



## Happy December!

As we wrap up another semester we want to wish everyone happy holidays! We hope you take some time to rest and enjoy time with family and friends. As always, if you have any comments or concerns, please fill out our [anonymous Google form](#). Have a great month -- and stay warm!

- Lindsey and Kaitlyn

### DEPARTMENT NEWS

➤ The **Biochemistry Department Holiday Party** is **December 7th from 6-8pm** in the Student Life Center Ballroom. It's a sit-down dinner this year. We look forward to celebrating with all of you!

➤ As a reminder, it is an expectation of all members of the department to attend and engage with speakers invited to give **Frontiers Lectures**. They are always **at noon on Fridays**. This month they fall on the 3rd, 10th, and 17th. Student presentations for Colloquium are scheduled in between Frontiers Lectures, again, at noon on Fridays. The next one is January 14th. The schedule can be found [here](#).



### TRAINEE OF THE MONTH

#### Jessica Taylor

**What year are you?** I am in my fourth year of graduate school.

**Whose lab are you in?** I'm in Dr. Breann Brown's lab.

**What do you like best about the biochemistry department?** What I like most about the biochemistry department are the people :) I also love how members in the department are willing to help if you need a hand or want to learn a new technique. We have a true sense of camaraderie.

**What advice do you have for other students?** Some advice for other students is to always take care of yourself- physically, mentally, and emotionally. Even when you feel like you can take on an obscene amount of work or work hours- it isn't sustainable. So, you must be proactive about taking care of yourself.

**What's your favorite experiment to run?** My favorite experiment to do is to set up optimized protein crystal trays because 1) I know the crystals will form since they have been optimized and 2) There is an element of surprise associated with it because I don't know how changing a specific variable will affect the morphology.

**What's your favorite place to go or favorite thing to do in Nashville?** My favorite thing to do in Nashville is to eat! And with that comes trying new restaurants. Some of my favorite restaurants are Degthai, Rolf and Daughters, Las Palmas and Barcelona! Although, it's hard to choose because there are so many yummy places.



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

### DEPARTMENT EVENTS IN DECEMBER

- **2nd at 6pm**, Graduate Student Council general body meeting (in-person, Alumni Hall 201)
- **3rd at 12pm**, Frontiers Lecture (Zoom): Jan Kosinski, EMBL Germany
- **7th from 6-8pm**, Biochemistry Holiday Party, Student Life Center Ballroom
- **10th at 12pm**, Frontiers Lecture (Zoom): Jan Jordan lecture: "Retrospective on Dr. Stanley Cohen and the 1986 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine"
- **10th at 3pm**, Archana Krishnamoorthy Dissertation Defense (Zoom and in-person, MRBIII 1220)
- **17th at 12pm**, Frontiers Lecture (in-person, LH 214): Carrie Partch, UC-Santa Cruz



### Congrats to...

- **Sarah Glass** (Guengerich lab), who published "[Binding of cytochrome P450 27C1, a retinoid desaturase, to its accessory protein adrenodoxin](#)".
- **Alexandra Blee** (Chazin lab), for their pre-print, "[An active learning framework improves tumor variant interpretation](#)".

### Continuing our holiday theme for this month's newsletter...

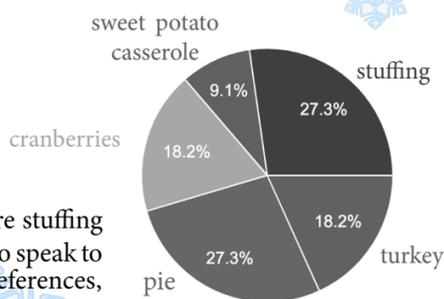


## Would you rather have...

- A) a carrot for a nose or
- B) sticks for arms

### The results are in!

I was reassured to find our Thanksgiving favorites were stuffing and pie (coming in at 27.3% each). However, I do need to speak to the 18.2% of you that went with cranberries... Regardless of personal preferences, I hope everyone had plenty of leftovers of their favorite Thanksgiving food.



### IN OTHER NEWS

- ICYMI: COVID-19 vaccine boosters [have been authorized for all adults](#). Boosters are available to students [by appointment only](#) at Student Health. Information about boosters for staff can be found [here](#). Don't forget to log your booster dose with the [Command Center](#).
- There will be a special election at the General Body Meeting on December 2nd for the second Social Chair position in the Graduate Student Council (GSC) for the spring. If you're interested in being nominated for this position fill out the form [here](#).
- There are a few ASPIRE Internships for next semester that are accepting application right now. See the [ASPIRE website](#) for more details.
- Applications are also open for ASPIRE Spring Modules and will close by December 13th. More information can be found [here](#).
- The Student Care Network is operating under altered schedules during the holidays. See those schedules [here](#).
- TEDxVanderbiltUniversity will host a virtual event on Friday, Dec. 10 from 1-3pm. The event is part of the TEDWomen2021 conference featuring women leaders discussing how the pandemic disproportionately affected women and ideas that may improve our future. Register for the event [here](#).



### Check it out!

As always, double check events for their COVID-19 hours and regulations.

- **Places to go:** The seasonal champion of Nashville (aka Cheekwood) will have their **Holiday LIGHTS Experience** options through January 9th. For more information and tickets, visit their website [here](#). As another christmas light option... the drive-through **Dancing Lights of Christmas** will be at the Wilson County Fairgrounds this year until January 2nd. Follow [this link](#) for details. Pro tip: both of these events can get pretty crowded and busy, so it's best to plan ahead!
- **Things to do:** The **Holiday Spirits Cocktail Festival** will be on December 3rd at the Factory in Franklin, tickets can be purchased, [here](#). Cheers! Nashville Scene's **Taco Week** is also in December (the 6th through the 12th). \$5 tacos at all participating restaurants -- you can find more information [here](#).
- **People to see:** Amy Grant and Vince Gill will return this year for their "**Christmas at the Ryman**" residency, tickets can be found, [here](#).

### Wellness

#### Mental Wellness: Want to explore wellness on your own time?

There are various apps affiliated with Vanderbilt care for self-directed practices. These range from Headspace for practicing meditation to recorded seminars on Dialectical Behavioral Skills (DBT). You can find a comprehensive list of self-directed tools [here](#).

**Physical Wellness:** COVID-19 booster shots have been approved for everyone and are available through the city or most pharmacies. You can find more information [here](#). A quick reminder that asymptomatic COVID-19 testing is available at the David Williams II Recreation and Wellness Center in the auxiliary gym. Individuals can park in lot 102 and will need to enter through the large doors at the back of the Rec Center. There is also a limited number of drive-up testing parking spaces in lot 102. Best part? No appointment necessary—just show up Mon-Thurs from 7 AM – 3 PM and get tested!

**Professor: Where do you see yourself in a few years**

**Me:**



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