



Happy September!

Is it time for pumpkin spice yet? As we transition to fall (apparently in name only, not weather), we're excited for things to start picking back up around campus. As always, if you have any comments or concerns, please fill out our [anonymous Google form](#). Have a great month!

- Lindsey and Kaitlyn

DEPARTMENT NEWS

➤ The [BSA calendar](#) is back up! Follow along for updates on social events, colloquium, and seminars. Click [here](#), if you would like to integrate Biochemistry or other relevant university events with your calendar.

➤ **Colloquium is back too!** Thanks everyone who came to the first one last Friday! The colloquium committee has put together a fantastic lineup to start us off this year. Colloquium is held on Fridays at noon in LH214 (and on Zoom) and coordinates with the Frontiers seminar series, which is held at the same time & place. All trainees are expected to attend both colloquium and the seminars. In lieu of providing food like we did before the pandemic, in-person attendees will receive individually packaged goodies with an assortment of beverages and snacks on the way out to be enjoyed socially-distanced after colloquium. There are plenty of slots left for students to sign up! See the department [website](#) for the most up-to-date schedule.

➤ Daily and annual parking permits for this academic year start today (September 1st). For more information or to register for a permit [click here](#). You can also go to the office to sign up for a monthly payment plans.

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TRAINEE OF THE MONTH

Emilio Rivera

What year are you? 4th year – whoa.
Whose lab are you in? I'm in Richard Caprioli's lab. I work on developing technologies for MALDI imaging mass spectrometry to investigate antibiotic resistance in *Staphylococcus aureus* biofilms. I love that I get to turn a wrench one day, and culture bacteria the next.

What do you like best about the biochemistry department? Definitely the community – it's actually why I joined the department in the first place! My lab is pretty physically removed from the rest of the department, but I've always felt like a part of the family.

What are you most looking forward to with colloquium this year? I can't decide between two things: I'm really excited about it being in-person! I think most of us are Zoomed out and it will be great to get people together again and continue cultivating the community. I'm also stoked about the raffle we're doing this year where people can win prizes for asking questions.

What advice do you have for other students? I would say to remember to slow down and smell the roses. Grad school can feel all-consuming sometimes, but it's important to enjoy the little things in life and keep things in perspective.

What's your favorite experiment to run? Mass spectrometry is my first love (don't tell my wife), so anything with a mass spectrometer.

What's your favorite place to go or favorite thing to do in Nashville? It's not exactly in Nashville, but I would say The Caverns. It's a music venue about 1.5 hours out of town and is literally a cave with a stage. If you have a chance to see a concert there, take it!



[Click here to nominate a fellow grad student or post doc for Trainee of the Month!](#)

DEPARTMENT EVENTS IN SEPTEMBER

- **10th** at noon, LH214 - Colloquium: RCR hosted by Walter Chazin
- **10th** from 5-7pm - Back to School social event at Sandbar. Food and drink tickets provided
- **24th** at noon, LH214 - Frontiers Seminar: Tanja Mittag, St. Jude Children's Research Hospital



Many things have had their science and/or pop culture moments in the last decade. Maybe they weren't appreciated like they should be, maybe they were actively hated, but they've turned over a new leaf in 2021...

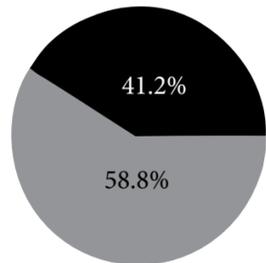
Who or what is an underrated science topic that is finally getting the recognition it deserves?

- A) Bees... à la killer hornets and #savethebees
- B) HeLa cells... remember our *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks* discussion?
- C) PCR... shout out to those weekly COVID tests
- D) Rosalind Franklin... giving her the X-ray crystallography credit she deserves

The results are in!

58.8% of you would take the peace of mind and never doubt your results while the other 41.2% want to publish wherever you please for the rest of time. Both sound good to us!

Is there anything you're dying to know about your fellow biochemists? Send them our way and we may just add it next month.



IN OTHER NEWS

- Vanderbilt changed the Student Health Insurance Plan (SHIP) administrator to Academic HealthPlans this year. Starting August 12, everyone enrolled in SHIP will have a new plan through Aetna. [Click here](#) to learn more about the new plan, find out important dates, and print your new insurance card.
- Are you an international student or post-doc looking for a community of other international biomedical researchers at Vanderbilt? The Vanderbilt International Research Alliance is a new group established on campus (by two of our very own graduate students) to connect and support international students and post-docs across different labs and departments within the biomedical sciences. While the official paperwork is being filed, join the group's [Slack channel](#) for additional updates and communications.



Check it out!

Deja vu - COVID is back (though it never really left). Please follow Vanderbilt & CDC guidelines and mask up when you enjoy these places and events.

- **Places to go:** The annual [East Nashville Beer Festival](#) returns in 2021 on September 18 at East Park. Attendees can expect dozens of local and regional craft breweries, food trucks, and live music. Tickets are \$65 and \$25 for designated drivers. Proof of COVID vaccination or negative test are required for admission. Another East Nashville option is the [East Nashville Art Show](#) at The Marketplace the third Friday of the month. This month that falls on September 17th.
- **Things to do:** If you feel led to help the victims of the recent floods, [Community Foundation of Middle TN](#) is raising money for a Tennessee Emergency Response Fund. In terms of volunteering or other non-monetary relief such as donations, [Community Resource Center](#) has some great opportunities.
- **People to see:** [Jim Gaffigan](#) has added Nashville as a stop on his *Fun Tour*. He'll be coming to the Bridgestone Arena September 30th, tickets are still available. Many music venues now require proof of vaccination including The Basement/Basement East, The Bluebird Cafe, Exit/In, and City Winery.



Does this resonate with you? If so, consider participating in the new Biochemistry Mentorship program. The wellness committee is looking for senior graduate students (4th year and up) and/or post-doctoral fellows who would be willing to serve as informal mentors to these trainees. Mentors and mentees will be able to discuss topics like work-life balance, exploring career options, overcoming imposter syndrome, managing difficult conversations, and other issues that the mentee might face. If you're interested, please fill out the survey [here](#).

Wellness

Mental Wellness: For this month, I highly encourage you to check out the [Student Care Network website](#) for all things related to improving your well-being. From financial to spiritual, cultural to intellectual, there's some really great resources to help you through these challenging times.

Social Wellness: Are you a 4th year or greater student interested in mentoring the newest members of our department? The BSA Wellness Committee is looking for volunteers to launch a mentor-mentee based "buddy" program for younger students. Sign-up [here!](#)

Physical Wellness: New school year, new student health insurance! You can download and save your new health insurance card [here](#). Also, masks are now required when exercising inside the Vanderbilt Recreational Center.

nobody:
not a single soul:
hazardous chemicals warning label
in lab:



Please reach out to lindsey.n.guerin@vanderbilt.edu or kaitlyn.r.browning@vanderbilt.edu if you have any feedback, questions, or student of the month nominations.