



2008-09

Announcements

Outstanding Dissertation: Dr. Rebecca Kinkade Davis has been selected by a University-wide faculty committee as a recipient of the “**Outstanding Dissertation**” award for her work “*Rb-Raf-1 Interaction as a Therapeutic Target for Proliferative Disorders*”. Dr. Davis is the first Cancer Biology graduate to receive this prestigious honor recognizing exemplary scholarship that demonstrates high potential impact on the nominee’s field of study. Dr. Davis will receive a plaque and \$1,000 monetary award! Congratulations, Becky & Dr. Chellappan!

Commencement: A second Cancer Biology student has spoken at Commencement! **Dr. Nicholas Woods** was selected by Graduate Dean Karen Liller to speak at the Fall 2008 Commencement.

Courses

This Spring semester, Cancer Biology students again had the opportunity to receive credit hours for the Biostatistics course offered by the Moffitt Biostatistics Department (Dr. Ji-Hyun Lee, course director).

Also, a Bioethics course developed by Dr. Ken Wright was offered to Cancer Biology students and Moffitt postdoctoral fellows. Many students and postdocs on funded fellowships are required to complete a bioethics course and the course was developed in part to meet this requirement.

Faculty

A PowerPoint slide highlighting the Cancer Biology Ph.D. and Postdoctoral Training Program is available to faculty for insertion into presentations. If you would like to promote these two worthwhile programs, please contact Cathy Gaffney to receive the slide.

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Student News



From left to right: Committee members Dr. Lori Hazlehurst, Dr. Doug Cress, Cheryl, Major Professor Dr. Hong-Gang Wang, Outside Chair Dr. Robert Weiss, Cornell University and Committee Member Dr. Srikumar Chellappan

Cheryl Meyerkord successfully defended her dissertation on February 9, 2009 and has accepted a postdoctoral position with [Dr. Hai-an Fu](#), Emory University School of Medicine.

WELL-DONE, CHERYL!



From left to right: Committee members Dr. Alan List, Dr. Gary Reuther, Major Professor Dr. Bill Kerr, Amy, Outside Chair Dr. Christopher Klug, UAB and Committee member Dr. Paul Sanberg

On February 19, 2009, **Amy Hazen** successfully defended her dissertation and has joined the lab of [Dr. Paul Simmons](#), director of the Centre for Stem Cell Research, University of Texas–Houston.

Congratulations, Amy!



From left to right: Committee members Dr. Gary Reuther, Dr. Huntington Potter, Meghan, Major Professor Dr. Tom Guadagno, Committee member Dr. Alvaro Monteiro and Outside Chair Dr. Andrew Aplin, Kimmel Cancer Center, Thomas Jefferson University

On April 3, **Meghan Borysova** successfully defended her dissertation and will remain in Dr. Tom Guadagno's lab until summer to finish a paper.

Outstanding, Meghan!

First Year Students

First Year Students who have selected their Mentors:

- **Melissa Price – Alvaro Monteiro, Ph.D.**

Current lab rotations for first year students:

- **Kate Bailey – Litman lab**
- **Crystina Bronk – Beg lab**
- **Jessica Craig – Burnette lab**
- **Lacy Loos – Chen lab**
- **Valentina Schneeberger – Weber lab**

CBSO (Cancer Biology Student Organization)

Led by Brittany Cross, students in the Cancer Biology Program have formed their own student organization, CBSO. With funding from USF, the students have developed a website and produced pamphlets describing the goals of the organization. Current officers are:

- President – Brittany Cross, Chen lab
- Vice President – Valentina Schneeberger, First Year
- Treasurer – Lori Griner, Reuther lab
- Secretary – Melissa Price, Monteiro lab

CBSO website: <http://ctr.usf.edu/cbso/>

Miles for Moffitt - Members of CBSO have formed a team to participate in the upcoming "Miles for Moffitt" and would welcome donations. To donate, please go to:

<http://www.active.com/donate/milesformoffittmiles/MPrice86>

Student Roundtable – On November 14, 2008, students in the Cancer Biology Program met at USF Riverside Park for a picnic lunch and roundtable discussion of a number of items including curriculum, policies and future student events.



TA Opportunity – The Biology Department at USF contacted Dr. Wright to determine if any Cancer Biology student would be interested in volunteering as a TA in the summer or fall semester. Four students indicated interest and their contact information was forwarded to the Biology Department.

2008 Poster Symposium, USF Research Week –

Five Cancer Biology students participated in the inaugural Research Week sponsored by the USF Office of Research & Innovation and the Graduate School. **Brittany Cross** won first place in the Natural Sciences category for her poster "**Regulation of p53 by MDMX**". Brittany received a certificate and a \$250 Research Travel award.



From left to right: Dr. Karen Holbrook, USF Office of Research & Innovation, Dr. Karen Liller, USF Graduate School, Brittany, Dr. Richard Pollenz, USF Graduate School

Publications

Accepted

2

Shain KH, **Yarde DN**, Meads MB, Huang M, Jove R, Hazlehurst LA, Dalton WS. *Beta1 integrin adhesion enhances IL-6-mediated STAT3 signaling in myeloma cells: implications for microenvironment influence on tumor survival and proliferation.* Cancer Res. 2009 Feb 1;69(3):1009-15. Epub 2009 Jan 20.

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Jonathan Rios-Doria, **Aneliya Velkova**, Virna Dapic, Hose M Galan-Caridad, Vesna Dapic, Marcelo Carvalho, Johana Melendez and Alvaro N.A Monteiro. *Ectopic expression of histone H2AX mutants reveal a role for its post-translational modifications.* Cancer Biology and Therapy 8:5,1-13 march 2009.

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Thomas DeLigio, **Aneliya Velkova**, Diego Zorio and Alvaro N.A Monteiro. *Can BRCA1 predict response to taxane-based cancer therapy.* - (accepted : *Anti Cancer Agents in Medicinal Chemistry*)

Youn JI*, Nagaraj S*, Collazo M, Gabrilovich DI. *Subsets of myeloid-derived suppressor cells in tumor-bearing mice.* J Immunol. 2008 Oct 15;181(8):5791-802 (* Equal contribution).

9

Jason A. Dubovsky, Douglas G. McNeel, John J. Powers, Eduardo M. Sotomayor, Javier A. Pinilla-Ibarz. *Treatment of Chronic Lymphocytic Leukemia with a Hypomethylating Agent Induces Expression of NXF2, an Immunogenic Cancer Testis Antigen.* *Clinical Cancer Research* (2009). In Press.

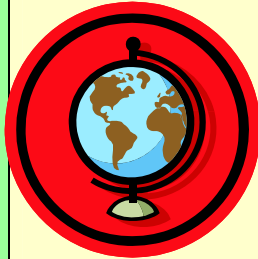
Li Z, Chen L, **Kabra N**, Fang J, Chen J. *Inhibition of SUV39H1 methyltransferase activity by DBC1.* *J Biol Chem.* 2009 Feb13

Submitted

Wang, X., J. Wang, **E. L. Hopewell**, S. Hussain, S. Balachandran, A. Garcia-Sastre and A. A. Beg (2008). *An essential cell type-specific requirement for IKKb/NF-kB in virus-induced IFN expression in plasmacytoid dendritic cells.* (Submitted to PNAS).

Grants

If there are grant submissions or awards, please let me know!



Travel Awards

Michelle Collazo Ruiz attended the "Regulatory T Cells Symposium" in Keystone, Colorado March 1-6, 2009 and presented her abstract *"SHIP Limits the Immunoregulatory Capacity of the T Cell Compartment"*.

Five Cancer Biology students will be attending AACR April 18-22, 2009 in Denver, Colorado. The students and their abstracts are listed below:

Shruti Desai – *"PRDM1 in Mantle Cell Lymphoma"*

Jason Dubovsky – *"Altering the Functional Immunogenicity of Chronic Lymphocytic Leukemia Cells Using Epigenetic Modifiers"*
(Jason will be giving an oral presentation)

Alyson Freeman – *"Protein Phosphatase 2A and CHK2 Binding is Disrupted by DNA Damage"*

Jacqueline Johnson – *"The Role of E2F1 in Cell Migration and Metastasis"*

Danielle Yarde – *"Bortezomib Targets FANCD2 and Enhances Melphalan Response in Myeloma Cells"*

✳️ A new form, *Travel Award Request Form*, can be found on the *Cancer Biology website* by clicking on *"Students"*, then the link *"Information and forms for current students click here"*. This will enable the program to better track the numerous meetings students attend throughout the year.

Interview Day 2009

Fifteen applicants to the Cancer Biology Program were at Moffitt on Thursday, March 5 to meet with faculty and current students. Following a day of interviews, the applicants were hosted to dinner at the Columbia Restaurant. Applicants also had the opportunity to attend the Scientific Retreat the following day.

Scientific Retreat 2009

Several Cancer Biology graduate students participated in the annual Moffitt Scientific Retreat held on Friday, March 6, 2009. Students receiving awards for their posters were:

- **Jason Dubovsky** – First Place, Graduate Student
- **Je-In Youn** – Third Place, Graduate Student



Jason Dubovsky (on left), First Place Award



Je-In Youn, Third Place Award

In addition to a certificate, Jason and Je-In received \$1,000 and \$250 respectively. Congratulations!

Pictures from Interview Day & Scientific Retreat



From back: Kyle Bauckman, Jason Quevreaux, Citadel Cabasag, Vito Rebecca, Keith Young, Katherine Amato, Oluwafadekemi Awoyinka, Kathy Rocha



From back: Jose Trevino, Inna Fedorenko, Joan Ritho
Courtney Kurtyka, Nhan Tu, Anxhela Gjyshi, Lindsey Ulkus



Lunch with current students on Interview Day



Inna Fedorenko studies Alyson Freeman's poster



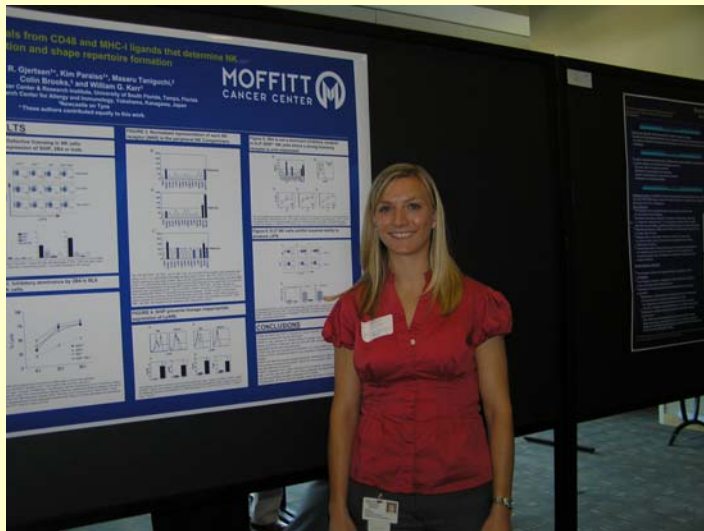
Courtney Kurtyka explains her poster to Keith Young



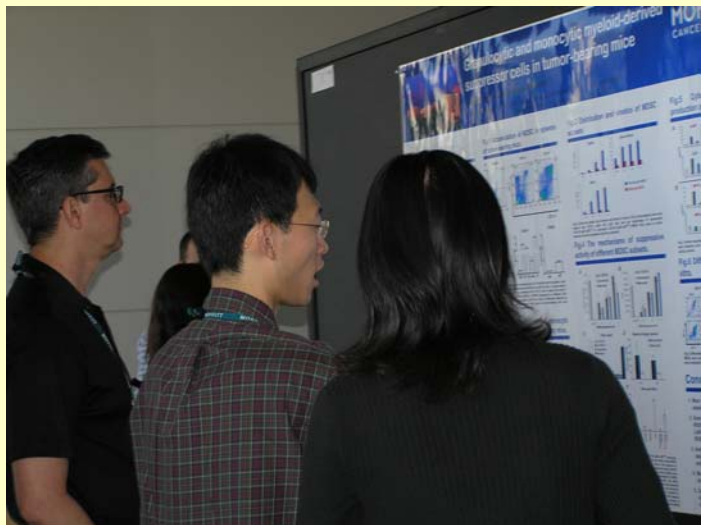
Alyson Freeman talks with Anxhela Gjyshi



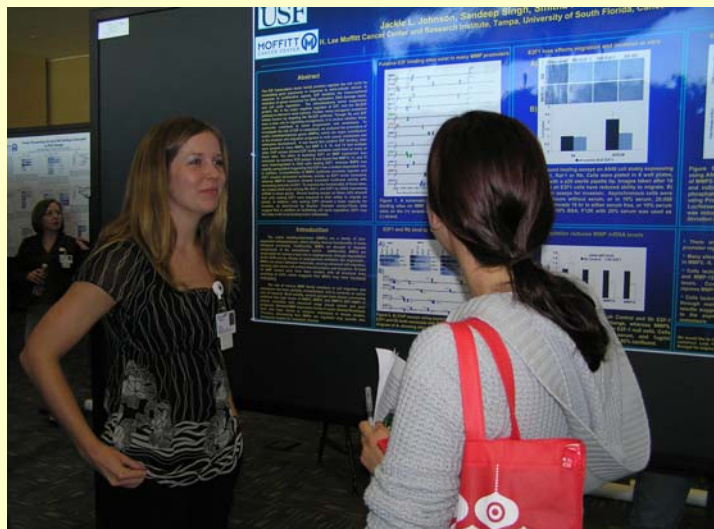
Nicole Gjertsen and Phil Wong share a smile



Nicole Gjertsen with her poster



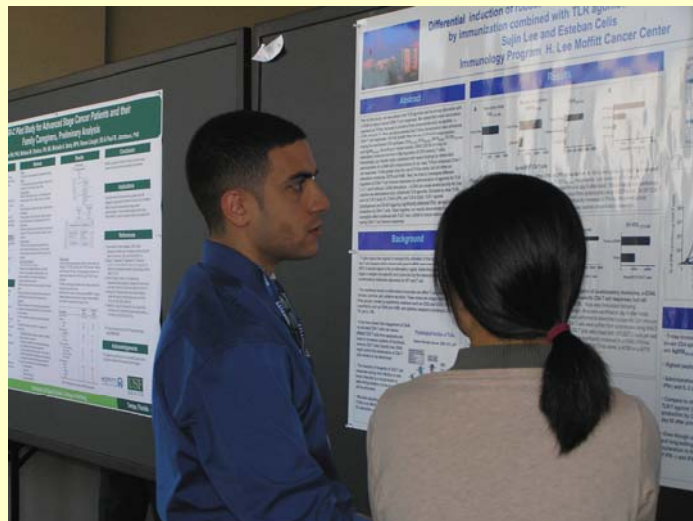
Je-In Youn with his poster; Dr. Monteiro listens in



Jackie Johnson with her poster



Brittany Cross (right) explains her research to Dr. Doug Cress, Anxhela Gjyshi and Citadel Cabasag



Vito Rebecca discusses a poster



From left: Katherine Amato, Melissa Price, Kyle Bauckman, Jessica Craig, Kate Bailey, Joan Ritho, Keith Young, Lacy Loos



From left: Katherine Amato, Melissa Price,
Kyle Bauckman, Jason Dubovsky, Dr. Monteiro,
Jessica Craig



Anxhela Gjyshi and Jason Quevreaux



Revika Matuknauth and Courtney Kurtyka, Cress lab