The Dean’s Corner

As I reflect back on this year, the fiscal impact on the college has been significant, however, we have still been able to have a very positive year. We had 30 PhD students and 8 MSTP students matriculating this Fall. We are very pleased with these incoming classes and look forward to them becoming very successful as they pursue their career goals.

We had several persons of distinction in our College this year. Once again Dr. Craig Beeson was voted the outstanding teacher of the year and we had 11 faculty nominees

See The Dean’s Corner continued page 3

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About the Newsletter
The goal of our newsletter is to bridge the current and former College of Graduate Studies communities, highlighting the achievements of both. The newsletter is edited by Cynthia Wright, PhD, Associate Dean for Admissions and Career Development. Send news and information to: wrightcf@musc.edu.
Executive Dean, Professor of Neurosciences; Dr. He Huang, Associate Dean for International Relations and Graduate Education, Professor and Director Bone Marrow Transplant Center; Dr. Huahao Shen, Associate Dean for Medical Education; Dr. Zhengping Xu, Associate Dean for Research; Dr. Zhong Chen, Executive Dean, College of Pharmaceutical Sciences; Dr. Hua Yu, Director, Office of International Relations; Dr. Lucy Luo, Associate Dean, College of Pharmaceutical Sciences; and Dr. Moses Li, President, Moses Li Foundation, Chairperson and CEO, CUA Group, Inc. Dr. Weimin Fan, Professor of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine, MUSC, played a key role in helping to organize the meeting.

The discussions centered on potential future collaborations in several areas of mutual interest. They included exchange and training of students and postdoctoral fellows, a unique MD/PhD program, collaborative basic science research projects, and potential clinical and translational research projects. A formal memorandum of understanding supporting the educational programs was signed by Dean Duan, President Greenberg and Dr. Moses Li. An additional agreement was signed by Executive Dean Luo, President Greenberg and Dean Halushka for a unique combined MD/PhD program. These are significant steps forward in building a very strong working relationship with Zhejiang University School of Medicine faculty and students.

A presentation was made by Dr. Halushka, informing the students of Zhejiang University School of Medicine of the potential training opportunities available to them as a result of the memorandum of understanding that was officially signed. Approximately 40 medical and graduate students attended the presentation.

Dr. Brady made a formal presentation about the South Carolina Clinical and Translational Research Institute as part of a symposium organized on Clinical and Translational Research. The presentation was very well received and may result in future collaborative research projects in the areas of clinical and translational research.

Dr. DiPiro met with the Associate Dean, College of Pharmaceutical Sciences, to discuss student programs of mutual interest. A formal memorandum of understanding coordinating educational activities was also signed.

The MUSC delegation also visited two hospitals in Hangzhou, the Run Run Shaw hospital and the Second Affiliated Hospital. Both hospitals are affiliated with the Zhejiang University School of Medicine. These are very modern facilities with state of the art care available for their patients.

The meeting was deemed very successful by all who attended and everyone was optimistic about future scientific and educational interactions.
for the award. Dr. Cindy Wright was promoted to Associate Dean for Admissions and Career Development and selected for the very prestigious program, Executive Leadership in Academic Medicine (ELAM). Juan Varela, MD,PhD was chosen the Distinguished Graduate of the Year. Ms. Linnea Freeman, neuroscience graduate student, received the very prestigious MUSC Student Leadership Award. Mr. Ryan Rhome, MD/PhD student, received the very prestigious Earl B. Higgins, Student Leadership Award in Diversity. The Graduate Student Association once again was awarded the MUSC gives back award.

Our graduate students continued their very successful community outreach program titled “Graduate Students Reaching Out With Science” (GROWS). They have visited several middle schools and been very enthusiastically received.

We also graduated 25 PhD, 4 MD/PhD, 1 DMD/PhD, 13 MS and 10 MSCR students.

The core curriculum completed its ninth successful year.

The following are just some of the significant accomplishments of the past year. I invite you to view our annual report and in particular the executive summary to learn more about your college (accessible from our website at www.musc.edu/grad).

Two new Graduate Assistance in Areas of National Need training grants were awarded from the Department of Education, Dr. Elizabeth Slate’s Biostatistics Training Grant was successfully renewed as was Dr. Leonard Egedi’s short-term training grant.

Fifteen extramural postdoctoral training grants (T32) support 47 postdoctoral positions.

The national success rate for students applying for a Ruth L. Kirschstein NIH Research Service Award (F30,F31) is about 30%, while ours is approximately 80%, an extraordinary accomplishment. We currently have 19 students who were awarded an F30 or F31 and one who was awarded a DOD fellowship and one an American Heart Association Fellowship. Almost one-half of our pre-doctoral students are funded from competitive extramural training grants. We also have 3 postdoctoral fellows supported by individual F32 training grants.

Collectively, be you an alumnus, pre-doctoral student, postdoctoral researcher, or faculty member, you have much to be proud of. [Image]

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**Distinguished Graduate of the Year**

The 2010 recipient of the College of Graduate Studies Distinguished Graduate Student Award was Juan Varela, an MD/PhD graduate. As part of the award, Varela returned to MUSC on August 24 to give the Elizabeth Chesterman Memorial Lecture to incoming graduate students. Varela’s research focused on the role of complement in the ability of the immune system to battle cancer. He is currently at Johns Hopkins University doing an internship and residency in hematology and oncology. [Image]

Dr. Juan Varela receives his honorarium as the Distinguished Graduate of the Year.
Commencement 2010

The College of Graduate Studies hooding ceremony was held on May 20 in St. Luke’s Chapel at 4:30 PM. Commencement was held on May 21 and we congratulate the following graduates:

Master of Science in Biomedical Sciences
Sarah E. Casey, Jody Dyan Ciolino, Leslie Layer Clark, Rachael LeeAnn Deardorff, Bently Patrick Doonan, Tanisha Hutchinson, Brian Alan Muller, Duncan Lee Norton, Joy Ego Obidike, Emmanuel Omar Reyes-Cortes, Megan Suzanne Schuler, Mary Ann Timmerman, Emily Marie Van Meter

Master of Science in Clinical Research:

Doctor of Science in Biomedical Sciences
Michelle Protokowicz, Joshua Matthew Rhett, Arelis Salas, Christopher James Swearingen, Christine Walters, Timothy Wayne Whitfield Jr., Bethany Jacobs Wolf, Chengwu Yang, Xin Zhou

Doctor of Philosophy:
Berry Stephen Anderson, Colleen Elizabeth Bryan, Marcus Rea Duvall, Blake Catherine Ellis, Jordan Jaskwhich Elm, Danielle Bernadette Gutierrez, Matthew Carl Hearing, Lydia Buxbaum King, Catherine Gaines Ling, Travis James McQuiston, Lucy Megginson, Erin Morris, Benjamin Adam Neely, Leslie Ann Parker, Christopher Samuel Potter, Jodi

Doctor of Philosophy/Doctor of Science in Clinical Research:
Shai White-Gilbertson

Doctor of Dental Medicine/Doctor of Philosophy:
Mildred Christine Salcedo Embree

Doctor of Medicine/Doctor of Philosophy:
Rany Talal Abdallah, Jamie Lee Fraser, Mona Taleb, Juan Carlos Varela

DMD/PhD graduate Mildred Embree and MD/PhD grads Rany Abdallah, Jamie Fraser, Mona Taleb and Juan Varela.
New Students 2010

This fall we welcomed 30 PhD, 8 MD/PhD, 12 MSCR/SPTCR, 4 MS, and 1 DMD/PhD student into the College of Graduate Studies. Orientation was held on August 23, 2010 in a new format where a College-specific orientation took place in the morning and was followed by a general, university-wide orientation that featured speakers, videos, and door prizes. The information sessions were followed by a luncheon held in the College of Health Professions atrium that included a Deans’ Ice Cream Shop in which college deans and students provided ice cream to the incoming classes. On the Friday before orientation the Graduate Student Association sponsored a happy hour welcoming their new colleagues in the Hollings Cancer Center.

Current PhD student Telma Martins da Palma and MD/PhD students Sahar Saddoughi and Keely Morris help to welcome the new students.

Incoming PhD students (from left) Robyn Grayson, Krystal Dole, Jordon Gruber and Brenna Doheny enjoy the social with GSA vice president Zack Cope looking on.

Cheers… to neuroscience! (from left) PhD students Aram Parsegian, Sam Centanni, Zack Cope and Ben Hughes.

Graduate Students GROWing New Scientists

Contributed by Linnea Freeman

The Graduate Student Association GROWS (Graduate Students Reaching Out With Science) program is going strong since it was first established in the spring of 2009 (led by the efforts of 2008-2009 GSA president Rosanna Robertson and the support of Dean Halushka). The GROWS program was developed in order to teach and inspire 7th and 8th grade students in Charleston county. It is an opportunity for graduate students to teach specific lesson plans such as heart health, brain health, or bacteria, viruses and immunology as well as share their passion for science. It is also an opportunity for 7th and 8th grade students to learn new facts from a biomedical perspective and perhaps be inspired to pursue careers in science. In the spring of 2009 GSA members taught at four different schools, totaling 12 different classes. They also presented heart health and brain health modules at the Martin Luther King Service Project at the new Sanders Clyde Elementary School.
Student Carries on Tradition with Point Loma

When PhD student Nicole Trager started doing her dissertation research she didn’t know she was about to carry on a longstanding tradition of students who attended Point Loma Nazarene University in San Diego, California. In an odd coincidence, her project is a continuation of work started by another Point Loma grad, Jonathan Butler, an MD/PhD student who finished his dissertation work in 2009. In fact, over the past 18 years 8 Point Loma alumni have attended graduate school at MUSC, including Trager’s husband, current PhD student Richard Trager. Trager returned to Point Loma on October 4 to give a seminar to the pre-health club and had a chance to meet current students and reconnect with faculty members of her alma mater. The trip was sponsored by an NIH-funded training grant, the Initiative for Maximizing Student Development (IMSD), led by PI, Dr. Cynthia Wright, and hosted by Dr. Sara Choung, Associate Professor of Chemistry at Point Loma. About 40 students were in attendance and Trager discussed her research and program opportunities available at MUSC.

Alumni News

Alema Galijatovic-Idrizbegovic (PhD ’01)  
Merck Research Laboratories

Sharon Bond (PhD ’09) Associate Professor,  
College of Nursing, MUSC

Mary Kelly Guyton (PhD ’09, MSCR ’10) Army Medical Core, Division of Infectious Diseases

Elissa Purnell (PhD ’01) Associate Professor,  
Savannah State University

Octavia Peck Palmer (PhD ’06) Assistant Professor, University of Pittsburgh

Jan Woraratanadharm (PhD ’05) Staff Scientist and Regulatory Manager, Global Vaccines, Inc.

Student Awards

We celebrate the great success of our students in continuing to obtain their own competitive extramural funding. Congratulations go out to:

• Obaid Aseem (AHA Predoctoral Fellowship)  
• Linda Heffernan-Stroud (NIH NRSA)

• Keely Morris (NIH NRSA)  
• Sahar Saddoughi (NIH NRSA)  
• Kyle Strickland (NIH NRSA)

We also celebrate the success of the following individuals in obtaining these additional awards and achievements:

• Brandon Bentzley: 2010 recipient of the College of Medicine McGraw Hill Lange Medical Student Award for being at the top of his class at the end of first year.  
• Chris Gault and Loretta Hoover: inducted into Alpha Omega Alpha Medical Honor Society

Farewell

Meagan Mollenhauer (PhD’09) died from complications from breast cancer December 10, 2009. Mollenhauer graduated from the marine biomedicine program and then pursued postdoctoral work in Dr. Gary Gilkeson’s laboratory. She is survived by husband, Jeff, and daughter, Ava.
The Multicultural Graduate Student Association

Contributed by Joy Buie

The Multicultural Graduate Student Association (MGSA) meets every third Wednesday of the month at 12:15pm and all students in the College of Graduate Studies are welcome to attend. This year we have a new set of initiatives that are collectively named “Project R.E.A.C.H.” The acronym R.E.A.C.H spells out our goals for the year which are to: 1) Recruit minorities to the College of Graduate Studies Master’s and Ph.D. programs, 2) Enrich the members of MGSA, MUSC, and the Charleston community socially, culturally, and professionally, 3) Advocate communication with other students and faculty within the college 4) Cultivate an interest in the biomedical sciences amongst minority students in Charleston area schools, and 5) Help underrepresented, underserved Charleston communities through outreach projects. We have successfully planned and implemented a variety of programs and projects that coincide with our objectives which are discussed below.

Undergraduate Forum In July, MGSA planned and hosted our Annual Summer Undergraduate Research Program (SURP) forum for over 70 undergraduate biomedical investigators from across the nation. This forum served as a platform to inform students about the admissions, interview, and educational requirements for each of the six colleges here at MUSC. In February, members of MGSA will participate in the Ernest E. Just Symposium, which serves to educate minority students about various educational options available to them at MUSC and CGS.

Career Development Workshops During our monthly general body meetings, MGSA has implemented a host of career development programs in order to enrich our member’s success in academics and their future careers. During our September meeting, we presented a panel discussion on challenges that multicultural faculty faced on their journey to success. Our panelists included: Drs. E. Brown, A. Selassi, X. Zhang, S. Hammad, and S. Stewart-Clark. In October, we had the opportunity to learn about the “Art of Effective Oral and Poster Presentations” from Dr. S. Mathur. In the coming months, we will host discussions on networking, conferences, professional organizations, preparing for post doctoral positions, and a host of other topics that will support our members in the development of their careers.

Outreach and Community Service MGSA is serving the Charleston community by volunteering with the Carolina Youth Development Center (CYDC). We serve dinner and host a game night at the CYDC’s North Charleston children’s shelter monthly. We will host a Food Drive to support the Lowcountry Food Bank in November. We will also participate in Worlds Aids Day in December by promoting awareness and distributing red ribbons to CGS students, faculty, and staff.

Mentoring Program We plan on initiating a mentoring program at Burke High school and area colleges in which we expose them to careers in the scientific field, help high school students with applying to college and finding careers that fit their interest and most importantly for matriculating college students trying to increase the number of minorities entering into the biomedical sciences research field.

For current information on MGSA and our upcoming events, please visit www.musc.edu/mgsa

Members of the MGSA: (from left) Joe Cheng, Angela Alexander, Sybil Prince-Nelson, Fahmin Bashar, Vondina Brown, Joy Buie, Vinodh Rajagopalan, Nortorious Coleman, Kayla Hill, Denise Kimbrough

Contributed by Joy Buie
News from the Postdoc Association
Contributed by Jessica Glasser

MUSC postdocs and friends celebrate National Postdoc Appreciation Week

National Postdoc Appreciation Week

On Sept. 23, 2010 at approximately 4:30 PM EDT the U.S. House of Representatives passed H.RES.1545, which officially recognizes National Postdoc Appreciation Week. The success of National Postdoc Appreciation Week was made possible by the grassroots efforts of NPA volunteers. Congratulations!

The week’s festivities culminated locally as MUSC’s Postdoc Association held two events: an ice cream social and happy hour outing on the town. Over 50 people attended the ice cream social, held in front of the Dental entrance to the Basic Science Building. There were friendly and silly competitions and the prizes were branded with one of the NPA’s logos designed by our own Dr. Jay Morris. A slideshow of photos from the event can be found at http://tinyurl.com/MUSCPDA. Thank you, Postdocs, for all your hard work and ingenuity. We salute you!

Postdoc Elected to National Association

Jay Morris, Ph.D. is a postdoctoral scholar in Dr. Michael Wargovich’s lab in the Department of Cell and Molecular Pharmacology, who recently completed training in Cancer Therapeutics at the Hollings Cancer Center as an NRSA training fellow. He currently is a volunteer on the National Postdoctoral Association (NPA) Outreach Committee and manages the NPA online store. This includes up-keep of online merchandise selection, marketing and part of team developing ideas for new items and logos. Under his leadership, sales from the store have quadrupled compared to last year. He also recently was selected by the American Association of Medical Colleges G.R.E.A.T Group to serve as one of two NPA liaisons to that group. Jay has served as the vice president and president of MUSC’s Postdoctoral Association and currently serves as treasurer of the group. He helped to write the PDA’s constitution and to develop a peer-driven workshop series to enhance postdoctoral training. On October 11, 2010 the NPA announced electing him as one of five new Board of Directors for the two-year term of service beginning on January 1, 2011. Congratulations, Jay!

Congratulations to...

Dr. Lauren Wills for winning first prize for postdoctoral oral presentation at the Southeastern Society of Toxicology Meeting
Family News

Engagements
Anthony Leonard to Emily Brown
Danielle Clark to Charlie Lowe
Joe Cheng to Tina Zhang

Weddings
Chris Gault and Marianne Dubard in April
Anna-Maria Clark and Brian DeCosta in May
Ryan Whitaker and Marie Dorrell in June
Armina Wiggins and Ero Omole in July
Marisa Meyers and Christopher Needham in July
Jillian Lynch and Nathaniel Johnson in August
Loretta Hoover and Josiah Jophlin in October

Babies
Bryce and Danielle Johnson: Phineas David born May 2
Brian and Jennifer Hoel: Kellan Robert born August 25

Office of Research Development

The Office of Research Development has implemented a new approach for disseminating research news and funding opportunities for faculty, postdoctoral fellows and graduate students by using a “bundled” message system. “ORD Alerts” is sent on a scheduled basis, generally once per week, unless critical, time-sensitive news or volume warrants additional messages. If you would like to subscribe to this service, send an e-mail message to ord_fundingalerts-request@musc.edu with only “subscribe” in the body of the message. Suggestions or comments regarding the content or delivery of ORD Alerts are always welcomed.

Upcoming Events

Student Research Day will be held this year on November 5. This year’s keynote speaker will be Dr. Eric Olson, Professor of Molecular Biology at UT Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas. Dr. Olson’s laboratory studies muscle cell development in a variety of tissue settings. Visit the website: http://www.musc.edu/grad/srd for more information about Student Research Day. On Saturday, November 6, the Alumni Association will again sponsor a career panel discussion featuring CGS alumni. This year’s panelists include: Stephen Bellum (PhD ’98, patent attorney), Cynthia Bristow (PhD ’79, ’86, Assistant Professor Weill Cornell Medical College), Eric Buck (PhD ’07, Pentagon Force Protection Agency), Martha Murtiashaw (PhD ’77, ’81, Department of Chemistry, Connecticut College) and Britt Steed (MS ’03, Account Manager eBioscience). The program will take place from 10:00 AM to 1:00 PM in the Solomon Conference Room of the Gazes Research Institute and lunch will be served.

Errata

Sharon Bond and Pamela Murphy both graduated in May 2009 with PhDs from the College of Nursing but were omitted from the list of graduates in the Fall 2009 issue of Eureka. Congratulations to both!