



This newsletter is sponsored by the Office of Postdoctoral Education (OPE), Emory University School of Medicine & Emory Postdoc Science Writing Committee
(Editors: Anca Doloc-Mihu & Hima Bindu Gunturi)

Office of Postdoctoral Education
Website:

<http://med.emory.edu/postdoc/index.cfm>

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Welcome to the Postdoctoral Newsletter for the Emory Scientific Community. The Postdoctoral Newsletter will provide information, resources, articles, views and opinions for and by Postdoctoral Fellows at Emory University.

**UPCOMING POSTDOC FELLOW EVENTS AND WORKSHOPS
2009-2010**

Orientation Schedule for New Emory SOM Postdocs

- Orientation for New Postdocs since August 2009
Monday, November 2, 2009, 12-3:00 PM, Rm 313 SOM

Brown Bag Lunch Series

- Visas and Related Topics for Postdocs
Wednesday, October 14, 2009, 12-1:30 PM, Rm A153 SOM

Grant Writing Workshops

- Navigating the NIH & understanding the grant review process.
Wednesday, October 21, 2009, 3-5:00 PM, Rm 120 SOM

Writing/Publication Workshops

- Journal Writing, Session I
Thursday, November 19, 2009, 1-3:00 PM, Rm 120 SOM
- Journal Writing, Session II
Thursday, December 3, 2009, 1-3:00 PM, Rm 120 SOM
- Journal Writing, Session III - Figures and Tables
Thursday, December 7, 2009, 3-5:00 PM, Rm 312 SOM

Social Events

- Postdoctoral Holiday Party
Thursday, December 17, 2009, 3-6:00 PM, Rm 130 & Lobby SOM

Members of the Post Doctoral Association @ Emory University (2009-2010)

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Heather Ross ©
Drew Kohlhorst ©
Alaine Keebaugh
Yan Liang
Cengiz Gunay
Jean Phillippe Gourdine
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Workshop/Seminar

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SECOND ANNUAL POSTDOCTORAL RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM AND "ONE IN A HUNDRED CLUB" MENTORS!!!

The 2nd Annual Symposium held on June 4, 2009, was a huge success. Emory postdocs from 35 different departments presented 106 posters throughout the day. In addition, nineteen postdocs, selected based on the merit of their submitted abstracts, gave a 15 minute oral presentation of their research. The posters were grouped into six categories, and for each category, the poster with the highest score, as judged by a group of twenty two judges (Emory professors), was awarded.

The poster winners were:

- **Yanhua Wang** - Biochemistry/Molecular Biology
- **Srinivasa Datla** - Cell Biology
- **Taro Hitosugi** - Cancer Biology
- **Jeffrey Handy** - Diseases and Systems & Public Health
- **Vijayakumar Velu** - Infectious Diseases
- **Daniel Moreno De Luca** - Neurosciences

In the past year, Postdoctoral Fellows who had distinguished themselves in the research were recognized, and each received an Honor Award. Twenty one postdocs received awards from various scientific meetings and conferences, nineteen received grants and fellowships, ten won travel awards to research meetings, and one postdoc had a press release.

Five Emory mentors, nominated by their postdocs for their excellent mentoring skills, joined the "**One-in-a-Hundred**" Club and received the Outstanding Mentor Award. The awarded mentors were:

- **Dr. Vincent Yang, MD/PhD,**
Director, Division of Digestive Diseases
Postdocs: **Agnieszka Bialkowska, Amr Ghaleb and Engda Hagos**
- **Dr. Hui Mao, PhD,**
Associate Professor, Department of Radiology
Postdocs: **Min Kuang, Liya Wang, Nan Peng, Hari Krishna Sajja**
- **Dr. Sandra Dunbar, RN/DSN/FAAN,**
Charles Howard Candler Professor of Cardiovascular Nursing, Department of Nursing
Postdoc: **Carolyn Reilly**
- **Dr. Max Cooper, MD,**
Professor, Department of Pathology
Postdoc: **Peng Guo**
- **Dr. Greg Berns, MD/PhD,**
Distinguished Chair of Neuroeconomics and Director of the Center for Neuropolicy, Department of Psychiatry

Postdocs: **Jan Engelmann, Brittany Anderson, Emily Bell & Sara Moore**

RESPONSIBLE CONDUCT OF RESEARCH ETHICS COURSE (RCR) FOR POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWS

In Fall 2009, a new Responsible Conduct of Research Course created especially for Postdoctoral Fellows is being initiated by the School of Medicine. The course is designed with the advice of expert faculty, national guidelines for ethics training of scientists, the Emory Ethics Center and recommendations of a Postdoc Focus Group. The course is composed of a web-based portion mounted on Emory University's "Blackboard", an electronic course site and a classroom portion for discussions between faculty and Postdocs of relevant Postdoc Case Studies. The web-based portion contains informative readings, policies and guidelines on the national and university level along with thought provoking case studies. The overall course goals are aimed at informing Postdocs about ethical principles and helping them incorporate these principles into daily practice and decision making now and in the future.

The eight topics included in the course are Mentor and Postdoc Responsibilities, Responsible Authorship and Peer Review, Data Acquisition and Management, Research Misconduct, Collaborative and Team Science, Conflict of Interest, Human Subject Research, and Ethical Issues in Animal Research. This course is relevant for all Postdocs and especially those who have to satisfy an ethical training requirement for federal funding grant applications. If you are interested in registering for the Spring RCR course please contact Dr. Mary DeLong at mary.delong@emory.edu.

- Dr. Mary DeLong
Director, OPE

Congratulations to our six outstanding poster award winners and their mentors, Honor Award postdocs, and to our "One-in-a-Hundred" mentors. Thank you to all postdocs who presented their excellent work at the symposium. We look forward to seeing your excellent research at the next year's symposium!

Check it out at <http://www.med.emory.edu/postdoc/symp/flyer.html>

-Anca Doloc-Mihu
Postdoc, Biology Dept.

COMMUNICATION SUCCESS IN ACADEMIA: HOW TO TALK WITH YOUR ADVISOR

In academia, discussion with your advisor is an important part of your training, and cannot be avoided if you want to achieve academic success. First, as a graduate student, and then, as a postdoc, we all have gone through many experiences regarding how to talk with advisors.

Starting on the day when we decide to join a lab, and become a trainee under an advisor, we should continually realize that our advisors are well qualified, have gone through a lot of professional training, and they wish the best for our success. They work to train us to achieve our goals, even when we feel their actions are contrary, sometimes. Sometimes, if you have any doubt about your advisor – and you will have doubts— it is best to hold your tongue, and think twice. Your advisor is not your enemy; he wants you to succeed.

We want to impress our boss with the hard work we have done. Yet, no matter how much you do, sometimes you will feel that your advisor never thinks you have done enough, and there is always something yet to be accomplished. With an advisor, the work is never done. It is also so very common to feel that your advisor always tends to disagree with you. It is easy to feel this is the end of the world. However, our advisors are never those who want us to fail. Their critical comments and feedbacks mean to help us. In science, we are always looking for the best experiment to address the question we have and looking for the best way to express our results. But we are never perfect and must simply accept the process in the path of success. Should we be humble for our own good?

The basic goal of any discussion with our advisor is to share information and obtain feedback. Communication is an art; it takes two to tango. It requires the effort from both sides to build any good relationship. What we can do, is to help create a better situation.

THE NEW POSTDOC SALARY MINIMUM AND '09 SQUEEZE

Many Postdocs this fall were surprised when the usual salary increases awarded in the fall did not occur as expected. This is not a reflection on the splendid research support and production of our Postdocs. It definitely is a sign of tightening budgets due to a poor economy in the world, nation, and University. Emory University in being fiscally responsible and wanting to save funds to protect as many jobs and Postdoc positions as possible has kept salaries flat or with minimal increases for faculty, staff, and trainees in the new academic year. So, if you did not receive a raise, you are not alone.

The good news of September 1, 2009 was that any Postdoc whose salary was below \$37,000 was now raised to the new Postdoc minimum of \$37,000. Beginning September 1, 2010, a new minimum salary will be established each year for SOM Postdocs based on the minimum level of salary for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) NRSA Postdoctoral Award. The NRSA minimum level in the 2009 academic year is \$37,368. In addition, the minimum salary level for a Postdoc will increase at 3% per year for every year of Postdoc training.

- Dr. Mary DeLong
Director, OPE

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Sources for funding opportunities can be found at the website of

The Office of Postdoctoral Education:

http://med.emory.edu/postdoc/CurPos_tdoc/funding_opportunities.cfm

We are human beings. We can have bad moods, choose bad words, or show 'attitude' when we have discussions with our advisors. Thus, we need to practice discipline, strategy and preparation to accomplish beneficial conversations with our advisors. Here are a five simple suggestions you can try before you talk with your advisor:

1. Are you in a good mood? To have a good conversation, you need patience and a clear view unclouded by emotion. If you have something bad in your mind, try to find another time to talk with your advisor.
2. Timing is everything. It is always necessary to find the right time to talk with your advisor. It is not productive to try and guess the boss's mood, but keep meetings thorough, yet brief. Always plan the meeting, and give the boss enough time to contemplate and digest.
3. Always give your adviser an outline of the meeting issues before the meeting. It gives him or her something to follow during the meeting and something to refer to in the future.
4. If you find yourself in a meeting regarding a complaint, you may want to wait a few days, and think carefully whether this conversation is necessary or not. There will always be issues in the lab. It can be helpful to speak up, but try to make positive suggestions or solutions to improve the situation, rather than complaints.
5. Try to use nice words in any conversation with your advisor. Even when in an argument or debating, we should remember this is about learning. Personal attacks and nasty words do nothing but make the situation worse. Most times, you will regret this behavior afterwards.

Well, this is my very young experience on how to talk to an advisor. I sincerely wish that we all get the chance to build a good relationship and rapport with our advisors, and have a successful academic career.

- Yan Liang

Postdoc, Pharmacology Dept.

TRANSITION FROM POSTDOC TO TEACHING

When I arrived at Emory as a first-year graduate student in the summer of 2000, I had a long-range plan in place. I was going to graduate, probably move into a traditional post-doctoral fellowship, and then obtain a position at a small liberal arts college, similar to the one I had graduated from, and have a small yet productive lab while balancing a teaching career at the same time.

Even the best laid plans can change. Initially, I wasn't willing to accept that I might not reach that ultimate goal that I had not only set for myself, but that everyone around me was expecting me to achieve as well. This is what I was supposed to do, what earning a Ph.D. was all about - staying in research. Otherwise, why else would I be putting myself through 6 of the most difficult years of my life?

IMPORTANT WEB-LINKS

<http://www.med.emory.edu/postdoc/>

This site provides information and resources to postdocs in the School of Medicine.

http://www.med.emory.edu/postdoc/ProPostdoc/open_positions.cfm

This site provides information about the Open post-doctoral Positions in the Emory University.

<http://www.emory.edu/ISSP/>

This site provides useful information for International Scholars including the links for family support, housing, health, communication, transport, visas, and travel in Atlanta etc.

<http://www.nationalpostdoc.org/>

The National Postdoctoral Association (NPA) is a member-driven organization that provides a unique, national voice for postdoctoral scholars.

<http://www.hr.emory.edu/careers/index.html>

Careers website for Emory University

ENTERTAINMENT

Sandy and Tom are talking among themselves:

Sandy: It really annoys me -- I have a sty in my eye.

Tom: Really, how did you get it?

Sandy: Apparently it's really contagious.

Tom: Hmm. How would you catch a sty from somebody?

Sandy: By having "eye contact"!
:)

-**Cengiz Gunay**, Postdoc Biology Dept.;
Joke was interpreted by Grad student
Santiago Archila

My view -and my career goals- began to change in 2002. I'd always known that teaching was going to be a large component of my life and future career. I knew that I needed to gain more experience and credentials along the way, even if I was going to end up at a more research-intensive university for a faculty position. After all, teaching was still part of the tenure package, and I was destined for the tenure-track.

Everyone has that moment where they realize exactly what it is they are supposed to be doing with their life. Sometimes, it's making that amazing new research discovery; sometimes, it's getting frustrated and fed up with research at the bench; sometimes, it's seeing your students have an "Ah ha!" moment. My moment didn't come from any of those. Instead, it was a personal, life changing event -a serious illness- that made me sit down and ask myself a series of questions:

1. Am I happy where I am at the moment?
2. Can I see myself doing research for a good portion of my career on both a daily and yearly scale?
3. Do I want flexibility in my schedule and in my personal life?
4. What do I think about when I get up in the morning, and when I go to sleep at night, in relation to my career?

I took a long, hard look at myself, and answered the questions. What I discovered was that I no longer wanted to remain in bench research, at least not on a permanent basis. An occasional foray for a few months here and there was actually going to be enough for me. I wanted to be a teacher. I wanted my research to be in education. I wanted to develop new curricula; I wanted to reach thousands of students in a short amount of time. I wanted to excel at the only thing that popped into my head when I woke up and went to sleep. Also when I reflected on my thoughts that drifted towards what I wanted to do with myself and my life - and the only thing that occupied my mind was teaching. Listening to myself was the hardest thing to do. Breaking some of the news to current and past mentors wasn't easy either. They told me I had the talent and the ability to remain in research, even if it was at a small school where I didn't have to write and pray for an R01. I couldn't do it, I told them, for a host of reasons. Just as they all knew the research life was right for them, I finally knew that it wasn't right for me.

I chose a teaching-only path, off of the tenure-track. I was lucky in that I was able to remain here at Emory, and move into the department where I had taught for the better portion of six years. I knew many of the people that were now my colleagues, but the transition from graduate students, to postdoctoral fellow, to faculty - all at the same university- was not without its own difficult and awkward moments.

Can I offer advice? I'm not so sure. What I can offer is experience

Top Ten Excuses why my paper was not published in Nature Journal.

10. In my first paragraph I misspelled "sience."
9. I missed my deadline when I mistakenly uploaded the text to Twitter.
8. Still too depressed over the Jon and Kate (plus 8) breakup.
7. My lab mates conspired to ruin me by getting me drunk the night before submission.
6. Couldn't find a "Cliff's Notes" on my topic.
5. I didn't know there's a difference between science and science fiction.
4. Was scheduled for publication but Kanye West urged them to publish paper by Beyonce instead.
3. My collaborator went behind my back and published the paper in Science.
2. Who knew Albert Einstein had already published on the theory of relativity.
1. A dog ate my thumb drive.

- Yan Liang
Postdoc, Pharmacology Dept.

about what I did, but that is simply what worked for me. Personally, I thought that my soul searching was done in 1998 when, as a sophomore in college, I decided to no longer be a physician and instead to pursue my Ph.D. and a research career. Obviously, I was very wrong. Figuring out what I wanted to do with myself and my life have been an ongoing, constant, and evolving process. I'm in my second year on the faculty in the Biology department and I continue to evaluate where I am and where I want to go. I came from a time where it was expected that every little step was planned out, and I see many of my students doing that now. I tell them even at my age, after completing school and landing a job I love more than anything, a job that excites me, and fuels me on an intellectual and personal level, a job where I have the most amazing sense of accomplishment, I still continue to ask myself questions (questions 1 and 4 from the above list). I hope I never stop asking myself those questions, and I hope you don't either. Once I stop, I'll know that I no longer care about what I'm doing with my life, which would be detrimental to anyone with whom I worked. Passion, drive, and excitement are key components for anything in life, but most especially with a career like the ones many of us choose - research, teaching, industry, policy - in the ever changing fields that encompass the sciences.

I believe one of the things that we fail to do the most as graduate students and postdocs is that we simply don't listen to ourselves. We ask those around us for their opinions, and instead of taking them as just that - a point of view - we take them to be a sign of where we must go and what we must do with our careers. Too often, I hear graduate students or postdocs say "Well, I'm doing this because I guess it's just what I'm supposed to do next." The only thing you're supposed to do next is what you want to do, and if you don't quite know what that is, that's still okay. Take some steps to figure out what it might be - try teaching some classes, try learning about science policy, try an internship at a pharmaceutical company - and see what excites you when you wake up every morning.

- Jennifer Holzman
Postdoc, Biology Dept.

We would like to thank all our Postdocs for their contribution to the newsletter. We are highly encouraging and requesting Postdocs to come forward and send in their articles, views, opinions, research work, jokes, light hearted entertainment for the coming issues of the newsletter. We welcome the new Postdocs who joined the Science Writers : Jacqueline Fairley, Yan Liang, Min Heu You, Pradoldej Sompol (Bob), Xiaoyong Zhang (Shawn), Usha Bughani, Dan Yan, Feng Wei, Hao Chen, and Deepa Sikriwal and members of the various committees.

We warmly wish all the Postdocs, their families and friends Happy Columbus Day, Fall Break & a warm Thanksgiving Day from Office of Postdoctoral Education & Newsletter desk.
Cheers!!!!!!!