

# BPSA Monthly Newsletter



BIOCHEMISTRY  
POSTDOCTORAL  
RESEARCHER  
AND STUDENT  
ASSOCIATION

Thank you to Lily Yu for her excellent work as the previous newsletter writer! If there are any comments or concerns, please leave them in the [anonymous Google Form](#).

Have a great September!  
–Ali and Kevin, BPSA Communications Committee

## Announcements

The BRET Office released a Care Map with updated care resources, found below:

- [Graduate Students](#)
- [PostDocs](#)

DEI Journal Club is returning starting in October. We are actively seeking volunteers to present; please contact [Katherine Stefanski](#) if interested!

## Upcoming Events

- **6 Sept.** LH 202, 12 pm, Biochemistry Department Town Hall Meeting
- **13 Sept.** LH 202, 12 pm, Frontiers in Biochemistry Seminar, Squire Booker, Penn State University, “A Radical Solution for C(sp<sup>3</sup>)–C(sp<sup>3</sup>) Bond Formation during the Biosynthesis of Macrocyclic Membrane Lipids”
- **16 Sept.** Student Life Center, all day, Biochemistry Department Retreat
- **17 Sept.** MRB III 3131, 11 am, Thesis Defense, Ronan Bracken, “Dissecting Mechanisms of Proinflammatory Transcriptional Control in the Vascular Endothelium”
- **26 Sept.** LH 618, 11 am, Coffee and Conversations with Dr. Sezen Meydan
- **27 Sept.** LH 202, 12 pm, Frontiers in Biochemistry Seminar, Alberto Ciccia, Columbia University, “Dissecting the DNA damage response network”
- **27 Sept.** 1220 MRB III, 3 pm, Apex Lecture, Venki Ramakrishnan, “Why We Die”

## Congratulations to ...

- Xiaoyu (Lily) Yu (Kojetin Lab, winner) and Katherine Clowes Moster (Sanders Lab, runner-up) for winning the 2024 VICB Richard Armstrong Prize for Research Excellence.
- Jenny Tran (Brown Lab) and Katherine Stefanski (Sanders Lab) for poster awards at the 2024 VICB Symposium.
- Kevin McCarty (Guengerich Lab) for winning the 2024 Dean’s Award for Exceptional Achievement in Graduate Studies.
- Menghan Mei for defending his thesis, “Mechanisms of SARS-CoV-2 Nsp1 mediated host mRNA nuclear export inhibition.”
- Jessica Taylor (Brown Lab). [Elucidating the Role of Human ALAS2 C-terminal Mutations Resulting in Loss of Function and Disease](#). *Biochemistry*.
- Fred Guengerich. [Roles of Individual Human Cytochrome P450 Enzymes in Drug Metabolism](#). *Pharmacological Reviews*.
- Jessica Collins (Osheroff Lab). [Interactions between Zoliflodacin and Neisseria gonorrhoeae Gyrase and Topoisomerase IV: Enzymological Basis for Cellular Targeting](#). *ACS Infectious Diseases*.
- Madison Adolph (Cortez Lab). [Mechanisms and regulation of replication fork reversal](#). *DNA Repair*.
- James Tarr (Fesik Lab). [Discovery of a Myeloid Cell Leukemia 1 \(Mcl-1\) Inhibitor That Demonstrates Potent In Vivo Activities in Mouse Models of Hematological and Solid Tumors](#). *Journal of Medicinal Chemistry*.
- Neil Osheroff. [Development of Novel Bacterial Topoisomerase Inhibitors Assisted by Computational Screening](#). *ACS Medicinal Chemistry Letters*.
- Ashley Taylor (Fesik Lab). [Fragment-Based Screen of SARS-CoV-2 Papain-like Protease \(PLpro\)](#). *ACS Medicinal Chemistry Letters*.
- Paola Munoz-Tello (Kojetin Lab). [A tethering mechanism underlies Pin1-catalyzed proline cis-trans isomerization at a noncanonical site](#) (preprint). *bioRxiv*.
- Will Wan. [Visualizing chaperonin function in situ by cryo-electron tomography](#). *Nature*.
- James Dewar. [DNA replication recruits a friend to overcome a challenging break-up](#). *The EMBO Journal*.

# Introducing the new BPSA President and Vice President!

PRESIDENT - TARA HICKMAN



VICE PRESIDENT - JORDAN STACY

**What year are you and whose lab are you in?**

Tara: Peck lab, 4th year

Jordan: Iverson lab, 4th year

**Why did you take on a leadership role in BPSA?**

We remembered to fill out the Google Form our esteemed Pres and VP Ronan and Vincent sent out. Tara: I've really appreciated the role the BPSA has had in creating a supportive and collaborative environment for trainees and I wanted to take part in creating that community for incoming trainees.

Jordan: I've worked on a few committees across the BPSA now, and through them, I've been able to meet and work with so many new people and professors. Helping to lead the BPSA will allow me to keep those connections, make new ones, and also encourage everyone else in the program to grow their network outside of their labs, too!

**What are your top goals for BPSA this year?**

We want to foster a supportive and inclusive community for all trainees (grad students/post-docs) at different stages across the labs that are affiliated with the Biochemistry department. Many of us are in labs with multiple affiliations and we want to include as many trainees as possible.

**What biochemistry events or initiatives are you most looking forward to this semester?**

We're excited about our upcoming social and wellness events that we're planning to co-host with other grad student organizations since many of us are in labs with multiple department affiliations. We're also planning a wellness event with the Graduate and Postdoc Academic Success (GPAS) Program and the Biochemistry DEI Journal Club committee since they address different aspects of trainee health and wellness.

**What do you enjoy most about the Biochemistry Department and BPSA?**

We really appreciate the support and camaraderie in the department between trainees and faculty. Grad school is difficult, but the trainees and faculty are invested in supporting each other whether it be reviewing writing or listening to your frustrations about an experiment that doesn't work for the 1000th time.

## Check this out!

- **every Sept. Friday**, Musicians Corner Fall Series @ Centennial Park (free!)
- **13 Sept.** Full Moon Pickin' Party: bluegrass music series supporting the Warner Parks
- **20-22 Sept.** African Street Festival, Hadley Lillard Park (free!)
- **28-29 Sept.** Pilgrimage Music Festival. Franklin, TN

Traditional structural biology

AlphaFold



Grad Student

Technician



"All the months are crude experiments, out of which the perfect September is made." — Virginia Woolf