

the cell

SUMMER 2006
VOLUME 25 NUMBER 2

NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY
BMBCB

UPCOMING EVENTS

BMBCB Summer Picnic



Mark your calendars for the BMBCB summer picnic! It will be taking place on Friday, August 25th from noon until two p.m. at the firepit. Food and drinks will be provided. Take some time out of your workday to enjoy the summer along the lake and to spend time with members of BMBCB. We hope to see everyone there!

Special Department Seminar

A two-act play of RNA: (1) A novel function for the exon junction complex at neuronal synapses and (2) degradation of non-functional ribosomal RNAs in budding yeast

Melissa Moore

Department of Biochemistry, Brandeis University; Investigator Howard Hughes Medical Institute
Thursday July 27th, 12:30 p.m.
Pancoe ENH Auditorium

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BMBCB's New Project Coordinator Finishes First Fifty Days

Joshua Schnell
BMBCB Assistant Chair

As you were no doubt aware, the BMBCB administration office was understaffed for many months after the departure of Nick Woell, during which time staff roles and responsibilities were evaluated for opportunities to increase support to department researchers. This evaluation resulted in a proposal to WCAS's Sr. Associate Dean Lyn Weick, one component of which targeted increased administrative support for grant proposal preparation, a need that has been known for sometime. The proposal included a request to upgrade the previous Program Coordinator position to an exempt-level Project Coordinator, recognizing the importance of the proposal preparation process and allowing recruitment of a staff member with an advanced degree and/or several years of administrative experience. The result of the search has brought in Kelly Fust as BMBCB's first proposal support specialist.



honors, in English literature from DePaul University. She has extensive experience in writing and editing publications, including a quarterly newsletter at the DePaul Writing Centers, where she was a graduate assistant. Most recently she was working in the private sector, producing and editing content for ShopLocal.com. Her strong proofreading skills, familiarity with the academic environment, and ease in working with faculty all contributed to placing her as the top candidate for the open position.

Kelly Fust comes to BMBCB with a Master of Arts, with

The newly revamped Project Coordinator position adds

See "Project Coordinator" pg. 5

LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

Dear BMBCB Colleagues:

As part of the new look of *The Cell*, I have been asked to write a brief message in this and future issues relating to activities or news within the department. Let me start by saying that I hope you are all having an enjoyable and productive summer. For many of us, summer is a somewhat more peaceful time, without the pressures of classes, exams, committee meetings, and the like. It's also a time to attend scientific conferences, to focus on moving our research forward, and maybe even to relax a little bit. But within the BMBCB office, summer is a particularly busy time, as planning for the upcoming 2006-07 academic year is already well underway, and we are gearing up for faculty search, student recruitment, seminar programs, the budget cycle, and other activities that support our research and teaching missions. Many of you are most likely not aware of all the "behind the scenes" activity that goes on in the departmental and affiliated offices, and that's probably a good thing!

But in my time as chair, I have had ample opportunity to observe just how much our staff does that often gets taken for granted. So I would like to take this opportunity to thank the dedicated individuals that we have working in the BMBCB office, the Life Sciences Financial offices, and the PBS undergraduate and IBiS graduate programs. Within the BMBCB office, we are now once again fully staffed with the addition of Ms. Kelly Fust (see the article in this issue of *The Cell*), and Assistant Chair Josh Schnell has done a terrific job of assembling and leading a fine group of people who are dedicated to facilitating your research. We always strive to do better, so please let Josh and me know how our office is doing and what suggestions you might have for improvements.

Finally, you will note the announcement in this issue of *The Cell* that the BMBCB Summer Picnic has been reinstated after a brief hiatus, and will be held August 25. I hope very much

that you will be able to join us as we come together as a departmental community to celebrate and relax with family and friends as a prelude to the new academic year. Best wishes for the rest of the summer.

--Kelly Mayo, Chair of BMBCB

LIFE SCIENCES FINANCIAL SERVICES: HOURS OF OPERATION & NEW WEBSITE

In order to serve you more efficiently, the financial assistants in Life Sciences Financial Services (Hogan 2-150) are available for walk-ins from 8:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and by appointment only from 12:00 to 5:00 p.m.

Keep an eye out for our new website, which will be completed close to the start of the fall term. You'll want to have this new site bookmarked for its many useful tools, such as reference materials on various policies, forms, and convenient links to relevant sites. All the forms currently available in our office will be available through our website, including all travel & reimbursement related forms, vendor code request forms, request for research staff appointment, patent policy, and all OSR forms, just to name a few.

LOOKING FOR JOB POSTINGS?

The Cell is now a quarterly publication; therefore, job postings will no longer be presented in the newsletter in order to ensure that information does not become outdated. Details about available jobs or candidates seeking employment will now be sent out every other week to the relevant listservs. If you have postings or information on candidates that you would like to send out, please send an email to bmbcb@northwestern.edu.

STUDENTS GET UNIQUE RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES WITH SROP

By Kelly Fust, editor

Among the new faces in the BMBCB labs this summer, there are three undergraduate students, Maria Angulo, Kachael Johnson, and Stephanie Valtierra, participating in a unique research initiative run by the "Big Ten" universities and the University of Chicago. The Summer Research Opportunity Program (SROP) was developed over twenty years ago to increase diversity among college sophomores and juniors planning to pursue a graduate education; the program achieves this goal by making hands-on research and focused academic guidance available to those students who may not otherwise have these opportunities.

The eight-week long program is a full-time commitment and includes the creation and implementation of an individual research project (overseen by an assigned faculty member), participation in a research conference designed for all the participants in the program, and workshops centered on graduate-school preparation.

Kachael Johnson is working in Rick Morimoto's lab. She will be a junior in the fall and is a biology/pre-med major at Bethune-Cookman College in Daytona Beach, Florida. Kachael says that the lab has been very welcoming, and she is excited to participate in a program that will help her get clearer ideas about how she would like to focus her graduate study.

A biology major at Lake Forest College here in Illinois, Stephanie Valtierra is doing research in Erik Sontheimer's lab. She says that she is already finding out about new techniques to use in her work and is "learning a lot about the dedication and commitment involved in doing research."

Over in Andrew Dudley's lab, Maria Angulo is using her time to discover more about developmental biology, one of the fields she is considering pursuing in graduate school. A rising senior at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Maria is majoring in molecular and

cell biology with minors in chemistry and Spanish. Thus far in SROP, she has taken advantage of learning about scientific journals and various research techniques and protocols.

The students will be completing their work on August 10, at which time they will be presenting final reports of their projects at the Research Forum here at Northwestern.

BECOME INVOLVED IN THE POSTDOC ASSOCIATION

Welcoming new and current postdocs! Join us on the FIRST FRIDAY of each month.

Next event: August 4th at 5pm in the Pancoe 4th Floor interaction area.

Come along and meet fellow postdocs for refreshments; bring your issues and suggestions on how to improve postdoc life. Learn about the new Northwestern University Office of Postdoc Affairs.

Contact Louise (l-ludlow@northwestern.edu), Marija (marija@northwestern.edu) or Mamta (mamta-puri@northwestern.edu) for more information.

NOW ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS

The Greater Chicago Chapter of the Arthritis Foundation is currently accepting applications for Chapter Research Grant Awards. Only researchers within three years of completing their post-doc work and who have never served as a principal investigator may apply. Electronic applications are due no later than September 1, 2006. Funded researchers may receive up to \$30,000 a year for two years. Judging will take into account how the proposed work would aid the mission of the Arthritis Foundation. For more information on the awards, visit the Arthritis Foundation website: <http://www.arthritis.org/research> or contact Tom Fite, president of the Chicago chapter at 312.372.2080 or tfite@arthritis.org.

NEW FACE IN KECK FACILITY

By Kelly Fust, editor

The Keck Biophysics Facility has welcomed in a new assistant facility manager to replace Josh Hays. Katie Favale comes to Northwestern from the Argonne National Laboratory, where she worked for six years at the Advanced Photon Source. There she was responsible for managing the Biochemistry Laboratory.

Already involved in comprehensive training, Katie is excited to “get up to speed” in her new position and also looks forward to “working with the people at Northwestern and to all the challenges associated with my new position.”

For those unfamiliar with the Keck Facility, it was created as part of the Center for Structural Biology, with primary support from the W.M. Keck Foundation and with additional funds from the NIH, the Rice Foundation, and the Robert H. Lurie Comprehensive Cancer Center. It is a collaborative resource center, where faculty and other researchers from several Northwestern departments investigate the structures and interactions of biological and synthetic macro-molecules.

Katie encourages faculty, staff, or students who have any questions about the Keck facility or their services to feel free to contact her. She can be reached by telephone at 847-467-6533, or you can contact her by email at katiefavale@northwestern.edu.



GRANT PROPOSALS: NEWS & UPDATES

Changes to NIH Facepage

If you are not already aware, the updated NIH grant application no longer requires the PI signature on the application's facepage. However, Northwestern is still required to keep a PI's signature on file for each proposal by use of the NIH PI Compliance Requirement Form. You can find this form at <http://www.northwestern.edu/orsp/forms.html>.

In addition, the eRA Commons User Name is now required for all PIs submitting to NIH. If you need to set up a Commons account, please contact Mike Green via email at msgreen@northwestern.edu. He will need your full name and social security number in order to set up the account.

Elimination of Social Security Numbers on OSR-1

While OSR might need your social security number for the Commons name, they no longer ask for it on the OSR-1 form. That field now requests an employee ID number. If you have a copy of the OSR-1 saved on your computer, please ensure that it is this updated version. You can obtain the most recent versions of all the OSR forms at the link provided above.

[This grants section will be a regular addition to *The Cell*. If there is any information that you think would be useful here, or if you have grants-related questions that you believe could benefit all of our readers, please email Kelly Fust at K-Fust@northwestern.edu.]

SEND US YOUR NEWS AND UPDATES!

If you ever have any information that you would like in *The Cell*, such as updates about organizations or facilities, faculty or student news, or notices about upcoming events, please contact Kelly Fust at K-Fust@northwestern.edu or 847.491.5068.

Keep in mind when sending date-sensitive information that the newsletter now comes out quarterly instead of monthly. We look forward to hearing from you!

BILLS COULD REQUIRE FREE ACCESS TO NIH-FUNDED RESEARCH

By Kelly Fust, editor

An article in a recent issue of *The Chronicle of Higher Education*¹ focuses on a topic that could affect the publication of much of the research being done by BMBCB faculty. In the article, Anne Walters discusses a provision in a bill coming up for vote by the House of Representatives that would make it mandatory for researchers sponsored by NIH to make electronic versions of their research available on the free online system PubMed Central (run by the National Library of Medicine) within one year of publication in a scientific journal. Currently, NIH requests but does not require that PIs post to this site, and very few have chosen to do so.

A separate yet similar bill was recently introduced in the Senate and would require federal funding agencies that allocate more than \$100 million to research (such as NIH and NSF) to develop their own free online databases; in this case, researchers would have to post their findings within six months of publication. More information on this particular bill can be found in the online edition of *The Scientist* and several other publications. While many are concerned that these policy changes would be detrimental to scholarly journals in terms of profit and prestige, others applaud the possibility of allowing the public to access taxpayer-backed research.

¹ Walters, Anne. (2006, June 19) "House Committee Would Require Open Access to NIH-Backed Research." *The Chronicle of Higher Education*.

FACULTY PROMOTIONS

Congratulations to the following BMBCB faculty members on their recent promotions!

- o Erik Sontheimer was promoted to associate professor with tenure.
- o Linda Hicke was promoted to full professor.
- o Andreas Matouschek was promoted to full professor.

Project Coordinator, contd.

grants preparation specialist responsibilities (50%) to coordination of facilities management, departmental safety, BMBCB publications and other special projects. Wearing her pre-award grant support hat requires Kelly to interface almost daily with staff in the office of Life Sciences Financial Services, the WCAS Dean's office and, most importantly, the Office of Sponsored Research (OSR).

Kelly's reasons for interest in the position included both "the opportunity for taking on a whole new set of responsibilities by working with faculty and staff on grant proposals," and "the challenge of building a new [Project Coordinator] position, not just filling the position as it was before."

Since joining BMBCB, Kelly has attended a 4-part workshop in Research Administration covering both pre-award and post-award activities and has learned from staff in OSR about the pre-award process at Northwestern. This training has served her well as she has already assisted faculty with four proposals to both NIH and NSF. During her remaining time, she has been busy writing content for this issue of *The Cell*, updating and organizing the departmental key inventory, researching and planning a revamped printed brochure for the department, and working on a variety of smaller projects.

When asked for her impressions of BMBCB so far, she reports that she is happy with how receptive the faculty with whom she has worked have been to her involvement in the proposal process. She is looking forward to meeting more members of BMBCB and the Northwestern community in the months ahead.

In this climate of tight budgets at both the NIH and NSF, BMBCB is confident that Kelly's involvement with proposal preparation will provide valuable support to our faculty and staff competing for funding.

FALL RETREAT

The annual IBiS Scientific Fall Retreat is just around the corner! This year the retreat will be held September 7 and 8, 2006, at the Interlaken Resort & Spa, located just four miles west of beautiful downtown Lake Geneva, WI. The annual IBiS Retreat is an opportunity for new students to be welcomed into the program and to familiarize themselves with the science and the people in the various labs. It's also a chance for students, postdocs, and faculty alike to relax and regroup before heading into the new academic year.

This year promises to be a stimulating and fun-filled event. The poster presentations by students and postdocs are always very interesting and showcase their latest work. For her/his hard work and dedication, some lucky student will be honored with the Neil Welker TA Award.

In addition to some great presentations, the retreat is also about having fun. The Student Committee has been working hard planning many games, activities and, of course, the annual Trivia Contest. Lastly, the Retreat would not be the same without the traditional bonfire to end the first day!

The Interlaken Resort is located on a bluff overlooking Lake Como and makes for a very picturesque setting for the retreat. The resort features many amenities, including tennis courts, beach volleyball, an indoor and outdoor pool, a spa, restaurant, bar, and more.

Registrations and Posters are due Monday August 14, 2006. Late posters will be accepted until August 31, but may not make it in the Abstract book. Walk-in registrations are available at the door. If you have any questions, please contact Sacha Patera (apatera@northwestern.edu, 1-0451) or Cathy Prullage (ibis@northwestern.edu, 1-4301). They look forward to a great turnout and encourage everyone to partake in the fun!

STUDENT LABS

The first-year grad students from '05 -'06 have finished their rotations and chosen their labs. Check out the list below to see where everyone will be doing their research in BMBCB!

Student	Lab Choice
·Sorabh Agarwal:	<i>Rosenzweig</i>
·Sara Ahmed:	<i>Brickner</i>
·Darja Bamming:	<i>Horvath</i>
·Merideth Burkhart:	<i>Uhlenbeck</i>
·Ivelisse Cajigas:	<i>Brickner</i>
·Brian Chung:	<i>Allada</i>
·Daniel Czyz:	<i>Morimoto</i>
·Allison Harney:	<i>Meade</i>
·Ryan Hurtado:	<i>Holmgren</i>
·Erin Kennedy:	<i>Holmgren</i>
·Alison M. Kim:	<i>Woodruff</i>
·Sara Layman:	<i>Sontheimer</i>
·Pei-Chih Lee:	<i>LaBonne</i>
·Aparna Ramachandran:	<i>Horvath</i>
·Jared Schrader:	<i>Uhlenbeck</i>
·Paul D. Sillitti:	<i>Meade</i>
·Candace Tingen:	<i>Woodruff</i>
·Ann Marie Trull:	<i>Morimoto</i>
·Pei-Hsuan Wu:	<i>Carthew</i>

AWARD FOR IBiS STUDENT



Congratulations to IBiS student Jack Lin! Soon to be a third-year in the program, Jack recently received a Canadian Institutes of Health Doctoral Research Award from the Institute of Gender and Health. Always a prestigious and competitive award, it is even more so for those students studying outside of Canada. The project on which he is working, 'Structure-function studies of inhibin and its receptor complexes,' is a collaborative effort between the labs of Teresa Woodruff and Ted Jardetzky.

The Cell is published quarterly by the Department of Biochemistry, Molecular Biology and Cell Biology, at Northwestern University.

If you think you would enjoy receiving *The Cell* or would like to be removed from the mailing list, please refer to the following:

The Cell

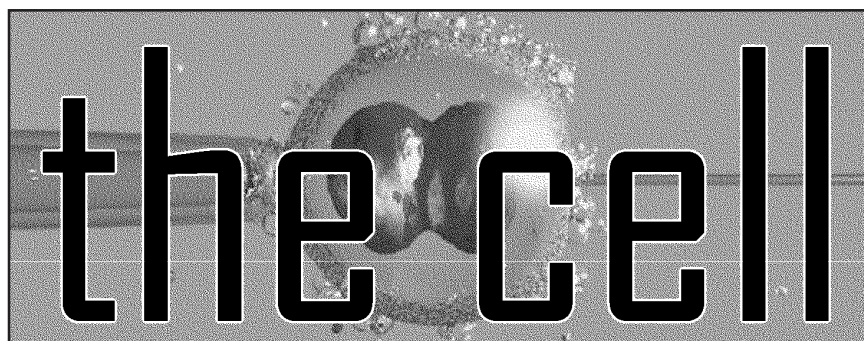
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