

# Molecular Biology Specialty Section



## President's Message

It now seems like a long time ago, but I enjoyed seeing many of you at the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Society of Toxicology Annual Meeting in Washington, DC. I appreciate your support of MBSS and your attendance at the reception and business meeting. I was particularly impressed with the quality of the students and post-doctoral fellows that we have in our specialty section which was exhibited in the presentations by the award winners. As usual, the awards were highly competitive this past year and it is an honor for the recipients who receive them. It is also a testament to the dedication of

our membership who provided significant funding to the MBSS endowment that supported the majority of the awards this past year.

At the 2011 Annual meeting, MBSS continued its strong tradition of session sponsorship and member-chaired sessions. We sponsored 5 scientific sessions and 4 continuing education courses and endorsed many more. This was an increase over last year and represents a great deal of work by our officers and membership. It is a challenge to pull together innovative and well-organized proposals in the short time between the end of the annual meeting and the submission deadline, but the quality of the Annual Meeting is highly dependent on our contributions. The Society continues to heavily rely on the specialty sections for these session proposals, so it is up to us to make sure that the molecular biology is well represented.

According to a recent tally, the MBSS has a total of 216 members which is an increase of 29% over the previous year! I want to especially welcome all the new members and hope the MBSS can provide you with a focal point for interaction with other members of the Society of Toxicology interested in molecular biology. We are also grateful to our long-time members, their contributions, and continued support for the MBSS and ask them to continue to support MBSS and provide feedback on how we can continually increase the value of MBSS membership.

I have tried to continue the momentum of the MBSS by strengthening its membership and increasing its visibility through the sessions and continuing education courses we have sponsored. I will continue to work on behalf of MBSS until the end of my term at the annual meeting. Please feel free to contact me with any concerns, suggestions, or comments.

Sincerely,  
Russell S. Thomas (rthomas@thehamner.org)

## Officers

### President

Russell Thomas  
*The Hamner Institutes for Health Sciences*

### Past President

Christopher Reilly  
*University of Utah*

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Chris Corton  
*U.S. Environmental Protection Agency*

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### Representatives

Jill Franzosa  
*Oregon State University*

Britton Goodale  
*Oregon State University*

### Postdoctoral

### Representative

Cassandra Deering-Rice  
*University of Utah*

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## *Treasurer's Report*

It is my pleasure to report that MBSS financial status is sound. This can be attributed to increased MBSS membership as well as conservative budgeting and spending practices. In the current report, I will highlight our funding sources and the allocation of these funds. MBSS receives two separate pools of funding: i) the general fund and ii) the MBSS endowment fund. MBSS general funds are derived from three major sources: rollover, membership dues, and registration fees. These general funds are used each year to cover the cost of catering the specialty section meeting as well as supplying certificates recognizing the MBSS student awardees. Each year we try to maintain enough funds in our rollover to cover these costs at the annual meeting. This year the MBSS general fund has \$2,229 (down approximately \$74 from the previous year). In October, we submitted our budget for the MBSS meeting in San Francisco (\$2,090). This should enable MBSS to cover costs in the absence of additional funds. So, where do we get our funds? The majority of our funding comes from the \$15 specialty section membership fees. Additionally, a small percentage of MBSS member's annual meeting registration fees also contribute to the MBSS general fund. Thus, increased MBSS membership and attendance of our members at the annual meeting significantly impact this general fund. These contributions will be evaluated at the 51<sup>st</sup> SOT annual meeting in March, and we will continue to keep our members posted as to the financial status of the general fund.

## *MBSS Endowment Fund Status and Contributors*

In 2007, the Molecular Biology Student Award Fund was established and the initial goal of \$25,000 was met in order to make it a Permanently Restricted Net Asset Fund to support student and postdoctoral awards for future SOT meetings. Despite the fluctuations in the financial markets, the fund has grown to \$28,954. This year, the SOT endowment board has authorized the use of up to 4% of the year-end balance for the molecular biology student awards. Thanks to your support, we have \$1,296.82 to contribute to the 2012 graduate and postdoctoral molecular biology awards.

Thank you to all who have contributed so generously. For those who have not yet done so, please consider donating to continue supporting these award programs. They provide recognition for the future leaders of the MBSS and the Society of Toxicology.

The 2010 – 2011 contributors to the Molecular Biology Student Award Fund were:

- Michael J. Carvan III
- Ronald N. Hines and D. Gail McCarver
- Russell S. Thomas
- Cheryl Lyn Walker

## *Dues Reminder*

The annual Society of Toxicology membership deadline for dues is December 15<sup>th</sup>. Please remember to renew your membership to the Society of Toxicology and to the MBSS. Also, please encourage your graduate students, post-doctoral fellows, and colleagues to become members of MBSS.

## *Changes to MBSS By-Laws*

The previous version of the by-laws governing our specialty section was drafted in 1988 and in need of revision. The officers approved revisions to the by-laws in August of this year and you received a voting notice from SOT headquarters. The vote by MBSS members was unanimously in favor of the revisions. The revised by-laws were sent to SOT Council and where they were given final approval. The finalized MBSS by-laws are available on the web site.

## 2011 Annual Meeting Sessions Sponsored By MBSS

The MBSS was the primary sponsor of five scientific sessions and four continuing education courses at the 2011 Annual Meeting, as well as a secondary or tertiary sponsor of many more. We wish to thank the chairs, co-chairs and speakers in these sessions.

### Continuing Education Courses:

*Dealing with the Data Deluge: A Live Data Discovery and Analysis Course.* Co-Chairs: Marc E. Gillespie, St. Johns University and Susan M. Bello, Jackson Laboratory.

*Epigenetics in Toxicology: Introduction, Mechanistic Understanding, and Application to Safety Assessment.* Co-Chairs: Mayurranjan S. Mitra, Washington University and Thomas Sussan, Johns Hopkins University.

*Applications of Computational Systems Biology for Toxicology.* Co-Chairs: Melvin E. Andersen, The Hamner Institutes for Health Sciences and Rory B. Conolly, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

*Practical How-To and Pitfalls Associated with Current Epigenetic Studies.* Co-Chairs: Reza J. Rasoulpour, Dow Chemical Company and Chunhua Qin, Merck & Company.

### Symposia/Workshops:

*Human Variability in Susceptibility to Environmental Toxicants.* Co-Chairs: Holly Mortensen, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and Susan Euling, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

*Uncovering the Role of Non-Coding RNAs in Toxicology.* Co-Chairs: Mark Hahn, Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute and Tamara Tal, Oregon State University

*Livers on a Plate: Next Generation Hepatocyte Models for High-Throughput Screening and Mode of Action Prediction.* Co-Chairs: Chris Corton, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and Susan Hester, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

*The Spectrum of Systems Biology.* Co-Chairs: William Mattes, PharmPoint Consulting and Lyle Burgoon, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

*Gene-Environment Disease Interactions in Fish Models of Human Disease.* Co-Chairs: Michael Carvan, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and Seth Kullman, North Carolina State University

## 2011 Graduate Student and Postdoctoral Fellow Awards

The highlight of the MBSS reception at the annual meeting is the recognition of the graduate student and post-doctoral fellow award winners. The awards are extremely competitive and are an excellent ways to enhance career development and become involved in the society. The awards were covered by our Molecular Biology Student Award Fund.

### 2011 Graduate Student Award Winners

- First Place: Katerine Saili, Oregon State University, “Neurobehavioral and transcriptional consequences of estrogen-related receptor gamma activation by low-dose bisphenol A exposure during neurogenesis”, Advisor: Robert Tanguay
- Second Place: Laura MacPherson, University of Toronto, “Role of 2,3,7,8-tetrachlorodibenzo-p-dioxin-inducible aryl hydrocarbon receptor signaling”, Advisor: Jason Matthews
- Third Place: Shengzhong Su, Penn State University, “Transcriptional regulation of the human microsomal epoxide hydrolase gene (Ephx1) driven by a far upstream alternative promoter”, Advisor: Curtis Omiecinski

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## ***2011 Graduate Student and Postdoctoral Fellow Awards (Continued from Page 3)***

### **2011 Post-Doctoral Award Winners**

- First Place: Alicia Timme-Laragy, Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute, “Nrf2b: A Novel Nrf2 paralog in zebrafish, Advisor: Mark Hahn
- Second Place: Cassandra Deering-Rice, University of Utah, “Activation of human TRPA1 by diesel exhaust particles (DEP): Association with lung injury, Advisor: Christopher Reilly



First Place Graduate Student  
Katerine Saili



Second Place Graduate Student  
Laura MacPherson



Third Place Graduate Student  
Shengzhong Su



First Place Postdoctoral Fellow  
Alicia Timme-Laragy



Second Place Postdoctoral Fellow  
Cassandra Deering-Rice

### ***MBSS Needs You... To Serve as an Officer or Representative!***

The MBSS election is held prior to the Annual Meeting. This year we will need to elect a new Vice President elect (total of 4 year commitment, VP-elect, VP, President, Past President), a Jr. Councilor (2 year commitment), a Junior Student Rep. (2 year commitment), and a post-doc. rep (1 year commitment). If you are interested in running for an officer position or would like to nominate someone please contact Chris Corton (**[Corton.Chris@epamail.epa.gov](mailto:Corton.Chris@epamail.epa.gov)**) who will be coordinating the election this year. Anyone interested in running for office will need to submit a brief bio by December 15, 2011. MBSS now elects a student and post-doctoral representatives through the annual ballot. This is a great opportunity for students and post-doctoral fellows. The student representative serves a two-year term on the SOT Student Advisory Council (SAC), allowing for the MBSS to be represented by a senior SAC-rep and a junior SAC-rep. The SAC-representatives are able to run for office within the SAC and serve on its executive board as the role of SAC within SOT continues to be refined. If you wish to be considered for the MBSS SAC representative, you must be a full-time graduate student in good standing that can fulfill the two-year commitment of the position and have interest in SOT policy and initiatives. The post-doc representative position is for one year and you must be a post-doctoral fellow from ~May 2012-May 2013. Feel free to contact any of the MBSS officers with questions or visit the following website for details on officer responsibilities: **<http://www.toxicology.org/ISOT/SS/molecular/MBSS.html>**

## 2012 Annual Meeting Reception

The 2012 Annual Society of Toxicology Meeting is in San Francisco, CA from March 11 – 15. The MBSS reception is on Tuesday, March 13<sup>th</sup>. Please plan on attending and supporting the specialty section and our graduate student and post-doctoral award winners.



## 2012 Annual Meeting Sessions Sponsored by MBSS

At the 2012 Annual Society of Toxicology Meeting in San Francisco, CA, the MBSS is sponsoring one continuing education course and four scientific sessions. The course and sessions are listed below.

### Continuing Education Courses:

*MicroRNAs in Biology and Toxicology.* Co-Chairs: Neel Aluru, Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute and Carmen Marsit, Brown University

### Symposia/Workshops:

*Cross-Species Analysis of Toxicogenomics Data: Approaches for Assessing Differences in Sensitivity and Conservation of Mode-of-Action.* Co-Chairs: Russell Thomas, The Hamner Institutes for Health Sciences and Craig Rowlands, Dow Chemical Company

*Realizing the vision of 21st Century Toxicity Testing: Genetic approaches to pathway analysis.* Co-Chairs: Chris Corton, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and Lyle Burgoon, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

*How Useful are Liver In Vitro Models for Toxicity and Mode of Action Prediction?* Co-Chairs: Chris Corton, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and Wolfgang Dekant, University of Würzburg

*The Thick and Thin of Nuclear Receptors and Nrf2 in Diabetes and Obesity.* Co-Chairs: Angela Slitt, University of Rhode Island and Lauren Aleksunes, Rutgers University

## A Plea from the Vice President Elect...

Although 2013 may seem like a long way off, the Society of Toxicology requires session proposals to be submitted shortly after the 2012 meeting. It is not too early to start thinking about innovative sessions that may contribute to the 2013 meeting. Please be aware that the MBSS officers are there to provide suggestions and assist you with the development and sponsorship of the proposals. We especially want to remind you that coordinating your submission early with the VP elect (Nancy Denslow; [ndenslow@ufl.edu](mailto:ndenslow@ufl.edu)) will allow us to provide feedback on the proposal prior to submission. This practice has proven invaluable over the past few years in terms of success rates for acceptance by the Program Committee. Students and Post-Docs are also strongly encouraged to communicate with the MBSS officers to develop any ideas they may have.

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If you need more information on our specialty section,  
please check out our web site:

<http://www.toxicology.org/ISOT/SS/molecular/MBSS.html>

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