



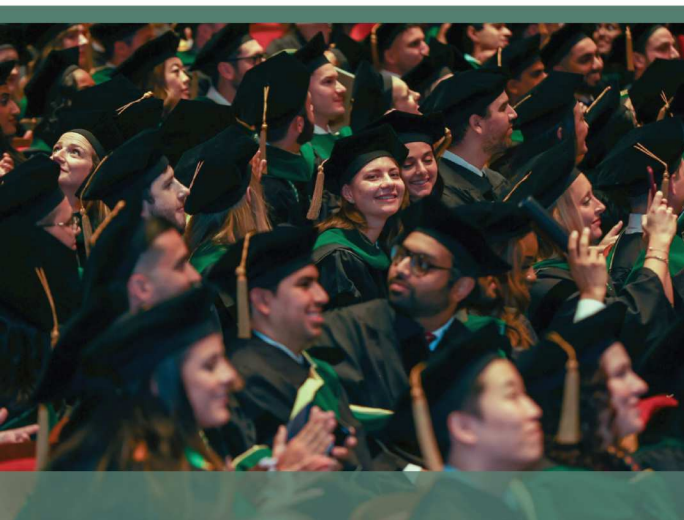
SUMMER 2023
Vol. 10, No. 3

Degrees of Healing and Discovery: Commencement 2023

The class of 2023 celebrated Commencement at the Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts on May 12, with an audience of family, friends, Drexel leadership, special guests, faculty, alumni and professional staff. The ceremony celebrated more than 550 graduates from Drexel's MD program and the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences and Professional Studies.

Before the students received their degrees and donned their hoods, Walter H. and Leonore Annenberg Dean and Senior Vice President of Medical Affairs Charles B. Cairns, MD, addressed the graduates, emphasizing the day's theme of community and support.

"You have supported one another personally and academically, and collectively helped us to thrive as an institution," Cairns said. "Your support for each other mirrors the support you gave the Philadelphia community. We know that you will be instrumental in shaping the world beyond our local communities for years to come."



The class of 2023 has participated in many outreach initiatives, from distributing hygiene kits, food and water in Philadelphia's Kensington neighborhood to mentoring high school students interested in pursuing STEM careers. Students have also helped advance scientific knowledge through research, poster and platform presentations at prestigious conferences, and publication in scientific journals.

During the Commencement ceremony, Drexel University President John Fry praised graduates' achievements. "Your accomplishments fill me with confidence that the future of

democracy and humanity is in the very best of hands," he said. "I am tremendously proud to call all of you Drexel graduates."

Graduates and Commencement attendees heard an address from John H. Glick, MD, emeritus professor of medicine at the University of Pennsylvania, and former vice president and associate dean for resource development. He was the longest-serving director of Penn's Abramson Cancer Center, and a pioneering oncologist. "I am not the same doctor that I was when I graduated from medical school in 1969 and you will not be the same person in ten years that you are today," Glick said. "What you have today, thanks to Drexel, is an excellent foundation to learn, grow and mature. I urge you to continue your daily learning, and to enhance your abilities. I salute you at the beginning of the next phase of your career."

The Commencement ceremony was also streamed live for those who could not attend in person and is archived online at drexel.edu/medicine/news-events/commencement.

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pulse

Pulse, a publication for students, faculty, staff and alumni of Drexel University College of Medicine, is published four times a year by the Marketing & Communications Department
245 North 15th Street, Room 6328
Philadelphia, PA 19102

Danielle Kane
Executive Director
Marketing & Communications

Adrienne Hovey
Editor

Heidi Karl
Art Director

Contributing writers:
Lisa Ryan, G.K. Schatzman

Submissions may be emailed to
CoM_Pulse@drexel.edu.

For questions, comments or additional copies of Pulse, call 267.359.6370 or email CoM_Pulse@drexel.edu

drexel.edu/medicine



Dean's Message

Our move into the Health Sciences Building is complete! Indeed, we have been anticipating this opportunity to combine our educational campuses with the University for several years. The first classes of MD students were welcomed to University City in the beginning of August, joining students from the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences and Professional Studies and the College of Nursing and Health Professions. This is an incredibly exciting milestone for our school, one that represents a significant leap forward in our commitment to providing the highest-quality education and training for all our students. Bringing our nursing, allied health professional and medical students into one modern, state-of-the-art space offers immense



Charles B. Cairns, MD

potential for enhancing interprofessional relationships, fostering collaboration and cultivating the future landscape of medicine and science.

I am also very proud of the class of 2023, who graduated in May. The ceremony was a wonderful opportunity to highlight the achievements of our graduates and wish them well on the next phase of their journey. Having esteemed oncologist John H. Glick, MD, as keynote speaker and honorary degree recipient was a true privilege. I am equally proud to welcome the newest cohort of MD

program and graduate students who are joining us this academic year. We are all eager to see what these new students will achieve and who they will become during their time at Drexel University College of Medicine.

Another set of important welcomes to new faculty leaders: Linwood Haith, MD, has been appointed academic chair of the Department of Surgery and associate dean for external affairs. Dr. Haith serves as the chief of burn surgery at Crozer-Chester Medical Center and is a nationally known academic and clinical leader in burn surgery. Margaret Larkins-Pettigrew, MD, MEd, MPPM, has been appointed academic chair of the Department of Obstetrics & Gynecology. A national champion for diversity and clinical excellence, Dr. Larkins-Pettigrew also serves as senior vice president and enterprise chief of clinical diversity, equity and inclusion at Allegheny Health Network. At our regional campuses, Chinazor Umerah, MD, has been appointed associate regional dean of our Cape Fear Valley Health System campus. Dr. Umerah is a hospitalist who is board certified in internal medicine. Aditya Joshi, MD, will take on the associate regional dean role at the UPMC Harrisburg campus. Dr. Joshi is a psychiatrist, board certified in neurology and psychiatry.

Indeed, this has already been an historical and impactful year for our community, for all these reasons and many more. As we look ahead to the challenges we face and the successes we will enjoy in the future, our ability to adapt, grow and thrive has been and continues to be most fully realized when we work together.

Charles B. Cairns, MD

Walter H. and Leonore Annenberg Dean
Senior Vice President of Medical Affairs



2023 Batts Dinner

The 2023 James A. Batts Jr. Diversity Dinner was held on May 10. The event celebrates the achievements of graduating students from groups that are underrepresented in medicine. It also provides an opportunity to raise funds that support student success. This year's event raised \$7,700.

The keynote address was delivered by Yanick Vibert, DO, assistant professor of pediatrics. The student speakers were Lex Profozich, Sophie Gonzalez and Aderinsola Aderonmu, and the alumni speaker was Irene Kirkland Mintz, MD, MCP '86.

The dinner is named in honor of James A. Batts Jr., who joined the faculty at the Medical College of Pennsylvania in 1979 and retired in 1989 as senior attending physician and professor emeritus in the Department of Obstetrics & Gynecology.





We thank you, our graduates, for partnering with us, and bringing creativity and energy to our educational community.

– Donna Russo, PhD, HU '89, interim vice dean for educational affairs, senior associate dean for curriculum, and William Maul Measey Chair in Medical Education



Today we celebrate the hope and promise that each of you carries into your careers and your lives as you make a powerful impact on society.

– Seema Baranwal, MD, senior associate dean for student affairs





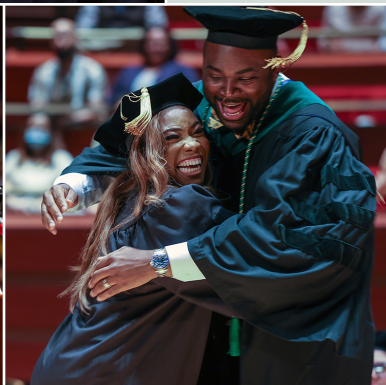
Remember today, and remember our last few years. Remember what we've learned and what we still need to learn. Remember our teachers. Remember our loved ones. Cherish them all.

– Kyle Brunner, MD '23



Staying flexible, adapting to challenges, and finding new solutions is part of what has kept this school going for 175 years, and these traits will serve you well in the future.

– Edward Siegel, MD '12, president, Alumni Association



A Step Toward Restoration

The honor board feels the early benefits of embracing a restorative justice model.

What do you do when you mess up? How does guilt factor into repairing harm? And how, in communities of mission-minded students, can we center healing as a core part of justice?

Questions like these began to gather attention at Drexel University College of Medicine in the spring of 2022 as Steven Rosenzweig, MD,

proposed integrating restorative practices into the college's honor court system.

Rosenzweig, a professor of emergency medicine (palliative medicine) and director of the Office of Community Engagement, oversees professionalism and bioethics education. He and fellow educators at the College of Medicine have brought a vision of medical training that fosters "intellectual, emotional, social and spiritual capacities of students to become excellent and compassionate physicians." Implementation of restorative practices furthers that aim.

Rosenzweig led a task force of teachers, deans and students to study restorative practices and learn from the experiences of other medical schools to create a new and innovative approach to the peer honor court system. Consideration gave way to swift adoption for the following academic year, transforming the old honor *court* system into an honor *board* that implements restorative justice for violations of the College's Code of Ethics. The difference? The court model existed simply to establish guilt or innocence.

The restorative board model, on the other hand, goes a step further to identify harm done and establish a plan to repair it.

Now, at the end of their first year under the new model, Rosenzweig and Michael Spear, MD, professor of pediatrics and the honor board's faculty advisor, reflect on the successes of the change, alongside outgoing honor board president Heidi Maupin, MD '23, and fourth-year MD student Vivian Li, the honor board's incoming president.

"All medical learning and practice happen within community" Rosenzweig says. "Restorative practices have helped us achieve greater resilience for our community through building greater support for all parties and creating pathways to repair harm and restore trust."

How It Used to Be

The model that the College's honor court used to function on is not unlike the U.S. criminal justice system, Rosenzweig says. Following the priorities of what we generally call retributive (rather than restorative) justice, juries are tasked with determining guilt or innocence based upon the evidence presented. What happens next — often punishment or sanction of one kind or another — is out of their hands.

As the College gathered input from students and faculty about their experiences with the honor court, it became increasingly clear that people on both sides — those on the court and those summoned before it — found it distressing.

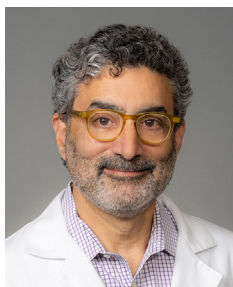
Li, a member of the court before becoming president of the honor board for the upcoming year, describes it as "severe and not very useful for students who understood what had happened and wanted to figure out how to move forward."

Maupin agrees: "It was really difficult to have your peers come before a panel of the honor court members and feel so judged, and have to be so vulnerable in retelling the story of what they did wrong when they already knew that it was wrong. They had to relive that for really no purpose other than to go through the formal process as it was outlined in our handbook."

Having to pronounce judgment on a peer without being able to support their making amends was particularly stressful. "I think it was difficult to see a student make a mistake that you yourself could have made, and to be judged for it and not really have any ability to show understanding," she says.

According to Rosenzweig, the restorative framework originates in the justice teachings and practices of diverse Indigenous communities across the Americas, Africa,

Polynesia and other regions. "Restorative practices are rooted in deep, traditional understandings of community, accountability and social healing, and have gained some traction in Western criminal justice and educational contexts, including academic medicine."



Rosenzweig



Maupin



The honor board's members and advisors believe that they work and they're worth it. Still, the restorative pathway is not for every student. A student may always opt instead for an honor court hearing, to make the case before their medical school peers that they were not in violation of the Code of Ethics.

Restorative Justice in Practice

Students who opt in to the restorative process are not summoned as isolated defendants before a jury. Instead, they enter a room of peers and advisors ready to provide support and understanding through the process of moving from "what happened" to "what's next." Seats are arranged in a circle, rather than a usual court configuration. That process requires deep listening and responding to those who experienced harm or their representatives.

"We look at how to repair the harms and address the needs of those harmed, as much as possible. We come up with a plan," Rosenzweig explains. "It could be future expressions of remorse and accountability to those not in the room. It could be some kind of restitution. It could be committing to a service that prevents someone else from causing harm in the future," like creating a learning module for future students — something that has already been done. "And it always involves self-reflection on personal patterns that may have contributed to the event."

For Li, the changes have made a palpable difference. "It was night and day," she says. "The students who came in felt a lot more supported, and I think they could see how much we cared about them and how invested we are in the healing process. I enjoy being a part of that healing instead of just being part of a side that says if they're innocent or guilty."

As the board's faculty advisor, Spear has noticed a difference. And folks from other parts of the College have taken note, too. "It's really been a revolutionary advance for the medical school" and has rapidly generated buy-in and support by faculty and deans involved in assessment of student professionalism, Spear says. "It was like a no-brainer to them."

Mistakes in Medicine

"Healing" is a word that came up a lot in these conversations about restorative justice. As it turns out, a justice process focused on healing could be especially vital for students training to practice medicine — a field where changing how we address mistakes means real improvements in patient outcomes.

Spear, who throughout his career has run debriefing sessions after critical health care incidents, makes an

analogy between restorative justice and the recent shift in the culture around medical mistakes following a seminal editorial from Dr. Albert Wu¹ in *The BMJ*, "Medical Error: The Second Victim." "The culture of medical mistakes in health care became less punitive and more problem-solving, so more people were willing to admit that they made a mistake," Spear explains.

"Restorative justice is sort of like that debriefing process."

"If I inadvertently commit a medical error, I need a way to repair harm and move through, and integrate that story into a life story of a devoted physician who brings healing into the world," Rosenzweig explains.

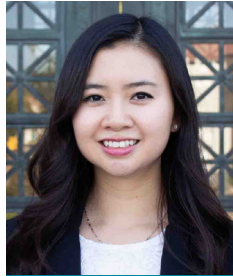
As Maupin points out, the psychological differences in how we frame that narrative directly impact clinical practice. "If we make a mistake [in clinical practice] and don't really feel like we're able to move past it, we become really ineffective — especially ineffective in showing compassion to both ourselves and other people," Maupin says. "If we leave students feeling undeserving to be in medicine because they made a mistake during medical school, that is really a disservice. It's about showing the level of compassion to ourselves in medicine that we show other people."

Building Up

Seamless support from administration in adopting the new system just months after its proposal has been crucial. "I think it's so easy for administrators to just say no. The fact that people saw it as valuable so quickly and were asking how we can make this work instead of coming up with ways why it can't work is really honorable," Maupin says. "I think people need to look to this instance as an example for how important it is to approach institutional change with that mindset of 'How can we make it work?'"

The honor board will continue to build on the past year's progress. For Li, the incoming president, increased awareness of what this restorative justice model looks like is an important step in demystifying the honor board process so that students feel comfortable and know what to expect going in. Rosenzweig notes that restorative practices such as team-based circles and community agreements are being widely introduced into the MD curriculum. "Restorative justice is just one part of a restorative frame that builds community," he explains. "Beginning their first week of medical school, our students learn the language of community, inclusivity, accountability and repair. This helps us learn, grow and flourish together."

— G.K. Schatzman



Li



Spear

Reference

1. Wu, A. "Medical Error: The Second Victim." *BMJ* 2000, 320:726: <https://www.bmj.com/content/320/7237/726>

College of Medicine Leaders Share Insights at Equity in Medical Education Summit

The Independence Blue Cross Foundation and Delaware Valley DEI Consortium hosted an Equity in Medical Education Summit on April 11, 2023. The theme was “We’re Making Change Happen.” Numerous College of Medicine faculty members spoke during the event:

Annette Gadegbeku, MD, associate dean of community health and faculty director of Healing Hurt People, and Janet Cruz, MD, assistant professor of family, community and preventive medicine, presented as part of the “Readiness” session.

Seema Baranwal, MD, senior associate dean for student

affairs, and Dana Farabaugh, MD, senior associate dean of undergraduate medical education, were among the faculty for the “Student Affairs Retention” session.

Rita Guevara, MD, assistant dean of diversity, equity and inclusion, and Vanessa Pirrone, PhD, associate dean of admissions, served as faculty for the “Recruitment” session.

Donna Russo, PhD, interim vice dean for educational affairs, senior associate dean for curriculum, and William Maul Measey Chair in Medical Education, was a faculty member in the “A Call to Action” roundtable discussion.

Roshell Muir, PhD, director of the Office of Urban Health Equity, Education and Research, was a presenter for the “Student Engagement Faculty Leads” session.

Leon McCrea II, MD, MPH, program director of the Drexel Pathway to Medical School and senior associate dean of diversity, equity and inclusion, gave closing remarks.



Transition to Clinician: Inaugural West Reading Class Embarks on New Journey

On May 15, 2023, the rising third-year MD students at Drexel University College of Medicine at Tower Health celebrated taking the next steps in their education — by taking actual steps. As part of the campus’s Transition to Clinician ceremony, the students and other attendees walked from the campus building to Reading Hospital, where they will complete the clinical years of their MD training.

The event began with opening remarks by Bisan Salhi, MD, PhD, assistant dean of student affairs, diversity, equity and inclusion at the West Reading Campus, and Karen Restifo, MD, JD, campus dean. After an academic awards ceremony, the students and around 20 faculty, staff and guests from Tower Health made the one-mile journey to Reading Hospital, where they were greeted with applause and cheers from hospital staff and clinical providers.

At the hospital, the attendees were addressed by Restifo, Charles F. Barbera, MD, president and CEO of Reading Hospital, and Wei Du, MD, professor and academic chair of psychiatry at the College of Medicine and senior vice president of academic affairs, chief academic officer and designated institutional official for Tower Health. Sue Perrotty, president and CEO of Tower Health, gave the closing address, which was followed by a tour of the hospital led by Tower Health residents.

In attendance to greet the students were Tower Health leaders including Bernard Boulanger, MD, MBA, executive vice president and CEO of provider enterprise, Melanie Ricci, MBA, vice president of support services, Barbara Romig, DNP, RN, NEA-BC, chief nursing officer at Tower Health and Reading Hospital, Alexandra Short, MS, systems director of library services, Kate Thornton, MA, president of the Reading Hospital Foundation, and Suzanne Wenderoth, MD, executive vice president and chief medical officer for Tower Health and Reading Hospital.

Faculty Awards Celebrate Esteemed Drexel Educators

On June 2, 2023, the Office of Faculty presented its Faculty Awards as part of Faculty Professional Development Day. This year, the awards expanded from 12 to 21, celebrating excellence in research and scholarship, education, patient care, community outreach, mentoring, and diversity and inclusion impact.



Early Career Basic Science Investigator Award

Joshua Jackson, PhD, Department of Pharmacology & Physiology

Early Career Clinical Scientist Award

Christopher A. Butts, PhD, DO, Department of Surgery

Mid-career Basic Science Investigator Award

Rodrigo A. España, PhD, Department of Neurobiology & Anatomy

Mid-career Clinical Scientist Award

Manreet Kanwar, MD, Department of Medicine

Julian Marsh Faculty Scholar Award

Simon F. Giszter, PhD, Department of Neurobiology & Anatomy

Clinical Educator Award

Nicholas C. Kuzma, MD, Department of Pediatrics

Angelo Pinto Educator Award

Renee Kottenhahn, MD, Department of Pediatrics
Joanne R. Mathiasen, PhD, Department of Pharmacology & Physiology

June Klinghoffer Clinical Educator Award

Wei Du, MD, Department of Psychiatry

Emerging Clinical Leader and Innovation Award

Tariq Javed Cheema, MD, Department of Medicine
Caitlyn R. Moss, MD, Department of Medicine

Oksana Korzeniowski Patient Care Award

Ann Carr, MD, Department of Pediatrics

William Likoff Clinical Excellence Award

Hans Kersten, MD, Department of Pediatrics

Early Career Community Outreach Award

Norrell K. Atkinson, MD, Department of Pediatrics

Vincent Zarro Community Outreach Award

Elizabeth Cuevas, MD, Department of Medicine

DUCOM Institutional Service Award

James Burns Jr., PhD, Department of Microbiology & Immunology
Ramesh Raghupathi, PhD, Department of Neurobiology & Anatomy
Mark Trombetta, MD, Department of Radiologic Sciences

Faculty Professional Development, Sponsorship and Allyship Award

James B. Reilly, MD, MSHP, Department of Medicine

Early Career Mentoring Award for Basic Science Faculty

Jacqueline M. Barker, PhD, Department of Pharmacology & Physiology

Early Career Mentoring Award for Clinical Faculty

Enitan Adegite, MD, MPH, Department of Pediatrics

Elias Abrutyn Mentoring Award for Clinical Faculty

Cheryl A. Hanau, MD, Department of Pathology & Laboratory Medicine

Award for Excellence in Basic Science Mentoring

Peter Baas, PhD, Department of Neurobiology & Anatomy
Akhil B. Vaidya, PhD, Department of Microbiology & Immunology

Daniel V. Schidlow, MD, Transformational Leadership Award

Olimpia Meucci, MD, PhD, Department of Pharmacology & Physiology

Drexel College of Medicine Diversity and Inclusion Impact Award

Priscila Sato, PhD, Department of Pharmacology & Physiology

During the event, the Mary DeWitt Pettit, MD, Fellowship was presented to Ashley Henderson, MD, MBA, clinical assistant professor of pediatrics, for her project "Analyzing the Impact of Low-Cost Baby Bundles on Postpartum Depression in Under Resourced Communities."

Graduate School Student and Faculty Award Ceremony

Congratulations to the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences and Professional Studies faculty and students who received awards at the pre-Commencement event on May 11, 2023.

Student Awards

Division of Biomedical Science Programs

Bondi Award

Kathleen Bryant

Bondi Fellowship

Ashley Opalka

Research Excellence for Original and Creative Work

Breanne Pirino

Excellence in Student Mentoring

Tara Fortino

Excellence in Teaching Assistance

Kendra Case

Shayna Singh

Division of Interdisciplinary and Career-Oriented Programs

Academic Excellence in the Biomedicine and Business Program

Danielle Walawender

Academic Excellence in the Biomedicine and Law Program

Shahnza Shahid

Academic Excellence in the Immunology Program

Cara Lord (in-person student)

Benjamin D. Abert (online student)

Academic Excellence in the Infectious Disease Program

Denise Freeman-Twiggs (online student)

Justine Samanen (online student)

Jane I. van der Schaaf (online student)

Academic Excellence in the Molecular Medicine Program

Ramsha Kamran (in-person student)

Kailey P. Caroland (online student)

Academic Excellence in the Pathologists' Assistant Program

Mable Je

Academic Excellence in the Drug Discovery and Development Program

Desmond Lewis (in-person student)

Caitlyn Durgin (online student)

Jillian McGonigle (online student)

Academic Excellence in the Clinical Research for Health Professionals Program

Dhimitri Nikolla

Academic Excellence in the Clinical Research Organization and Management Program

Amy Anthony

Amanda Petrellis

Academic Excellence in the Master's in Laboratory in Animal Science Program

Brandye Nicole Davis (in-person student)

Taylor Noel Hunsucker (online student)

Division of Pre-medical and Pre-health Programs

Academic Excellence in the Drexel

Pathway to Medical School Program

Ashley Dillon

Academic Excellence in the Biomedical Studies Program

Rika Goto

Academic Excellence in the Interdisciplinary Health Sciences Program

Ose Ehigiator

Academic Excellence in the Intensive Medical Sciences Program

Woojin Lee

Common Good Award in the Pre-medical/Pre-health Programs

Grace Sandel

Excellence in Teaching Assistance in the Pre-medical/Pre-health Programs

Rudy Chiu

Morgan Gardner

Faculty Awards

Division of Biomedical Science Programs

Best Advisor/Mentor

Christian Sell, PhD

Best Student Advocate

Rodrigo España, PhD

Best Professor

Timothy Cunningham, PhD

Division of Interdisciplinary and Career-Oriented Programs

Best Adjunct Professor

Amy Ott, PhD

William Tobia, MBA

Best Mentor

Fred Krebs, PhD

Best Professor

Elise Mosser, PhD

Division of Pre-medical and Pre-health Programs

Best Adjunct Professor

Bradford Jameson, PhD

Best Mentor

Douglas Baird, PhD

Best Professor

Douglas Baird, PhD

Kirsten Larson, PhD



Dean Cairns at the Health Sciences Building



Tiffany Davis, EdD, (left) and Conor Sullivan, MS, director and assistant director of the Clinical Education Assessment Center & Standardized Patient Program, unpacking supplies in one of the examination rooms.

Last Push: College of Medicine Completes Move to Health Sciences Building

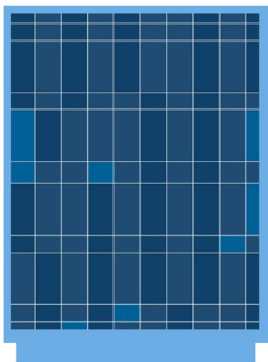
Over the summer, the College of Medicine finished its phased move to the Health Sciences Building in University City. Moving is never easy, and relocating significant portions of a medical school is even harder, but the experience was straightforward thanks to the organizational prowess of the Office of Educational Affairs, the talents of our dedicated moving company and the efforts of those faculty and staff who carefully packed up their offices, in addition to everyone’s continued patience throughout the process.



IF ALL THE MARKER BOARDS IN THE BUILDING WERE COMBINED, THEY WOULD COVER OVER **315 ACRES**



OVER **1,450** TRADESPEOPLE HAVE WORKED ON THIS BUILDING



THE EXTERIOR SKIN CONSISTS OF **2,242** CURTAINWALL PANELS FROM LEVEL 2 UP TO THE ROOF



CURTAINWALL PANELS WERE ASSEMBLED IN THE SAME FACILITY USED TO BUILD THE **F14 TOMCAT**

Distinguished Leaders Take the Reins in OB-GYN and Surgery

Margaret Larkins-Pettigrew, MD, MEd, MPPM, has been appointed academic chair of the Department of Obstetrics & Gynecology. Larkins-Pettigrew joined Drexel in 2021 as a professor of obstetrics and gynecology, and she supervises students and residents at Highmark Health and Allegheny Health Network (AHN). Since 2020, she has been AHN's senior vice president, enterprise chief diversity, equity and inclusion officer, and clinical inclusion strategist. In addition to these roles, she continues a general gynecology practice.



She serves on the AAMC Group on Diversity and Inclusion and has been listed in Becker's Hospital Review's 149 Black Healthcare Leaders to Know, as well as being named a Modern Healthcare Top Diversity Leader in 2021 and 2022. She has also been awarded funding for projects pertaining to racial bias training for pregnancy providers and staff, underrepresented resident retention, medical school preparation for high school students, and reducing infant mortality through structural racism and unconscious bias training.

A prolific and highly sought-after speaker, Larkins-Pettigrew has presented in local, national and international

settings on a range of topics including the impact of the pandemic on Black people worldwide, maternal and neonatal mortality, global health, the epidemiology of HIV, the social determinants of health, and promoting diversity in the C-suite. She is also the author of a 2020 memoir, *The Colors of My Heart: Embracing My Blackness Through History, Family, Fear, and Faith*.



Linwood R. Haith Jr., MD, has been appointed academic chair of the Department of Surgery effective July 1. Haith has been a faculty member of the College of Medicine for more than 40 years and is currently a professor of surgery, as well as associate dean of external affairs. He is a member of the staff of Crozer-Chester Medical Center and medical director of the Nathan

Speare Regional Burn Treatment Center.

A dedicated clinician and educator, Haith has been named to *Philadelphia* magazine's Top Docs list annually since 2014, and he received the Teacher of the Year award from the Crozer-Chester Department of Surgery in 2020. He is a fellow of the American College of Surgeons and the American College of Critical Care Medicine.

Haith has been active in clinical research involving burn patients and has been funded by the U.S. Department of Defense. He has published 60 journal articles and the definitive chapter, "Burns/Inhalation," in *The Trauma Manual 2nd Edition*. He has also presented locally, nationally and internationally on topics related to the care of burn patients.

West Reading Students Welcome "Sisters in STEM"

Drexel University College of Medicine at Tower Health is building connections with future physicians and scientists in their community. First- and second-year MD program students have partnered for two years with Sisters in STEM, a Reading Science Center program that encourages elementary- and middle-school girls to study science.

Earlier this year, MD program students hosted Sisters in STEM at the West Reading Campus for a day of hands-on lessons in medicine, marking the girls' first visit to the medical school. The field trip aligned easily with Sisters in STEM's mission.

"The program's goal is to foster a love of science in young women, building a foundation that will inspire



them to continue their education in STEM-related courses, including those focused on health care," says Andrea Bensusan, academic coordinator at the College of Medicine at Tower Health. "Many of the Sisters in STEM participants come from communities that are underrepresented in STEM careers, including medicine."

At the West Reading Campus, Sisters in STEM participants worked with MD program students to complete patient simulations, had lessons on thoracic anatomy and the circulatory system, and gained opportunities to practice checking each other's heartbeats and blood pressure.

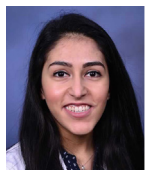
MD program students from the Student National Medical Association helped make the field trip a success, as did students involved in Cutting Edge Anatomy, an extracurricular group pairing medical students with school-aged aspiring physicians for mentorship.

Other MD students work with Sisters in STEM throughout the year, as part of the hands-on learning and community engagement that is a pillar of the College of Medicine's first- and second-year medical school curriculum.

Whether they are working with young scientists for an afternoon or long term, MD program students don't just facilitate the kids' hands-on education in biology and medicine. They also model a potential educational and career path.

WHAT WE'RE DOING

Jessica Ausborn, PhD, assistant professor, Department of Neurobiology & Anatomy, and colleagues in Drexel's School of Biomedical Engineering, Science & Health Systems including **Hyojong Jang, PhD**, postdoctoral fellow, **David Goodman, MS biomedical engineering '22**, and **Catherine von Reyn, PhD**, assistant professor, published "Azimuthal Invariance to Looming Stimuli in the *Drosophila* Giant Fiber Escape Circuit" in the *Journal of Experimental Biology* in May 2023.



Barpujari



Kiley

Awinita Barpujari and **Alina Kiley**, both fourth-year MD students, **Jennifer Ross, PhD**, research assistant professor, Department of Pharmacology & Physiology, and **Erol**



Veznedaroglu

Veznedaroglu, MD, professor and Robert A. Groff Chair, Department of Neurosurgery, authored "A Systematic Review of Non-opioid Pain Management in Chiari Malformation (Type 1) Patients: Current Evidence and Novel Therapeutic Opportunities," which appeared in the *Journal of Clinical Medicine* on April 23, 2023.



Nothem



Buck

Kathleen Bryant, PhD neuroscience '23, **Mitch Nothem, PhD pharmacology and physiology '20**, postdoctoral scholar, Department of Pharmacology & Physiology,



Barker

Lauren Buck, MS, Barker Lab manager, **Binay Singh, BS biomedical/medical engineering '22**, **Sana Amin**, Biology bachelor's student, **Christina Curran-Alfaro**, Neuroscience PhD student, and **Jacqueline Barker, PhD**, associate professor, Department of Pharmacology

& Physiology, published a research article, "A History of Low-Dose Ethanol Shifts the Role of Ventral Hippocampus During Reward Seeking in Male Mice," in *eNeuro* on May 16, 2023. The article was chosen for the journal's featured research spotlight.



Kendra Case, a PhD candidate in the Neuroscience program, presented her research, "Gulf War Veteran Derived Cerebral Organoids Display Multifaceted Pathological Defects in Gulf War Illness," at the Biophysics of Organoids Workshop at Princeton University's Center for Theoretical Sciences in Princeton, New Jersey, on February 17, 2023.



Côté

Marie-Pascale Côté, PhD, associate professor, Department of Neurobiology & Anatomy, and **Guillaume Caron, PhD**, former postdoctoral fellow, in collaboration with **Jadwiga Bilchak, PhD neuroscience '21**, published a research article, "Bumetanide Increases

Postsynaptic Inhibition After Chronic SCI and Decreases Presynaptic Inhibition With Step-Training," in the *Journal of Physiology* on April 15, 2023. Côté was also awarded a Pennsylvania Department of Health Grant for the proposal "Optimizing Transcutaneous Spinal Cord Stimulation to Promote Recovery After SCI."



Simon M. Danner, PhD, assistant professor, Department of Neurobiology & Anatomy, gave an invited talk at the Bioengineering Seminar Series of the Temple University College of Engineering in Philadelphia on April 14, 2023.



Garth Ehrlich, PhD, a professor in the Departments of Microbiology & Immunology and Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery, was selected by the American Society for Microbiology to be a distinguished lecturer for the program's 2023-2025 term. The Distinguished Lecturer roster consists of scientifically diverse experts who are available to present at branch meetings of the society throughout the U.S.

College of Medicine Faculty Recognized for Scholarship and Teaching Excellence

Drexel University's Offices of Research & Innovation and Faculty Advancement recently announced the recipients of the 2022-2023 Research, Scholarship and Creativity Awards and the Provost Awards for Teaching, Scholarship and Professional Service. Two College of Medicine faculty members were honored:



Jessica Barson, PhD, an associate professor in the Department of Neurobiology & Anatomy, received a Provost Award for Outstanding Mid-career Scholarly Productivity. The award recognizes faculty members who have demonstrated unusual excellence and become recognized leaders in their scholarly field. Barson's research explores the neural basis of addiction.



Jed Shumsky, PhD, a professor in the Department of Neurobiology & Anatomy and senior associate dean of educational and academic affairs for the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences and Professional Studies, received the Christian R. and Mary F. Lindback Foundation Award for Distinguished Teaching, the most prestigious award given to full-time faculty members who over the years have demonstrated the highest achievements in teaching.

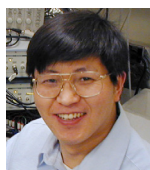


Itzhak Fischer, PhD, professor and chair of the Department of Neurobiology & Anatomy, published "Big Tau: What We Know, and We Need to Know" in the May 10, 2023, issue of *eNeuro*. The paper describes a unique isoform of the tau protein expressed in peripheral neurons and specific regions of the brain, which may be able to improve axonal transport in projecting axons and prevent tau aggregation associated with tauopathies.



Patrick W. Frank, DC, associate professor in the Department of Neurobiology & Anatomy, was offered a spot as a DELTA fellow for the program's 2023-2024 cohort. The DELTA program provides a longitudinal, mentored, leadership professional development opportunity

for American Association for Anatomy members.



Wen-Jun Gao, MD, PhD, professor, Department of Neurobiology & Anatomy, and **Linda A. Chamberlin, MD/PhD neuroscience '22**, in collaboration with Neuroscience program alumni including **Shasha Yang, PhD '22**, **Nancy R. Mack, PhD '22**, **Brielle R. Ferguson, PhD '18**,

and **Erin P. McEachern, MS '18**; **Joshua Lucas, MD '22**; and Interdisciplinary Health Sciences alumni **Owen McLeod, MS '20**, and **Claire A. Rolland, MS '20**, published a research article, "Pharmacogenetic Activation of Parvalbumin Interneurons in the Prefrontal Cortex Rescues Cognitive Deficits Induced by Adolescent MK801 Administration," in *Neuropsychopharmacology* on March 23, 2023. **Nadia N. Bouras**, a Drexel Biological Sciences program undergraduate student, Gao and Mack published an invited review, "Prefrontal Modulation of Anxiety Through a Lens of Noradrenergic Signaling," which appeared in *Frontiers in Systems Neuroscience* on April 17, 2023.



Grasty



Guzik

Kimberly Grasty, research assistant, **Claudia Guzik, MD '23**, **Elizabeth D'Lauro**, Biochemistry of Health and Disease PhD student, **Shae Padrick, PhD**, assistant professor of



Padrick

biochemistry and molecular biology, **Joris Beld, PhD**, assistant professor of microbiology and immunology, and **Patrick Loll, PhD**, professor of biochemistry and molecular biology, recently published "Structure of VanS From Vancomycin-Resistant Enterococci:

A Sensor Kinase With Weak ATP Binding" in the March 2023 issue of the *Journal of Biological Chemistry*.



Shrobona Guha, MS, a Neuroscience PhD candidate, presented her research, "Investigating the Role of Microtubule-Associated Motor Protein KIFC1 at the Synapse," at the Focused Meeting on Emerging Concepts in Neuronal Cytoskeleton, in Santa Cruz, Chile, on

March 27, 2023.



Jackson



Hartsough

Joshua Jackson, PhD, assistant professor of pharmacology and physiology, received his first NIH R01 award as a faculty member at Drexel. The award, from the National

Institute on Aging, will support his work on glutamate transporter-dependent neuromuscular coupling in Alzheimer's disease. Jackson also received a Melanoma Research Program Idea Award from the Department of Defense in support a collaborative project with **Edward Hartsough, PhD**, assistant professor of pharmacology and physiology, for their project "Role of Perilesional Reactive Astrocytosis in Melanoma Brain Metastases."

Olimpia Meucci, MD, PhD, professor and chair of pharmacology and physiology, Jackson, and **Zachary**



Meucci



Klase

Klase, PhD, associate professor of pharmacology and physiology, received a new R21 award from the National Institute on Drug Abuse. Funding from this award will support an



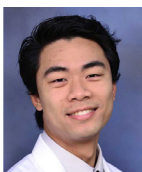
Fatatis

ongoing project in the Translational Research and Core Expert Support (TRACES) facility, "Adult Human Brain Tissue Cultures to Study NeuroHIV."

The project is a collaboration with co-investigators **Alessandro Fatatis, MD, PhD**, professor of pharmacology and physiology, and **Atom Sarkar, MD, PhD**, professor of neurosurgery.



Jain



Lin

Pooja Jain, PhD, professor of microbiology and immunology, has been elected secretary of the board of the International Retrovirology Association. Jain, **Edward Lin, MD '24**,



Stoffel



Khan

Dominic Sales, MS microbiology and immunology '21, **Victoria Stoffel, MD '24**, **Shallyn Dickson**, Biological Sciences student, **Zafar Khan, PhD**, professor of

microbiology and immunology, and **Joris Beld, PhD**, assistant professor of microbiology and immunology, published "Apigenin Improves Cytotoxicity of Antiretroviral Drugs Against HTLV-1 Infected Cells Through the Modulation of AhR Signaling" in the March 25, 2023, issue of *NeuroImmune Pharmacology and Therapeutics*.

Jain received a Laboratory Travel award from the American Association of Immunologists to attend Immunology2023 in Washington, D.C., May 11-15. At the conference, Microbiology & Immunology PhD candidates



Carey

Julie Joseph and **Abhishek Rao**; **Alison J. Carey, MD**, associate professor, Departments of Microbiology & Immunology and Pediatrics; Stoffel; Jain; and colleagues from the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research presented

“Extra Vesicular Immune Checkpoint Molecules Provide Long-Distance Control of Adaptive Immunity in HTLV-1 Associated Neuroinflammation Involving Viral Antisense Protein.”



Esquea



Reginato

Giang Le Minh, Biochemistry of Health & Disease PhD student, **Emily Esquea**, Molecular & Cell Biology & Genetics PhD student, **Tejasi Dhameliya, MS molecular and cell biology and**

genetics '21, Jessica Merzy, Biological Sciences bachelor's student, **Mauricio Reginato, PhD**, professor and interim chair, Department of Biochemistry & Molecular Biology, and colleagues at the Medical University of South Carolina authored “Kruppel-Like Factor 8 Regulates Triple Negative Breast Cancer Stem Cell-Like Activity,” which was published in *Frontiers in Oncology* on April 19, 2023.



Luo



Ajit

Xuan Luo, MS drug discovery and development '19, now a PhD student in the Pharmacology & Physiology program, **Renée Jean-Toussaint, MS drug**

discovery and development '19, Yuzhen Tian, research associate, Department of Pharmacology & Physiology, **Sergey Balashov, PhD**, former Genomics Core Facility manager, **Ahmet Sacan, PhD**, associate teaching professor, School of Biomedical Engineering, Science & Health Systems, and **Seena Ajit, PhD**, associate professor, Department of Pharmacology & Physiology, authored “Small Extracellular Vesicles From Spared Nerve Injury Model and Sham Control Mice Differentially Regulate Gene Expression in Primary Microglia.” The paper appeared in the *Journal of Pain* on April 11, 2023.



Joanne Mathiasen, PhD, professor of pharmacology and physiology and co-director, Drug Discovery & Development program, and a colleague at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency published “The Irwin Test and Functional Observational Battery (FOB)

for Assessing the Effects of Compounds on Behavior, Physiology, and Safety Pharmacology in Rodents” in *Current Protocols in Pharmacology* on May 23, 2023. This publication was an update of a protocol that was originally published in 2018.

Calendar

October

5 **Woman One Award Ceremony**
Honoring health leader Ala Stanford, MD, and restaurateur Ellen Yin, MBA
5:30 p.m.
Le Méridien, 1421 Arch Street
Philadelphia, PA 19102
Contact: Janine Barber, jkb48@drexel.edu

9 **Indigenous Peoples Day**

November

2 **Discovery Day**
The College of Medicine's Annual Day of Research
Pennsylvania Convention Center,
North Broad Street Between Race & Arch Streets
Philadelphia, PA 19102
Information: drexel.edu/medicine/discoveryday
Contact: discoveryday@drexel.edu

9 **Marion Spencer Fay Lecture, Award and Reception**
Honoring pioneering structural biologist and immunologist Erica Ollmann Saphire, PhD, MBA
4:30 p.m.
Health Sciences Building
60 North 36th Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104
Contact: Janine Barber, jkb48@drexel.edu

23-24 **Thanksgiving Break**

25 **Access to Science**
The Academy of Natural Sciences of Drexel University will be open to visitors on the autism spectrum and their families, to experience the museum before the crowds.
1900 Benjamin Franklin Parkway
Philadelphia, PA 19103
Register or learn more:
accessstoscience@ansp.org, 215.299.1060

Nov. 2-
Dec. 1 **Immune Modulation & Engineering Symposium**
IMES 2023 features trailblazing research engineers and scientists working to advance the field of immune engineering.
Drexel University Campus
Contact: Claire King, cak46@drexel.edu

December

25 **Christmas**

Save the Date

College of Medicine Commencement
May 9, 2024
The Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts
300 S. Broad Street, Philadelphia, PA 19102
Contact: DUCOMMilestones@drexel.edu

Full calendar: All College of Medicine events are available at drexel.edu/medicine/news-events/events.

Alumni: For information about alumni events, please call toll-free 888.DUGRADS (888.384.7237), email medical.alumni@drexel.edu or visit drexel.edu/medicine/alumni/events.

WHAT WE'RE DOING



Stephanie Matt, PhD, a postdoctoral fellow in the Department of Pharmacology & Physiology, earned a K01 Research Scientist Development Award from the National Institute of Mental Health. The award will support her research project

“The Role of Antidepressants in Central and Peripheral Myeloid HIV Persistence and Inflammation.” Matt also received a Daniel T. O’Connor Young Investigator Travel Award from the Catecholamine Society, which provided funding for her to attend the 2023 meeting of the American Society for Pharmacology and Experimental Therapeutics.



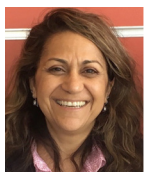
May



Sato

Nathalie May, MD, associate professor of medicine, and **Priscila Sato, PhD**, assistant professor of pharmacology and physiology, were among the authors of “Association

Between Cardiovascular Risk and Coronavirus Disease 2019: Findings From 2021 National Health Interview Survey.” The paper appeared in the *Annals of Epidemiology* online March 23, 2023. **Longjian Liu, MD, PhD, MSc**, associate professor of epidemiology and biostatistics, Dornsife School of Public Health, was the first author, and **Paakhi Srivastava, PhD**, research assistant professor at Drexel’s WELL Center, and **Leslie McClure, PhD, MS**, professor and chair of epidemiology and biostatistics, Dornsife School of Public Health, were also authors of the paper.



Miller



Krebs

Vandana Miller, MD, associate professor of microbiology and immunology, was invited to give a plenary talk at the 25th International Symposium on Plasma Chemistry on

May 23, 2023, in Kyoto, Japan. The talk, “Plasma Dose for Clinical Applications: New Considerations,” covered research conducted by Miller, **Fred Krebs, PhD**, associate professor of microbiology and immunology, **Edward**



Wigdahl

Hartsough, PhD, assistant professor of pharmacology and physiology, and **Brian Wigdahl, PhD**, professor and chair of microbiology and immunology, along with colleagues from Princeton University, Rutgers University and North Carolina State University.

Julia Sutter, MS microbiology and immunology '22, now a PhD student in the Microbiology & Immunology program, published a first author review, “Manipulation of Oxidative Stress Responses by Non-thermal Plasma to Treat Herpes Simplex Virus Type 1 Infection and Disease.” The review was published in the February 2023 issue of the *International Journal of Molecular Sciences*. Other authors included Wigdahl, Krebs, Miller and a colleague from the University of Minnesota.



Mortensen

Ole Mortensen, PhD, associate professor, Department of Pharmacology & Physiology, and **Shaili Aggarwal, PhD**, who earned a clinical research certificate from the College of Medicine in 2018, authored a book chapter, “Discovery and Development of Monoamine Transporter Ligands,” in *Drug Development in Psychiatry*, which was published by Springer in March 2023.



Norton



Mosser

Pamela Norton, PhD, associate professor, **Elise Mosser, PhD**, assistant professor, **Pooja Jain, PhD**, professor, **Fred Krebs, PhD**, associate professor, and **Stephen Jennings, PhD**,

professor, all in the Department of Microbiology & Immunology, gave a virtual presentation, “Development of Experiential Learning Projects in the Online Educational Environment” at EDULEARN23, the 15th annual International Conference on Education and New Learning Technologies, which was held in Palma de Mallorca, Spain, July 3-5, 2023.

Dana Peterson, PhD, professor, Department of Neurobiology & Anatomy, was awarded an American Association of Anatomy (AAA) Innovations Grant for the proposal “The Anato-Bee: A Scholastic Competition in the Anatomical Sciences for High School Students.” She presented a poster on this same topic at the AAA annual meeting in Washington, D.C., on March 27, 2023.

The International Symposium for Neural Regeneration Meeting 2023 was held in Stevenson, Washington, April 23-27. Four members of the laboratory of **Megan Detloff, PhD**, assistant professor, Department of Neurobiology & Anatomy, presented posters at the event:

Daniel Freeman, Drexel BS/MS student in biological sciences and Detloff Lab research assistant: “Correlation of Pain Outcomes With Myeloid Cell Activation State in the DRG and Dorsal Horn After C5 Spinal Cord Injury”

Jonathan Richards, Neuroscience PhD candidate: “Infiltrating Macrophages and Microglial Activation Correlates With SCI-Induced Pain and Depressive-Like Behavior”

John Walker, MS, Neuroscience PhD candidate: “Nociception Impedes Grasping Recovery in the Spinal Cord Injured Rat”

Jason Wheeler, MS, Neuroscience PhD candidate: “Intrathecal Injection of Polarized Macrophage Exosomes Reduces Mechanical Pain Sensation in Spinal Cord Injured Rats”



Pirino



Barson

Breanne E. Pirino, MS, Neuroscience doctoral student, and **Jessica R. Barson, PhD**, associate professor in the Department of Neurobiology & Anatomy, along with colleagues at

Binghamton University, published a paper, "A Critical Review of Effects on Ethanol Intake of the Dynorphin/Kappa Opioid Receptor System in the Extended Amygdala," in *Alcohol: Clinical and Experimental Research* on April 11, 2023. Pirino also received a travel award to present her work at the Kappa Opioid Therapeutics Conference, which was held in Washington, D.C., March 29-31, 2023. She



Carpenter

and **Brody Carpenter, MS**, also a Neuroscience PhD student, were awarded Student Merit Awards to present their work at the Research Society on Alcohol conference, which was held in Bellevue, Washington, June 24-28, 2023. Pirino was a finalist for the Enoch Gordis

Research Recognition Award from the Research Society on Alcohol.



Qiang



Baas

Liang Oscar Qiang, MD; PhD molecular and cell biology and genetics '09, assistant professor, Department of Neurobiology & Anatomy, co-chaired a symposium, "Innovative

Cellular Models and Experimental Approaches to Probe Mechanisms and Therapies for Gulf War Illness" at the 2023 annual conference of the American Society for Neurochemistry in Lexington, Kentucky, on March 21.

Peter Baas, PhD, professor, Department of Neurobiology & Anatomy, was invited to deliver a presentation, "Cytoskeletal Mechanisms of Cognitive Deficits in Gulf War Illness," as part of the session. Qiang also delivered a talk, "Anti-sense Oligonucleotides for Neurodegenerative Diseases," at the Cell and Gene Therapy Symposium held by Drexel University on May 4, 2023.



Ramesh Raghupathi, PhD, a professor in the Department of Neurobiology & Anatomy, was invited to present a seminar to the Initiative for Maximizing Student Development post-baccalaureate program at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota. He presented his recent work

on health inequities in the diagnosis and treatment of pediatric brain trauma.



Katelyn Reeb, a PhD student in the Pharmacology & Physiology program, earned the Dean's Award for Best Research Poster Presentation at Drexel's Emerging Graduate Scholars Conference. The poster was "Positive Allosteric Modulation of Glutamate Transporter

EAAT2 as a Novel Therapeutic Approach for Neurological Disorders."

Candace Rizzi-Wise, a Neuroscience PhD student, was invited to speak at the New York University CoNNExINS 2023 symposium on June 9.



Romano



Barger

Gabriele Romano, PhD, assistant professor, Department of Pharmacology & Physiology, received a Melanoma Research Program Idea Award from the Department of

Defense. The funding will support his project "Biomimetic Nanoparticle-Mediated Delivery of Immunomodulating Nucleic Acids as a Strategy to Anticipate Melanoma Drug Resistance." Romano, **Lindsay Barger**, Microbiology

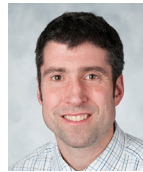


El Nagggar

& Immunology PhD student, and **Olivia El Nagggar**, Molecular & Cell Biology & Genetics PhD student, were among the authors of "Microparticle-Delivered Cxcl9 Prolongs Braf Inhibitor Efficacy in Melanoma," which appeared in the journal *Cancer Immunology Research* on May 3, 2023.



Daniel V. Schidlow, MD, dean emeritus and course director for Medical Humanities, Bioethics & Professional Formation, received AL DIA's Lifetime Achievement Award in recognition of his legacy and impact on the Hispanic community in Philadelphia. He was honored at an event on June 12, 2023, at Philadelphia's Masonic Temple. Schidlow is also a professor of pediatrics, medicine, and pharmacology and physiology.



Daniel Taylor, DO, associate professor of pediatrics, authored an expert opinion article in the *Philadelphia Inquirer* on June 7, 2023, headlined "Philadelphia's Smoky Air Is Making It Hard to Breathe. My Young Asthma Patients Are Suffering the Most."



Tom



Wulf

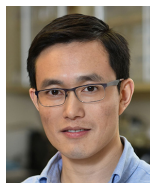
Veronica Tom, PhD, professor, Department of Neurobiology & Anatomy, gave an invited talk at the 28th Annual Kentucky Spinal Cord and Head Injury Research Trust

Symposium in Lexington on May 11, 2023. **Mariah Wulf, MS neuroscience '20**, now a Neuroscience PhD student, and Tom published "Consequences of Spinal Cord Injury on the Sympathetic Nervous System" in *Frontiers in Cellular Neuroscience* in February 2023.



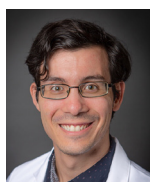
Kathryn Veazey, PhD, assistant professor of neurobiology and anatomy, spoke at the International Association of Medical Science Educators annual meeting, which was held in Cancun, Mexico, from June 10-13, 2023, as part of a focus group session about enhancing accessibility for students with disabilities. Just prior to her arrival at Drexel, Veazey received a Student Travel Award to present her

research at Anatomy Connected, which was held March 25-27, 2023, in Washington, D.C. She spoke about student perceptions of the impact of the medical school experience on personal factors that influence clinical communication skills.



Dong Wang, PhD, assistant professor, Department of Neurobiology & Anatomy, delivered a talk, "Emerging Many-to-One Weighted Mapping in the Hippocampus-Amygdala Circuitry Underlies Memory Formation," at the International Conference on Learning and Memory,

which was held from April 26-30, 2023, in Huntington Beach, California. Wang and **Arron Hall**, a Neuroscience PhD candidate, published a paper, "The Two Tales of Hippocampal Sharp-Wave Ripple Content: the Rigid and the Plastic," in the February 2023 issue of *Progress in Neurobiology*. Hall was also awarded a three-year F31 individual fellowship for "Anterior Cingulate Cortex Referentially Drives Dorsal CA1 Deep Neuronal Activity During Sharp-Wave Ripples for Memory Consolidation."



Sam Wechsler, MS, a Neuroscience PhD candidate, was awarded a three-year National Institutes of Health Ruth L. Kirschstein NRSA individual predoctoral fellowship for the proposal "Characterizing the Sensorimotor Transformation in *Drosophila* Olfactory System."



Jason Wickman, Pharmacology & Physiology PhD student, was a recipient of a 2023 Dean's Travel Award from the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences and Professional Studies.



Lane



Qiang

The American Society for Neural Therapy and Repair held their 30th annual meeting April 27-30, 2023, in Clearwater, Florida.

Department of Neurobiology & Anatomy faculty members **Michael Lane, PhD**, and **Liang Oscar Qiang, MD, PhD**, attended. Lane is the current president of the society and chairs the society's Scientific Program Committee. Qiang chaired a session on "Cell and Gene Engineering for Neural Repair" and gave an invited platform presentation, "Bi-phasic Microtubule Defects in Tauopathy: Treatment Implications."



Hall



Niceforo

Also in attendance were Neuroscience PhD student **Adam Hall**, Department of Neurobiology & Anatomy postdoctoral fellow **Alessia**

Niceforo, PhD, and Molecular & Cell Biology & Genetics students **Tara Fortino** (PhD program), **Kayla Schardien** (PhD program) and **Skandha Ramakrishnan** (master's program). They all received travel awards to attend the meeting, and Fortino was invited to give a platform presentation, "Engineering Spinal Interneurons for Repair of the Injured Cervical Spinal Cord," for which she received the Paul J. Reier Award for Excellence in Neurotrauma Research. Niceforo also received an award for Best Postdoctoral Poster Presentation.

Recent Thesis Defenses

We congratulate the following master's and PhD students from the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences and Professional Studies on the successful defense of their theses.



Taylor McCorkle
Neuroscience PhD Program

Title: Sex-Dependent Mechanisms Underlying Cognitive Deficits Following Repeated Mild TBI in Adolescent Rats
Advisor: Ramesh Raghupathi, PhD



Micaela O'Reilly
Neuroscience PhD Program

Title: Role of NF-Kb in Sympathetic Hyperreflexia After Spinal Cord Injury
Advisor: Veronica Tom, PhD



Dayna Robinson
Pharmacology & Physiology MS Program

Title: Defining the Signaling Mechanisms by Which Dopamine Stimulates Akt Activation in Primary Human Macrophages
Advisor: Peter Gaskill, PhD



Ukamushu Undieh
Microbiology & Immunology MS Program

Title: Dysfunction of the Gut Microbiome-Brain Axis in Neurodegenerative Disease: Role of Indole and Its Metabolites
Advisor: Sandhya Kortagere, PhD



Evangeline Williams
Microbiology & Immunology MS Program

Title: Understanding Commensal-to-Pathogen Transitions in *Haemophilus influenzae* Through Comparative and Functional Genomics
Advisor: Joshua Chang MeIII, PhD

Get to Know...

What is your official title at Drexel?

I'm director of the Office of Urban Health Equity, Education and Research (UHEER). I coined the acronym for my office. The name is quite long, and UHEER rolled off the tongue. I'm also a research assistant professor in the Department of Family, Community & Preventive Medicine.

Explain what you do in under 50 words.

As director of UHEER, I oversee strategy and scholarship in urban health equity and provide project management and mentorship. My biomedical research focuses on human immunology and infectious diseases, where I have 15-plus years of experience in flow cytometry and cell sorting used to drive multidisciplinary systems biology projects.

Who do you interact with most on a daily basis?

I interact with other faculty, professional and administrative staff, and graduate and medical students. I also meet with outside collaborators and often liaise with vendors who provide many of the resources and contracts for the lab machines we use.

What is your typical day like?

What I like about my role is that no day is the same. I mostly have a combination of to-do tasks, meetings and projects to complete. I generally start the day by replying to and crafting emails. I could have a full lab day training or mentoring students, or a combination of that and writing in my office. Through the UHEER office, I also have strategic planning meetings for projects or grants, as well as meetings to support other faculty and mentor students on their health equity research. I also lecture immunology graduate students and facilitate sessions for medical students. I lecture on mentorship for the Responsible Conduct of Research courses in the graduate school, the medical school and the University, so when these courses are in session, I have periods where I am teaching and traveling to the different campuses.

How do you see your work fitting into the big picture of the missions of the College?

My passion for advocacy and health equity drives the work I do now in the UHEER office and fits perfectly with the College of Medicine's mission to "excel and innovate in education, research and delivery of compassionate care." My hope is that my work in biomedical science and health equity will provide diverse and novel solutions. I also hope that with collaborative work we can advance agendas that benefit the College's workforce and students, and

create more opportunities for the community to attain their highest level of health.

What are your favorite and least favorite tasks?

My least favorite tasks would include any repetitive work. I find that my favorite projects are ones where I am more productive, where I have some creative oversight or input, and that I can influence and drive forward. These kinds of tasks, such as strategic planning, project design and troubleshooting, keep things interesting. Having new projects to work on, and collaborating with teams from different departments and other institutions, really helps to diversify my research and my skillset.

What is your educational and previous work background? How did those prepare you for what you do now?

Both of my postgraduate programs focused on virology and respiratory immunology. I did my postdoctoral work in the field of HIV medicine and germinal center biology. I continue to focus my research on germinal center interactions in health, viral diseases and vaccination, while expanding into evolving topics such as adjuvant discovery.

Interestingly, before I started my master's program, I worked as an assistant operations manager in a financial institution and found my

love for project and organizational management. I also worked as an assay scientist in drug discovery at a large pharmaceutical company before entering my PhD program. Both these roles, while in different types of organizations, allowed me to gain "real-world" experience, something I think is beneficial to those pursuing an academic career.

My skills in project management have been invaluable, and I have recently enrolled in a Certified Associate in Project Management (CAPM) course at Drexel to prepare me to take the certification exam. In my role as director of UHEER, research project management is a core part of my leadership. All my training and work experience has culminated in preparing me for my current role.

What's one thing you love about Philly?

I have a great interest in sports, music and culture, and Philadelphia ticks all three boxes for me. I regularly attend sporting events (go Phillies!), go to concerts to see some of my favorite artists — I recently saw Mary J. Blige — and I am always visiting a museum with my family and friends or going out to eat at many of the amazing restaurants in the city that serve food from all over the world.



Roshell Muir, PhD
Director, Office of
Urban Health Equity,
Education and Research



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SAVE THE DATE

Please join the Lynn Yeakel Institute for Women's Health and Leadership for two upcoming events.



Woman One Award Ceremony and Reception

Thursday, October 5, 5:30 p.m.

Le Méridien in Philadelphia

*Honoring health equity champion Ala Stanford, MD,
and
community leader and award-winning
restaurateur Ellen Yin, MBA*



Marion Spencer Fay Lecture, Award Ceremony and Reception

Thursday, November 9, 4:30 p.m.

Drexel Health Sciences Building

Honoring pioneering structural biologist and immunologist Erica Ollmann Saphire, PhD, MBA

Visit drexel.edu/medicine/iwhl or contact Janine Barber at jk48@drexel.edu for more information.