Attention Postdoctoral Fellows:

Monthly Postdoctoral Association Meeting
Wednesday, August 7th, 2013
Light Hall Room 433, 11:30am-12:30pm

The Postdoctoral Association (PDA) exists to support the postdocs at Vanderbilt University and serves to enhance and improve the postdoctoral experience. Monthly PDA meetings are an open forum to communicate ideas, identify any areas requiring advocacy, and establish the overall direction of the PDA. Our monthly meetings are typically the first Wednesday of each month and are open to all Vanderbilt postdocs. We encourage anyone interested to attend!

Agenda:

1. Discussion on Topics: Dr. Moses Prabu, Director of Protein Sciences, Berg Pharma
   - Open discussion with Dr. Moses Prabu, of Berg Pharma (Local Employer!)
     - http://www.bergpharma.com/
   - He will be available to answer any questions you may have about breaking into and working in the pharmaceutical industry

Dr. Prabu has a physics degree from India. Switched from astrophysics to solid state physics. Wanted to do grad school in physics and/or engineering but ended up in biosciences and enjoyed it. Postdoc at UMass medical school in structure based drug design. Accepted a position at Commonwealth Medical College in Scranton, PA. Recently moved to Berg Pharma in Nashville. In 2001 he thought about starting an airline. Berg Healthcare has 3 divisions, pharma, biosystems and diagnostics. Manufacturing is in Nashville. Longterm goal is to bring some cell biology and structural biology to Nashville. He is responsible for discovering macromolecules for therapeutics, this requires tracking of proteins and what they are doing in the cell. A venture capitalist is stationed here so he can just walk into his office, very supportive of hiring, growing in understanding of the business.
Advice for postdocs: PhD holders may be overqualified for the manufacturing jobs. Once you get your PhD you are up against a clock to get a faculty position or industry job. You have to make your own future. Stay in good contact with old bosses, start thinking beyond your own project. Be able to talk to a broad audience about your science. Start thinking about your own independent work early in your postdoc. Send out a lot of job applications, it takes a long time to get a job. Ads for university jobs, 90% of the jobs are already filled, they just have to interview 3. You may get lucky. Custom fit your project proposal to the department. Careful proof reading on your application. If you like to work in teams, and are flexible industry is a good place. Don’t get short sighted about what you want to do. You went to grad school to learn how to learn you can do what you want. There is a lot of money available for small business.

What is the most important thing on a CV for an industry job?

Get a copy of the ad, CV/Resume should be 1-2 pages, crisp.

What does a company want and what do you bring?

Hiring managers may get intimidated if you are too experienced. Highlight relevant parts of your education. Focus on what they are looking for. State what you want to achieve. First few bullet points related to what they want.

What should you look for a job in an expanding small pharma company?

There are a lot of opportunities to work in small expanding companies. What do they want you to do, what is the timeline, how much do they want to spend. People from academia don’t understand some times business people want to know about the ROI. When a business person talks to a scientist, “eat 3 m&M’s before answering” i.e. think. Process the question and give a
rational answer.

What is the most rewarding part of your day?

Working as a team to overcome a challenge and seeing his employees do the same.

What is the size of the company here?

12 when he started now up 5 in his group about 60 in Boston, thinking of expanding up to 140. For every PhD there are 5-6 technicians.

2. Election Results

- Welcome our 2013-2014 PDA Executive Committee
  - Senior Co-Chair: Katie Jameson
  - Junior Co-Chair: Lindsey Morris
  - Secretary/Treasurer: Holly Cyphert
- Thank you to all who participated in the elections!

3. Vanderbilt Postdoc Networking Event

- Scheduled for Thursday, August 15th at 4:00pm in Light Hall Room 415A-D
- **New and improved format:** Open networking for the first 10 minutes. Then we will have a 10 minute discussion within smaller groups followed by a 5 minute synopsis amongst the entire group. This will be repeated 3 times.
- Electronic handbook will include name, email, lab, short (140 characters) research summary, undergrad and grad
institutions
  ▪ Raffle for prizes generously provided by the VMAA
  ▪ Seeking volunteers to help with planning, set-up, and clean-up

*(If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Barbara Natalizio)*

VMAA has provided a lot of prizes. Register by end of the day on Friday. Invite your friends. Each person will get nametags, with colors assigning to 3 different groups. The hope is to meet everyone. Each group will have 1 topic to discuss followed by synthesis. Moderators at each table will serve to keep conversation moving. Volunteers needed, sign up sheet passed around.

4. The Annual Vanderbilt Institute for Chemical Biology Research Symposium
  ▪ Thursday, August 8th 8am-5pm in the Student Life Center
  ▪ Keynote address: Dr. Jon Clardy, Harvard University [http://clardy.edu.harvard.edu/research](http://clardy.edu.harvard.edu/research)
  ▪ Registration and more info: [https://redcap.vanderbilt.edu/surveys/?s=VnCqJ5](https://redcap.vanderbilt.edu/surveys/?s=VnCqJ5)

  Keynote 9-10AM

5. National Postdoctoral Association Appreciation Week: Annual Postdoc Picnic
  ▪ Scheduled for Wednesday, September 18th @5:00pm
  ▪ Location: Fannie Mae Dees Park (Dragon Park), Shelter One
  ▪ Sponsored by the BRET office and VMAA
  ▪ Families are welcome
  ▪ Please contact Claudia Cottingham in the BRET office for more information
6. **Science Outreach & Communication: A Career Symposium**

- [http://asbmb-career-symposium.missouri.edu/](http://asbmb-career-symposium.missouri.edu/)
- *Saturday, September 21, 2013 7:30am-5:00pm*
- University of Missouri, Columbia, MO
- Registration is free

7. **Sign-up sheets for PDA committees**

- Scholarly Learning/Symposium Planning
- Postdoc Advocacy
- Social Networking and Activities
- Web and Communication

8. **Suggestions for upcoming topics**

Email Barbara or Katie

9. **Reminders:**

- Register for Kim Petrie’s Career Development List
- Sign up to receive the BRET e-newsletter
- Join Vanderbilt University Biomedical Research Graduate and Postdoctoral Trainee and Alumni Linked-In Group
- **Join the Vanderbilt University Postdoctoral Association Google Group**
  - [https://groups.google.com/forum/?hl=en&fromgroup=s#!forum/VU-Postdocs](https://groups.google.com/forum/?hl=en&fromgroup=s#!forum/VU-Postdocs)
  - The webboard is designed for open communication amongst Vanderbilt postdocs about science, family, life and anything you feel would be of interest to our community! Sign up today for email alerts of new postings!

Meeting day and time will change, probably around lunchtime.
Please suggest times to Barbara or Katie. A doodle poll will go out to help figure out a time.