three-day **Undergraduate Education Program** at the Annual Meeting. Selected undergraduate students from across the country will attend introductory toxicology lectures, information sessions on



applying to graduate school, and a special poster session. Volunteers are needed as host mentors to accompany groups of students throughout the program. This is a great opportunity to get involved with the Committee for Diversity Initiatives within SOT and to meet some up-and-coming young scientists!

The **Membership Committee** needs volunteers to sit at their booth and be available to answer general questions about SOT membership. The PDA plans to distribute lapel pins to postdoc members at the meeting, and staffing the membership booth with postdoc volunteers would be helpful in doing so. As a volunteer at the membership booth, not only would you meet other people involved with the Membership Committee, but you would also get a chance to meet other postdocs who are picking up lapel pins, as well as other scientists interested in joining SOT.

Links to many more volunteer opportunities can be found on the SOT Annual Meeting page (<http://www.toxicology.org/dotnet/volunteer.aspx>). Additionally, the PDA is always looking for contributing writers for the Post-Y and volunteers to head up projects. Please contact us with your ideas at SOTHQ@toxicology.org.

Society of Toxicology
1821 Michael Faraday Drive
Suite 300
Reston, VA 20190
703-438-3115
sothq@toxicology.org

Postdocs Apply! First Annual Best Postdoctoral Publication Awards

Mihalis Panagiotidis

The Society of Toxicology Postdoctoral Assembly (PDA) is proud to announce the **First Annual Best Postdoctoral Publication Awards**. The purpose of these awards is to recognize recently published exceptional papers in the field of toxicology. Eligible papers were published or in press between June 1, 2005 and May 31, 2006 and authored by SOT members who conducted the research during their postdoctoral training. There will be a total of 3 awards, each consisting of a plaque and a \$100 cash award.

Awardees will be acknowledged during the Annual Meeting at the Postdoctoral Assembly Luncheon on March 28, 2007.

More information, including requirements for eligibility and application forms, is available at the PDA web page <http://www.toxicology.org/ai/spd/PD-PubAwardAnn.asp>. Please contact bet-tye@toxicology.org if you have any questions.



Postdoctoral Participation and Representation in SOT Specialty Sections, Regional Chapters and Special Interest Groups

Mihalis Panagiotidis and Jamie DeWitt

Hello, SOT Postdoctoral members! My name is Mihalis Panagiotidis (Co-chair of the Postdoctoral Assembly) and, together with Jamie DeWitt (Postdoctoral Representative for the Immunotoxicology Specialty Section), we are working towards implementing a proposal by which the PDA Board will efficiently communicate with the postdoc representatives in Specialty Sections (SS), Regional Chapters (RC), and Special Interest Groups (SIGs). This is an important issue because it will provide a basis for facilitating not only communication between these groups and the PDA, but also provide an opportunity for leadership experience and ultimately networking in SOT and the toxicology community in general for elected postdoctoral reps.

Our main goal is to set up a structure to strengthen organization of postdoctoral representatives, facilitate efficiency, and better serve the needs of the postdoctoral members of SOT. Given that we only "advertised" the idea of postdoctoral representatives to these groups during the last Annual Meeting in San Diego, the response so far has been great. However, we still have a ways to go to having each Specialty Section, Regional Chapter and Special Interest Group represented. This is perhaps a good opportunity for those interested to serve in this capacity to officially inquire about such representation to the relevant presidents of the grouping which they are interested. In addition, we are making plans to meet with those representatives already involved with their SS, RC or SIG groups during the 2007 SOT Annual Meeting in an attempt to incorporate their input to the final proposal and other initiatives the PDA is working on. In the meantime, I look forward to meeting with each one of you during our activities at the 2007 SOT Annual Meeting. Please free to contact any of the Board Members (SOTHQ@toxicology.org) if you have questions or concerns.

Results of the First Survey of the Postdoctoral Experience

Jenni Durringer

- **Do you know the average time a person spends in Postdoctoral training?**
- **What do postdocs want most out of SOT?**



The answer to these and other *tantalizing* questions can be found at the PDA website (http://www.toxicology.org/ai/FA/Survey_Results.pdf), where we have posted the results from our "Survey of the Postdoctoral Experience." This survey has proved to be very useful, as we have built many of the current year's initiatives from your responses, including changing the time and format of the postdoctoral mixer and getting ideas for seminars and workshops of interest to postdocs.

Thank you to everyone who completed the survey! We hope to make this a yearly event for the PDA so that we can continue to have the most up-to-date information on SOT postdocs. So be watching your e-mail this April for the chance to participate again!

See You in Charlotte! The 2007 SOT Postdoctoral Calendar of Events

Aaron Rowland



The PDA board wanted to make sure that every postdoctoral researcher is aware of the events that the PDA is sponsoring, co-sponsoring, or recommending at the 2007 SOT national meeting. Register early (<http://www.toxicology.org/ai/meet/am2007/index.asp#>) and organize your weekly events in the "2007 Toxicologist" itinerary manager, available in mid-February (for more information see http://www.toxicology.org/ai/meet/am2007/it_planner.asp). Some of the events not to be missed include:

SAC/PDA Student/Postdoctoral Mixer: The Student Advisory Committee (SAC) and the Post Doctoral Assembly (PDA) have combined forces once again to provide an opportunity early in the week to meet and greet fellow students and postdocs at the SAC/PDA Student/Postdoctoral mixer. Tickets and badges are required for attendance. Postdocs, meet your PDA representatives and receive your 2007 SOT Postdoc pin.

Who can attend: Graduate students and postdocs who have indicated a desire to attend by obtaining a ticket. SOT badges must be worn for entry to this event.

What is the event format: Casual environment designed to greet old friends and meet new ones

When is this event held: 7:30pm – 8:30pm Sunday, March 25th

Attend and you may receive a door prize provided by SAC.

For more information: <http://www.toxicology.org/ai/meet/am2007/studevent.asp>

PDA Postdoctoral Luncheon: The PDA postdoctoral luncheon was designed to provide a forum where postdocs can get together over a free lunch and recognize the achievements of outstanding postdoctoral researchers.

Who can attend: This is a ticketed event exclusively for postdocs

What is the event format: This is a casual luncheon recognizing recipients of the first ever "Best Postdoctoral Publication Awards" as well as the postdoctoral Regional Chapter and Specialty Section award winners. Newly elected 2007-2008 PDA Board members will be introduced and a brief overview of the PDA accomplishments and goals will be presented.

When is this event held: 12:00 – 1:15pm Wednesday, March 28th

For more information: <http://www.toxicology.org/ai/meet/am2007/studevent.asp>

Lunch with an Expert: SAC is sponsoring this opportunity for graduate students and postdocs to meet and talk with an expert scientist in a variety of institutions and areas of Toxicology. Approximately six students/postdocs will be matched with an expert with similar interests. This is an awesome chance to meet and ask candid questions about life as a toxicologist. If you are interested, please sign up for the program in advance of the meeting.

Who can attend: Students and postdocs who sign up prior to the annual meeting.

Event format: Informal meeting over breakfast, lunch, or dinner to discuss careers, life as a scientist, etc.

The cost of the meal is the responsibility of each participant!

When is this event held: The meeting date and time will be arranged by the Expert and will be forwarded via e-mail to the student/postdoc participants.

Sign up at: <http://www.toxicology.org/ai/spd/lunchexpert.asp>

Student In Vitro Lecture: Join other students and postdocs interested in learning about alternative research approaches to animal models. Attend the annual catered luncheon provided by the Colgate-Palmolive Company Animals in Research Committee.

Who can attend: Students, postdocs, past and present Colgate-Palmolive SOT award recipients

Event format: Casual catered luncheon and lecture

When is this event held: Monday, March 26th, 12:00 Noon – 1:15 PM

Cost: \$5.00 deposit, returned upon admission.

Registration: Register on the annual meeting registration form

For more information: <http://www.toxicology.org/ai/meet/am2007/studevent.asp>

(continued on the next page...)



Annual Meeting Postdoctoral Calendar of Events continued



SOT Council Meeting with Students/Postdoctoral Fellows: This is an opportunity for students and postdoctoral fellows to meet with SOT Council, voice concerns, and generate dialog with the individuals that organize and run the Society of Toxicology.

Who can attend: Students and postdocs. A closed meeting of SOT Council, SAC and the PDA board will immediately follow the open session.

Event format: Informal meeting with SOT council. Sodas will be available.

When is this event held: Wednesday, March 28th, 4:45 – 5:30 PM

For more information: <http://www.toxicology.org/ai/meet/am2007/studevent.asp>

Career Development Seminars: This series, which is sponsored by Career Resource and Development (CRAD), offers a diverse series of informative lectures/workshops designed to nurture your development as a scientist. More information will be provided in the schedule of events. For more information: <http://www.toxicology.org/ai/meet/am2007/pseminars.asp>

You Just Can't Focus on the Science – A Primer of Strategies to be Successful in Your New Position

You've completed your postdoctoral training and landed your first job. After many dedicated years in graduate school and as a postdoctoral fellow, you now have the scientific knowledge and technical skills needed to get the job done and you are ready to hit the ground running. However, there are many other important skills you need to learn. Whether your new job is in academia, government or industry, you just can't focus on the science. You need to be aware of the many planning and people skills needed to be successful in your new job.

Who can attend: Anyone interested in learning about what skills, outside of science, you need to have a successful career

Event format: Panel of speakers speak specifically on focusing on "Planning for Success and Career Satisfaction" and "The Importance of People and Leadership Skills in Career Success." Question and answer session will follow.

When is this event held: Wednesday, March 28th from 4:30 PM to 5:50 PM

Grantmanship Forum – learn about funding opportunities through NIH.

Communicating Science – Writing for technical and lay audiences.

Toxicology Consultant – A Perspective

Miscellaneous programs and helpful hints: The PDA board also wants to make you aware of some of the programs that may assist you in your specific needs that you would like to have met at the Annual Meeting:

Society of Toxicology Room Sharing Program: Cut costs! Share a room with a colleague. This program is a service offered by SOT, designed to identify roommates for the SOT national meeting. To learn more or to take advantage of this program, register at <http://www.toxicology.org/ai/meet/am2007/roomshare.asp>

Society of Toxicology Carpooling Program: Need a ride to the annual meeting? The PDA board is requesting this initiative to provide inexpensive transportation from the Research Triangle Area to the Annual Meeting in Charlotte. If approved, website links to register for this program will be available shortly.

CRAD Job bank: Need a job? Well, there are two ways in which the Career Resource and Development program have attempted to simplify this process by linking you with potential employers. First, CRAD supplies an online Job service (CRAD Job Bank) as well as an opportunity to meet with potential employers at the Annual Meeting (Career Resource and Development Service Program). To register for these programs go to <http://www.toxicology.org/ai/crad/register.asp>

CRAD Online resource: This year-round online resource matching potential employers with candidates. For more information on this program go to <http://www.toxicology.org/ai/crad/crad.asp#services>

Annual Meeting Career Resource and Development Service Program: Bring multiple copies of your resume for possible on-site interviews. The Career Resource and Development Services Center will be open Sunday March 25th – Wednesday March 28th to display job announcements, facilitate communication between potential employers and employees, and arrange interviews. For more information go to <http://www.toxicology.org/ai/crad/crad.asp#services>

Volunteer: Graduate students and postdocs, this is your chance to contribute to the society. There are many ways to volunteer your time at the meeting while getting an opportunity to network with people of similar interests. For a listing of volunteer opportunities and to register go to <http://www.toxicology.org/dotnet/volunteer.aspx>.

Postdoctoral Assembly Board Convenes for 2nd Annual Offsite Meeting

Kristen Mitchell



Members of the SOT Postdoctoral Assembly (PDA) Board met near Washington, D.C., on October 3rd for their second annual off-site meeting. General topics under discussion were the creation of new networking and leadership opportunities for postdocs within the Society and making plans for the 2007 Annual Meeting to be held in Charlotte, N.C. Some of the key issues discussed during the meeting are highlighted below:

- SOT Council is moving forward with the PDA's request to establish a new membership category for postdocs. Adding a new category will require the SOT membership to approve a change in SOT By-Laws, and implementation would be in the 2008 dues year. Postdoctoral researchers (D.V.M, Ph.D., or M.D.) with an interest in toxicology and under the direction of a research mentor will be eligible. The membership can be maintained for up to six years. The annual dues will be \$35.
- The PDA will be sponsoring a new award to be given to postdocs who have published exceptional peer-reviewed scientific articles within the past year. Cash awards and plaques will be awarded to the winners during the Postdoctoral Luncheon, which will be held at the Annual Meeting on Wednesday, March 28, 2007. Nominations must be received by December 15, 2006, for manuscripts that were accepted between June 1, 2005 and May 31, 2006. Additional information will be available on the PDA website.
- With the leadership of CRAD, the PDA will co-sponsor a mentoring program in which interested postdocs will be matched with more senior scientists working in industry, government and academia. The intention of the mentoring program is to provide postdocs with pertinent information and personal perspectives related to early career development.
- As a unique way to recognize postdocs and to promote the recognition of the PDA within SOT, all postdocs with current membership status will be provided with lapel pins to wear at the Annual Meeting in Charlotte. Pins can be picked up during the Sunday evening Student/Postdoc Mixer or at the Membership Booth during the meeting.

The PDA is encouraging all Specialty Sections, Regional Chapters and Special Interest Groups within SOT to consider electing a postdoctoral representative to facilitate the exchange of information, ideas and concerns between postdoctoral scientists and SOT. Having a postdoc representative from each section, chapter or group would provide opportunities for postdocs to assume leadership roles and increase their involvement in SOT, which would likely impact the future retention of talented scientists as SOT members.

Postdocs: Have You Signed Up for Your **FREE** Specialty Section and Your **FREE** Special Interest Group?

This past August, Jenni Durringer attended the Specialty Section Leadership workshop in Chicago as a representative of the PDA. A presentation was given to meeting attendees, including an overview of the history and structure of the Postdoctoral Assembly and description of the PDA website, newsletter and survey tools. It was stated that in addition to encouraging further involvement with the Specialty Sections (SSs), the PDA has been working with the CRAD Committee to develop programs of interest and applicability to postdocs.

Furthermore, it was noted that the Specialty Sections and Special Interest Groups are the beneficiaries of the Society's decision to allow **one free Specialty Section and one free Special Interest Group to each student/postdoc**. Have you taken SOT up on this offer and become a member of a Specialty Section? Besides having a chance to submit entries for awards, postdocs also get the opportunity to network with professionals closely allied with their specific line of work. These individuals may be the ones reviewing

your next grant proposal or may provide advice on where to target your grant proposal submissions. If you haven't already, please consider signing up for a Specialty Section and Special Interest Group when you renew your dues this year. Details on Specialty Sections can be found at <http://www.toxicology.org/isot/ss/specsection.asp>.

In addition, it is anticipated that postdocs will take an increasingly active role in the Specialty Sections. Specialty Sections have been encouraged to elect postdoctoral representatives, so potential leadership opportunities are available! Please contact your SS officers for further details.





Updates from the National Postdoctoral Association

Jennifer Duringer



- **Save the Date: NPA Annual Meeting 2007.** The NPA's fifth Annual Meeting will be held March 30 - April 1, 2007 in Berkeley, California. Look for more details and a tentative agenda online soon at http://www.nationalpostdoc.org/site/c.eoJMIWOBIRH/b.1388059/k.DBBE/NPA_Home.htm.
- **NIH Increases Support for Postdoc Health Insurance.** The National Institutes of Health has issued a new policy governing postdocs supported through the National Research Service Awards (NRSA). This policy increases the amount of funds available to fellows funded on individual fellowships and institutional training grants. For further details, please view the NPA news item online.
- **NSF Issues New Guidelines on Postdoc Mentoring.** The National Science Foundation's Geosciences Directorate has issued new mentoring guidelines for Principal Investigators who employ postdocs on their research grants. The guidelines call on P.I.s to document mentoring plans in both their proposals and their annual project reports. To view the guidelines and for further details, please see the news item on the NPA website.
- **NIH Loan Repayment Programs Seeking Applications.** The NIH Loan Repayment Programs (LRPs) seek to recruit and retain highly qualified health professionals with doctoral-level degrees to research careers using the repayment of educational loans as an incentive. In exchange for a two-year commitment to conduct research, the LRPs may repay up to \$35,000 per year of a participant's qualified educational loan debt, plus an additional 39 percent of the loan repayment amount to cover tax liabilities. If you have a doctoral-level degree, U.S. citizenship, and educational debt equal to at least 20% of your institutional base salary, you may be eligible. All applications must be completed by 8 p.m. eastern time, December 1, 2006. Visit www.lrp.nih.gov to apply or call 1-866-849-4047 for more information.
- **Postdoc fact sheet updated.** Did you know that a survey of research articles in *Science* found that 43% of first authors were postdocs? Or that in the biological sciences, the average amount of time for holding a postdoctoral position was 3.8 years? These and other facts about postdocs can be found through the main NPA website.

Tips for International Postdocs: How to Establish a Credit History in the U.S.

Kristen Mitchell

In the U.S., credit cards are almost an essential part of modern daily life and are commonly used for transactions such as renting a car or purchasing airplane tickets. However, credit cards are more than just a convenience in the U.S. -- credit card usage is also the primary means of establishing a credit history. Having a reasonable credit history is a key factor in being approved for large-ticket purchases such as vehicles or real estate. Unfortunately, when evaluating loan applications for such purchases, most financial institutions in the U.S. will quickly disregard any credit history that has not been established here in the U.S. and will be reluctant to extend credit to foreign nationals. Consequently, many international postdocs end up paying cash in full for such purchases.

Fortunately, international postdocs do indeed have some options for obtaining a credit card in the U.S. Listed below are some hints for quickly establishing a credit history:

- 1) Obtain a charge card through a major department store. Generally, such cards are easier to obtain than credit cards. Although you will only be able to use these cards at the individual department store, this can be a quick and inexpensive means to establish a credit history and can make it easier for you to obtain other types of credit in the future.
- 2) Apply for a secured credit card, which requires you to maintain a savings account as security for your line of credit. A secured credit card is easier to get than an unsecured one, but the annual percentage rate is often higher.
- 3) Become a secondary holder on another person's credit card. While the primary cardholder is contractually responsible for the bill, you will have the same purchasing power as the primary cardholder, and the account payment history will be detailed on both of your credit reports. This can be an easy way to establish a good credit history, assuming the account is well managed.
- 4) Find out if your university has an arrangement with a local credit union to provide foreign nationals access to credit cards. Local credit unions will often offer specials for students or postdocs and provide loans with lower interest rates than those offered by other financial institutions.



Regional Chapter and Specialty Section Updates

Southern California Regional Chapter ~ Dave Hovland (President)

The 2006 Annual Meeting of the Southern California Regional Chapter took place on October 12th, 2006 at Allergan, Inc. The title of the meeting was "Innovative Technologies in Nonclinical Toxicology: Markers and Models."

Midwest Regional Chapter ~ Robin Guy (President)

The 2006 Annual Meeting of the Midwest Regional Chapter took place on October 20th, 2006 at the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee. The title of the meeting was "The Role of Membrane Transporters in Toxicology."

Reproductive and Developmental Toxicology ~ Miyun Tsai-Turton (Postdoc rep)

- There is a call for applications for the RDTSS Graduate Student/Postdoctoral Awards for the 46th Annual SOT Meeting in Charlotte, NC. Two or three winners will be chosen for the best research/presentation in areas of 1) Male and Female Reproductive Toxicology, or 2) Teratology/Developmental Toxicology. The awards will be presented at the RDTSS reception. Details will also be posted on the Awards and Fellowships page of the SOT website – <http://www.toxicology.org.ai/af/awards.aspx>. Deadline for the awards is February 10th, 2007.
- Chrissy (Student Advisory Committee rep) and I will have a RDTSS poster for presentation at the Student/Postdoc Mixer. Come visit us and find out more about RDTSS.
- The RDTSS reception at the SOT annual meeting will take place on Monday evening from 6:00 pm to 7:30 pm. It is a great chance to meet RDTSS officers and network with RDTSS members.
- The RDTSS would like to encourage postdocs to join their specialty section. To find out more information about RDTSS, please check out their website <http://www.toxicology.org/ISOT/SS/repdevtox/index.html>.
- If you have any questions or suggestions, please feel free to contact me at mtsaitul@jhmi.edu. If I can't answer you, I will make sure to pass along your message to other RDTSS officers.

Regulatory and Safety Evaluation Specialty Section ~ James Green (Vice president)

The Regulatory and Safety Evaluation Specialty Section (RSESS) will be offering travel awards for current postdocs presenting posters or presentations at the SOT 2007 annual meeting. The awardee will be invited to attend the RSESS meeting at SOT and hear "the Great Debate," which is sponsored each year by the Specialty Section. Award amounts up to \$1500 will be given based on merit. Those interested should contact:

James D. Green, Ph.D., DABT Vice President - RSESS
Senior Vice President - Preclinical and Clinical Development Sciences
Biogen Idec, Inc
14 Cambridge Center
Cambridge, MA 02142
Tel: 617-679-2129, Fax: 617-679-3463
email: James.Green@biogenidec.com

Your Postdoctoral Representatives: Pallavi Limaye (Allegheny-Erie), Celine Beamer (Pacific Northwest), Sachin Devi (Comparative and Veterinary), Jamie DeWitt (Inhalation), Jianyong Wang (Occupational and Public Health), Miyun Tsai Turton (Reproductive and Developmental Toxicology), Sharmilee Sawant (Women in Toxicology), Jeffrey Moffit (Education Committee)

Calling All Postdocs!



While the Board enjoys putting together this newsletter each edition, we know there are others of you out there who have a knack for writing! If you have something to communicate to SOT postdocs, whether it's strictly informational or a "life experience" story you think would help other postdocs, please consider submitting an article for our next issue due out in the Spring of 2007. If you would like to cover one of the projects the PDA is working on, we have a need for that as well. Please feel free to contact us at SOTHQ@toxicology.org for further details.

