

The Post-y

Newsletter for the SOT Postdoctoral Assembly

Spring 2018



2018 Society of Toxicology Meeting

PDA Special Events at the 57th Annual SOT Meeting in San Antonio March 11-15!



**PDA Luncheon
Tuesday, March 13 at 12:20 PM
(Ticket Required)**

All postdoctoral scholars are invited to a casual luncheon organized by the PDA. The Best Postdoctoral Publication award recipients will be recognized and career-themed door prizes will be given away. The current PDA Board will review the year's accomplishments and the new officers for 2018-2019 will be introduced. Postdoctoral scholars should reserve a ticket for \$10 when registering for the Annual Meeting.

**Poster Tours for Trainees
March 12-14**

Time varies by group. Please consider participating in this one-hour, guided poster tour with an expert toxicologist! Meet at the

Best Postdoctoral Publication Awards

The SOT PDA presents the Best Postdoctoral Publication Awards (BPPA) each year at the Annual Meeting to recognize outstanding published works in the field of toxicology accomplished by members in formal mentored postdoctoral positions. Applications were eligible this year if papers were published between October 1, 2016, and September 25, 2017. Out of the outstanding pool of applicants, three recipients were selected.

Poster Tour Board in the main entrance lobby of the Convention Center 15 minutes prior to tour start time. Participants may continue to sign up at the Student/Postdoc Mixer on Sunday, March 11 at the Poster Tour Board.

**Chat with an Expert
March 12-15
Hosted by the Graduate Student Leadership Committee**

Time and place vary by group. Meet at the Chat with an Expert Poster in the main entrance lobby of the Convention Center. Participants may continue to sign up at the Student/Postdoc Mixer on Sunday, March 11 at the Chat with an Expert Poster.

Applications were reviewed by the PDA Board and outside reviewers with matching scientific expertise using the NIH conflict of interest, confidentiality, and nondisclosure rules. The 2018 awards will be presented during the PDA Luncheon at the 57th Annual Meeting in San Antonio, TX on Tuesday, March 13. Please be sure to come by, enjoy the luncheon and congratulate the recipients! More about the recipients follows on Page 2.

2017-2018 SOT PDA Board

Chair
Samantha J. Snow
snow.samantha@epa.gov

Vice Chair
Manushree Bharadwaj
manushree.bharadwaj@nih.gov

Secretary
Gurjot Kaur
gurjot.kaur@uni-konstanz.de

Treasurer
Marianna Stamou
marianna.stamou@hest.ethz.ch

Councilors
Cynthia Browning
cynthia_browning@brown.edu

Dilshan Harischandra
dilshan@mail.med.upenn.edu

Council Contact
Rosonald R. Bell
rosonald.bell@indivior.com

Staff Liaison
Rachel Woodson
rachelw@toxicology.org

Continued on Page 2

Table of Contents

2018 SOT Meeting	1	Know your Fellow Scientist.....	4-6
BPPA Awards.....	1-2	Annual Meeting Events and Symposia	7-8
Incoming Elected PDA Board.....	3		

Best Postdoctoral Publication Award Recipients

Dr. Colette Miller is currently a postdoctoral biologist in the Environmental Public Health Division at the US Environmental Protection Agency. Colette received her PhD in nutrition from the University of Georgia in 2014. Her doctoral work investigated the influence of sex on the development of non-alcoholic fatty liver disease throughout the lifespan, some of which gained national media attention and received numerous accolades including a best dissertation award and the nationally recognized ARCS® Foundation fellowship. At the US EPA, Colette is studying the role of air pollutants on adverse pregnancy outcomes, such as preeclampsia and intrauterine growth restriction, and how such exposures may increase the risk of later life metabolic disease in a sexually dimorphic manner. Colette's current work takes an interdisciplinary approach utilizing advanced high-resolution Doppler ultrasound, high throughput sequencing, and *in vitro* methods to characterize how air pollutants disrupt fetal development. Her most recent study, published in *Environmental Health Perspectives*, was awarded the 2018 BPPA award and demonstrated that exposure to ozone during implantation receptivity impairs fetal development.



Dr. Sreenivasa Ramalahgari received his BS in Biotechnology from Bangalore University, Bangalore, India followed by MS in Biotechnology from University of Abertay Dundee, Scotland, UK. After his master's degree he worked for a CRO, BioReliance Inc. based in Glasgow, UK, involved in safety testing of biological products. He received his PhD in Toxicology from Leiden University, Netherlands, under the supervision of Prof. Bob van de Water where he studied toxicogenomic responses of xenobiotics by using three-dimensional cell culture models of liver, kidney, breast and prostate cancer cell types. He received the prestigious Bo Holmstedt Memorial Foundation award for his work on 3R's principle at Eurotox 2012 conference. Ramaiahgari is currently working at the National Toxicology Program (NTP) of NIEHS/NIH, applying advanced *in vitro* models and novel methodologies including high content imaging and data-rich toxicogenomic approaches, (e.g. Tox21 human sentinel 1500+ gene expression) to study dynamic cellular stress responses upon environmental chemical exposure and extrapolate their effects on human health and disease. He also contributes to several NTP *in vitro* screening assays.



Dr. Priyanka Trivedi is a Sr. Scientist at Pfizer, where she supports drug safety research and development by delivering safety translational biomarkers and performing safety assessment of targets. She earned her master's degree in Regulatory Toxicology (2010) and doctorate in Pharmacology and Toxicology (2014) from the National Institute of Pharmaceutical Education and Research (NIPER), Mohali, India. During her PhD, she investigated the molecular mechanisms underlying the pathogenesis of colitis and colitis-associated colon carcinogenesis. As a postdoctoral research fellow at Mayo Clinic, Scottsdale, AZ, Priyanka focused on characterizing MUC1, a transmembrane mucin, as a cancer vaccine antigen to develop immunotherapy against solid tumors. In order to gain further research experience, Priyanka joined the Harvard Medical School, Brigham and Women's Hospital, Boston, MA. At Harvard, she identified a novel therapeutic target for kidney fibrosis and unraveled the molecular and immunological mechanisms underlying the pathogenesis of fibrosis. The work was published in the *Journal of the American Society of Nephrology* and was subsequently highlighted in *Nature Reviews Nephrology*.



PDA Board Members Elected for 2018-2019

Congratulations!

Vice Chair: Melanie Abongwa

Treasurer: David Faulkner

Councilor: Sarah Latcher

Councilor: Brita Kilburg-Basnyat

The results of the PDA election have been released. More information on the officers can be found on the PDA webpage.

We wish the 2018-19 Board all the best as they assume their new leadership roles on May 1st.

Upcoming Spring 2018 PDA-Hosted Webinar

Chaired by Gurjot Kaur, SOT PDA Secretary and Marianna Stamou, SOT PDA Treasurer

Stay tuned to ToXchange for updates!

Thinking Ahead to Next Year!

2019 Joint PDA and GSLC SOT Annual Meeting Session Proposal

The PDA submits scientific and career development proposals for consideration for the Annual Meeting.

Have an idea for a scientific proposal, career development theme, or a potential speaker?

Email ideas to Samantha Snow, PDA Chair (snow.samantha@epa.gov)

Tickets Available! Join the discussion at the SOT Annual Meeting....

***In Vitro* Lecture: More Than Skin Deep: When Alternative Approaches Outperform Animal Tests**

Presenter: Nicole Kleinstreuer
Monday, March 12, 11:30 AM to 1:00 PM
Hemisfair Ballroom C1

Breaking science--participate in a case study that focuses on current considerations for acceptance of alternate tests for dermal sensitivity.

Only \$10 while they last—contact sotmeetings@toxicology.org or call 703.438.3115 to add to your registration.

Core Competencies of Personal Development Will Always Withstand the Test of Time

Pankajini Mallick, PhD, ScitoVation LLC.

As postdocs we keep wondering about our goals and undoubtedly have one important question, “Should I go into academia or industry?” We base our final decision on our own values, needs, wants, and feelings regarding our career. To achieve this final goal, we invest most of our time sharpening scientific knowledge and research skills, and to some extent communication skills. However, there are other areas we can develop such as management, leadership, and professionalism that will help us to achieve success.

Management and leadership: As a manager or a team member, we need to plan and organize projects, share and delegate responsibilities, provide feedback, work in diverse environment, and handle conflicts. So, it’s good to start working on personal values and develop a clear personal vision, early on, long before taking on a major leadership challenge. A simple way to do so is to start by listing your positive traits, like creativity, decisiveness, honesty, meaningful work, etc. Then, choose two or three core values that can be the essence of you as a leader, based on personal experience and what resonates with your personality. Next, go to work on your vision and goals through engaging people like showing leadership in scientific meetings, becoming a leader outside of work (like in charitable organization), or taking an online leadership building course.

Professionalism: We might have heard that professionalism is about “being professional.” For some, it means dressing smartly at work, doing a good job, having advanced degrees, or other certifications. However, it covers much more than that; it’s also about being reliable, respectful, and competent. You can wear the wrong outfit to work once and still recover but if you bring an unprofessional attitude to work, for sure the work experience will not yield appreciation and recognition. So “attitude is everything.” It all starts with who we are, and how we conduct ourselves; therefore, character is the key attribute of professionalism and should reflect integrity, honesty and accountability. Staying work-focused and listening carefully will improve our chances to create a positive reputation that can ultimately translate into a raise and/or promotion. Professionalism can be achieved by being prepared, taking initiative, welcoming feedback, and showing gratitude.

As early-career scientists our biggest challenge, other than funding, is lack of work-life balance, which can leave us feeling exhausted. Thus, these core competencies are not only pertinent to the job associated tasks, but also to our private and social lives as individuals. Time management helps find space for our inner creativity and time to socialize, so we can stay motivated and avoid feeling overwhelmed. A question we should all ponder is, “How can we expect to perform to our greatest potential if we are tired and stressed?” It’s OK to take a break.

In this Post-y, we introduce a new “**Know your fellow Scientist**” segment, which will showcase experiences from fellow postdocs which we hope can serve as an inspiration for keeping a positive and healthy outlook on our career paths. Two of our fellow postdocs, Kimberly P. Keil and Shirisha Chittiboyina, share their strategies in maintaining work/life balance.



Know Your Fellow Scientist

Kimberly P. Keil, PhD

University of California, Davis

I am a postdoctoral researcher in the laboratory of Dr. Pamela Lein at the University of California Davis. I am studying neurodevelopment in response to exposure to environmental contaminants such as polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) in *in vitro* and *in vivo* rodent models. I also study how genetic susceptibilities may influence these environmental exposures. These complex gene by environment interaction studies require a great deal of patience, dedication, and hard work.

One thing that helps me focus is knowing I have a strong support team who I know I can rely on for help and problem solving. Also, having both short and long-term goals in mind keep me focused and on task, but also allow me the flexibility to change my goals as needed, as life or experiments dictate. Having discipline but also the foresight to change when you need to change have really helped me over the years to stay focused, driven, and still able to enjoy my work.

Work life balance is always a challenge, but I like to use my background of being raised on a small farm as both an outlet for recreation and a way to recharge to focus on my lab work. There is nothing that helps me more to unwind and clear my head than horseback riding or just time spent with my horse outside. Sometimes my best ideas or moments of scientific clarity come when I am cleaning a stall! I am also fortunate that my husband feels the same way I do about working on the farm and we can spend our time together doing something we both love, while recharging from stressful scientific jobs. I think a lot of the hard work and determination that I put into my scientific work is really just a carry-over from the way I was raised. If I can't be physically working in the barn, I have to be working in some other way, which translates well to science for me. While this is not how everyone wants to spend their time, finding that hobby or passion outside of the lab is critical and not being afraid to work for it is also important. Instead of looking at work and life as a balancing act, I like to think of it as two realms of my life that I can get enjoyment out of in very different ways, and that only motivates me to work harder on both of them.



Shirisha Chittiboyina, PhD

Purdue University College of Veterinary Medicine

I was never an overzealous kid who planned my life goal in middle or high school. I just wanted to travel around the world and of course, be independent. That was my goal. Being a math nerd, I received advice about how I can be a successful engineer and see places. However, my very ambitious parents convinced me that I could use my brains to be a better physician and still travel to help people around the world. That's how I landed into science and traveled to the United Kingdom and the United States. However, pursuing a PhD was not on my to-do list. My advisor Julie Graham at SCRI, UK, was the one who identified the scientist in me and encouraged me to apply for a PhD program. And the trouble starts.... I am sure most of you who have earned a PhD in the US will agree with me, it is the most challenging job you have ever taken in your life, to pursue a PhD. In my case, I have changed three advisors, three schools to finish one Masters and one PhD. You might ask, "why take the trouble?" I could have easily

Continued on Page 6

quit and chosen another profession. The thought crossed my mind too, several times on various occasions. Just when I decided to quit, a wonderful opportunity came by from Indiana University, Bloomington where I could finish my PhD in three years or less. I did finish my PhD in three and half years while spending 80% of my life in the lab and changing my project only once. It was about time, I thought, to take a break. I had my postdoc opportunity in hand by the time I defended my thesis, but my postdoc lab needed me as soon as possible. So, forget about the break and back to lab with pipettes, cells, western blots and assays. It is at this point when I realized, I need to learn how to balance my work and my personal life. And the trouble ends....

Work-life balance, an often-mentioned concept, more so in a corporate system than in academia, can seem like myth to many of us in a research environment. As graduate students and postdocs we are made to believe that "WORK IS LIFE". However, I made a few changes in my work style to make this life filled with work more enjoyable. Fortunately, I love the work I do, and I have an advisor who knows how to mentor me to be successful. This brings a big change to my outlook towards research spending many hours a week in the lab and increased my confidence.

I have looked outside my lab life. It could be anything you love to do, something as simple as gardening, to something as ambitious as running a marathon. I did both. I did gardening (don't ask about the fate of the plants) and ran a half marathon and of course numerous 5Ks and a 10K. We need not be trained athletes to do these feats. Have a friend or even a lab mate tag along with you and just take a fun walk. If you are a loner, like me, just listen to your favorite music and walk the three miles, which is healthy to your mind and body.

I was trained as a child in one of the Indian classical dance forms but was too shy to perform on stage. During my postdoc tenure, I have participated in stage shows on nearly four occasions during the span of two and half years. I have cooked for 300 people at a local event. Any of these tasks were not stressful at all. I actually learned to interact with people outside my work, appreciate all the work they do and understand people's perspective on life.

I hear my colleagues say sometimes, "I don't have time for all this, I have kids, or it is difficult." Trust me, we all do have time. At the least I know every one of us can make some time. As far as kids are concerned, engage them in your activity. Have fun together. Do a parent-child fun activity. It could seem chaotic, but it helped me rejuvenate, refresh my mind and focus better on my research. Yes. I still do spend many hours a week in the lab because that is what it demands. I traveled to ten different countries for vacation over the past eight years. I spend my nights writing papers and proposals. Am I successful in all my attempts? No, but that does not intimidate me because I know I am good at many other things beyond research.

This is my story. Some of you might already be doing what all I have done and probably more. I know some of my friends who go for a 10K hike or bike for 20 miles at a stretch. For those who have not come out of your shell, give it a try. Hobbies and passions are to be followed wherever you are and whatever you do.

2018 SOT Career Resources

- **SOT Online Job Bank:** <https://www.toxicology.org/application/jobbank/>
Be sure to update your CV and visibility settings before the meeting!
- **Mentor Match: The Online SOT Mentoring Program**
<http://www.toxicology.org/application/JobBank/mentormatch.asp>
- **Education-Career Development Sessions**
See p. 7-8 of the Post-y and the Annual Meeting App to find relevant sessions.

2018 SOT Meeting Networking Opportunities

- Student/Postdoc Mixer: March 11, 7:30 PM to 9:00 PM in CC Hemisfair Ballroom
- SOT Mentoring Breakfast: March 12, 6:15 AM to 7:45 AM in CC Room 220
- Career Exploration through Speed Informational Interviews: March 13, 1:25 PM to 2:45 PM in CC Room 220 (Sold Out!)
- Postdoctoral Luncheon: March 13, 12:00 PM to 1:20 PM in CC Room 220
- Poster Tours for Trainees: March 12-14 (time varies by group)
- Chat with an Expert: March 12-15 (time/location varies by group)
- SOT Component Group Mentoring Events
 - Food Safety Specialty Section Mentoring Event:
Monday 12 March, 4:45 PM to 5:45 PM in Grand Hyatt Lone Star E
[Act fast! Registration will be capped at 25 participants.](#)
 - Immunotoxicology Specialty Section Mentoring Event:
Tuesday, March 13, 4:00 PM to 5:00 PM in Grand Hyatt Texas F
Please RSVP as soon as possible to Emanuela Corsini (emanuela.corsini@unimi.it).
 - Molecular and Systems Biology, Mechanisms, and In Vitro and Alternative Methods Specialty Sections Mentoring Reception:
Tuesday, March 13, 6:30 PM to 8:30 PM at Restaurant Casa Rio
Space is limited! Register [here](#)! View the [flyer here](#).
 - Cardiovascular Toxicology Specialty Section "Chat with a Mentor" Breakfast
Wednesday, March 14, 7:30 AM at Schilo's Restaurant
Please RSVP to Katie Zychowski (kzychowski@salud.unm.edu) as soon as possible to inquire about availability.

Education and Career Development Sessions

In It to Win It: How to Negotiate During the Interview Process

Tuesday, March 13, 11:00 AM to 12:20 PM in CC Stars Night Ballroom B1

Chairpersons: Karilyn Sant, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, MA; and Cynthia Browning, Brown University, Providence, RI.

- Strategies for Negotiating Both Salary Compensation and Start-Up Package to Assure Productivity and Success in Your First Academic Job at a Research-Intensive Institution. **John Richburg**, University of Texas, Austin, TX.
- Getting to Yes: Academic Negotiations at a Primarily Undergraduate Institution. **Larissa Williams**, Bates College, Lewiston, ME.
- The Art of Interviewing and Negotiating for Your First Post-Training Job in the Pharmaceutical Industry. **Joseph Cichocki**, Alnylam Pharmaceuticals, Cambridge, MA.
- There's Usually No Harm in Asking. **Marie Fortin**, Alkami Corporation, Wilmington, NC.
- Negotiating with the Federal Government: What's Actually on the Table? **Tamara Tal**, US EPA, Research Triangle Park, NC.

Education and Career Development Sessions (continued)

Perfecting Your “Elevator Speech”

Tuesday, March 13, 4:30 PM to 5:50 PM in CC Stars Night Ballroom B1

Chairpersons: Joseph Cichocki, Alnylam Pharmaceuticals, Cambridge, MA; and Kathryn Page, The Clorox Company, Pleasanton, CA.

- Introduction. **Joseph Cichocki**, Alnylam Pharmaceuticals, College Station, TX.
- Body Language and First Impressions **Marie Fortin**, Alcami Corporation, Piscataway, NJ.
- Perfecting Your Pitch: Key Features of an Elevator Speech to Help You Reach the Top Floor. **Shaun McCullough**, US EPA, Chapel Hill, NC.
- What NOT to Do.... **Claire Sadler**, Apconix, Alderley Edge, United Kingdom.
- Panel Discussion/Q&A. **Kathryn Page**, The Clorox Company, Pleasanton, CA.
- Attendee-Participating and Chair/Presenter-Facilitated Elevator Speech Interactive Activity. **Joseph Cichocki**, Alnylam Pharmaceuticals, Cambridge, MA; and **Kathryn Page**, The Clorox Company, Pleasanton, CA.

Career Opportunities in Regulatory Toxicology

Wednesday, March 14, 11:00 AM to 12:20 PM in CC Stars Night Ballroom B1

Chairpersons: William Farland, Colorado State University and William H. Farland Consulting LLC, Rockport, ME; and Angela Lynch, ToxPlus Consulting and Roosevelt University College of Pharmacy, Haymarket, VA.

- Introduction. **Angela Lynch**, ToxPlus Consulting and Roosevelt University College of Pharmacy, Haymarket, VA.
- Training in Regulatory Toxicology: Understanding Opportunities and Present-Day Challenges. **James Klaunig**, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN.
- The Role of Regulatory Toxicology in Drug Development. **Tao Wang**, Achaogen, San Francisco, CA.
- Generating Toxicology Data to Meet the Needs of Regulatory Agencies. **Allison Greminger**, ExxonMobil Biomedical Sciences Inc., New York, NY.
- Evolving Approaches in Regulatory Toxicology: Integrating Pathway-Based Screening and Testing to Support Modern Chemical Safety Assessments and Harmonize International Approaches. **David Dix**, US EPA, Washington, DC.
- Panel Discussion/Q&A. **William Farland**, Colorado State University and **William H. Farland Consulting, LLC**, Rockport, ME.

Research-Based Approaches to Improve Teaching Effectiveness in Toxicology Classrooms

Wednesday, March 14, 4:30 PM to 5:50 PM in CC Room 301

Chairpersons: Barbara Kaplan, Mississippi State University, Mississippi State, MS; and Larissa Williams, Bates College, Lewiston, ME.

- Introduction. **Larissa Williams**, Bates College, Lewiston, ME.
- Scientific Teaching: Using the Rigor of Science to Facilitate Learning in the Classroom. **Edwin Barea-Rodriguez**, University of Texas at San Antonio, San Antonio, TX.
- Lessons Learned from a Flipped Classroom. **Larissa Williams**, Bates College, Lewiston, ME.
- Graduate Toxicology Presented in the Context of Problem Formulation and Experimental Design. **Barbara Kaplan**, Mississippi State University, Mississippi State, MS.
- Taking the Student Out of the Classroom with Community-Engaged Learning and Research. **Christian Curran**, Northern Kentucky University, Highland Heights, KY.
- Effective Communication of Toxicology Principles Is Critical to the Industry Toxicologist. **Steven Hermansky**, ConAgra Foodservice, Omaha, NE.

Are you completing your training soon and wondering how different career paths compare to each other?

Scientists at the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS), have developed a new tool which allows visualization of employment trends in the biomedical sciences by different criteria (type, sector, job-specific information). This tool was developed based on data collected from more than 900 NIEHS postdoctoral fellows over the past 15 years and is currently being refined to allow individual users and institutions to upload their own data from an Excel spreadsheet and compare their own employment trends. For more information visit:

<https://www.niehs.nih.gov/news/newsroom/releases/2018/january24/index.cfm>

Reference:

Xu H, Gilliam RST, Peddada SD, Buchold GM, Collins TRL. 2018. Visualizing detailed postdoctoral employment trends using a new career outcome taxonomy. Nat Biotechnol; doi: 10.1038/nbt.4059 [Online 15 January 2018].



The Post-y Newsletter is published twice annually in Reston, Virginia for the members of the Society of Toxicology Postdoctoral Assembly.

Editorial Office and Membership:

Society of Toxicology
11190 Sunrise Valley Drive, Suite 300
Reston, VA 20191
Phone: 703.438.3115
Fax: 703.438.3113
Email: sothq@toxicology.org