



Happy New Year!

Welcome to 2022, here's to hoping it's even a little bit better than 2021. As always, if you have any comments or concerns, please fill out our [anonymous Google form](#). Have a great month/year!

- Lindsey and Kaitlyn



DEPARTMENT NEWS

- We will have a new Program Assistant, Brandee Mills, joining the department! She will be located with Jen Smith in 607LH. Please join us in welcoming her on January 12th at 10:30am in 618 Light Hall.
- The University is ramping up COVID testing and guidelines in response to the recent increase in cases across the country. If you have not received a booster, weekly asymptomatic testing will be required. Additionally, graduate students are required to have been tested by the 14th of January to remain on campus. Additional information and guidance can be found [here](#) and [here](#).



- Thank you to everyone who attended the Holiday Party, we enjoyed celebrating with you all!
- We also wanted to thank everyone for submitting their pictures for the website and this newsletter. Keep an eye out for a new design next month!

TRAINEE OF THE MONTH

Jessica Collins

What year are you? 3rd year
Whose lab are you in? The Osheroff lab.
What do you like best about the biochemistry department? My favorite part of the department is the Biochemistry Student Association. I truly value the social events, STEM social issue discussions, and wellness initiatives hosted by the BSA, and I appreciate the open discourse between the BSA and department leadership to create a positive learning environment for students and postdocs.
What advice do you have for other students? Science is important, but science isn't everything. If you place your value in your ability to do an experiment or pass an exam, you'll feel like a failure. Instead, ground yourself in people who support and encourage you irrespective of your science. They will be your life rafts throughout your Ph.D.
What's your favorite experiment to run? My favorite experiments are supercoiling assays because the resulting DNA bands look like a wave.
What's your favorite place to go or favorite thing to do in Nashville? Fellow Biochemistry student Alexandria Oviatt and I have made it our mission to find the best biscuit in Nashville. In our spare time, we hunt down new biscuit places and review them on our Instagram (*shameless plug to follow us @over.doughsd*).



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



DEPARTMENT EVENTS IN JANUARY

- **7th at 12pm** - Frontiers Lecture (Zoom), Jeanne Stachowiak, UT Austin
- **12th at 10:30am** - Meet and greet with Brandee Mills, the new Biochemistry program assistant (in-person, LH 618)
- **14th at 12pm** - Colloquium (in-person, LH 214), Jorge Rua, Cortez Lab

Congrats to...

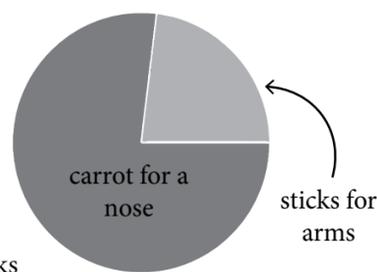
- **Dr. Archana Krishnamoorthy**, who defended her thesis last month.
- **Ivette Perez** (Iverson Lab) for her first-author publication, [A model for the signal initiation complex between Arrestin-3 and the Src family kinase Fgr](#), and **Manuel Castro** (Sanders Lab) who contributed to the paper.
- **Ankita Kotnala, David Anderson, Nathan Heath Patterson, and Lee Cantrell** of the MRSC and Schey lab on their publication, [Tissue fixation effects on human retinal lipid analysis by MALDI imaging and LC-MS/MS technologies](#).



2021 was admittedly not a great year... but let's look on the bright side!

Which of the following very important 2021 events was your favorite?

- A) That ship got stuck in the Suez Canal
- B) The final season of *Keeping Up with the Kardashians* aired
- C) Bernie Sanders sitting with his mittens at Pres. Biden's inauguration
- D) The Oprah interview with Meghan Markle and Prince Harry



The results are in!

Most of you (76.9% vs. 23.1%) would rather have a "carrot for a nose" than "sticks for arms". I imagine pipetting would be a bit more challenging with twig fingers, so we respect this choice.

Is there anything you're dying to know about your fellow biochemists? Send them our way!

IN OTHER NEWS

- The university is expanding the COVID-19 asymptomatic testing program. Effective Jan. 18, individuals must provide proof of a booster, if eligible, to be exempt from the asymptomatic testing program. [Submit your vaccine and booster record](#) by Monday, Jan. 10, to avoid the requirement of regular testing.
- In addition, masks are required indoors on campus at all times.
- ASPIRE events are up and running again for the semester. Check out their [calendar](#)!
- In case you missed it, the Lab-to-Table Conversations: "The Science of Beer" was on December 16th (and moderated by Biochemistry faculty Bruce Carter). If you'd still like to watch, you can do so [here](#).



Check it out!

As always, double check events for their COVID hours and regulations. Specifically, we ask you all to keep in mind the university's requests regarding the Commodores Care period from Jan 25th to Feb 3rd.

- **Places to go:** There are quite a few heated outdoor patios around town, for days slightly less chilly than this week, if you're more comfortable doing things outside. Check out [this list](#) by NashvilleGuru.
- **Things to do:** There is a pop-up ice skating rink in the Gulch from January 13th-16th. Tickets are \$20 and can be purchased [here](#) with a portion of the proceeds going to the Community Resource Center.
- **People to see:** This probably isn't the best time to recommend seeing any live performances in crowded venues, so instead, cuddle up on the couch or invite some COVID-safe friends and binge some of the [new movies and shows being released](#) on streaming services this month. See what it's like when 6 actors with a combined 41 Oscar nominations star together in one film (*Don't Look Up*, Netflix). Or introduce yourself to the ten newest Marvel characters in *Eternals*, which comes to Disney+ on the 12th. Also shout out to Jen for letting us know that you get free streaming at [Kanopy](#) with a Nashville Public Library card.

Wellness

Physical Wellness: Basketball, anyone? Gym courts are open at the Vanderbilt Recreation and Wellness center. During peak hours of the week (Sunday through Friday 3pm to 10pm), a Free Play reservation is required. Gym Courts will be limited to 15 individuals per court for a 55-minute reservation, and individuals may make one 55-minute reservation per day. During non-peak hours of the week, a Free Play reservation is not required and the gym courts are open for come and go use. Keep in mind that you must be masked up at all times when indoor at the Rec center!

Mental Wellness: Happy 2022! If you need some help developing resolutions that will stick, [this short article from VUMC](#) outlines how to set effective goals and welcome change into your life.

