

# upstategrad update

transforming students from consumers of knowledge into producers of knowledge

january 2016

## 12 MONTHS

It was brought to my attention today that this is the 12th issue of the Upstate Grad Update, or the end of our first year publishing the newsletter. I will point out that I have received innumerable compliments over the last year concerning this newsletter but deserve little of the credit. Indeed, the bulk of the credit goes to Jennifer Brennan in our office. Without her creativity and diligence this newsletter would only be an idea. So a big shout out to her!!

Elsewhere at Upstate we are welcoming a new president. This brings with it incredible excitement and anxiety for everyone on campus. The excitement comes from having a new leader that brings with her new ideas, a change of status quo and an incredible enthusiasm for Upstate and our potential. The anxiety comes for all the same reasons. As I have pointed out in the newsletter before, change can be scary and intimidating. We often resist it, fight it and after it happens try to change things back. We may also question whether we are up to the task and whether we can meet her expectations. However, I believe she is right that we do have incredible potential, both individually and as a group. Our halls are filled with brilliant faculty, excited students, talented staff and everyone has incredible ideas. So it is time to bring those ideas to life, to promote change, to create new knowledge, to transform students and realize our potential. I very much look forward to the next 12 months.

– Mark E. Schmitt, PhD  
Dean, College of Graduate Studies  
schmittm@upstate.edu

# publications & presentations

*In the past month, the following researchers in the College of Graduate Studies have published articles:*

Thakur NA, **DEBOYACE SD, MARGULIES BS.**

Antagonism of the met5-enkephalin-opioid growth factor receptor-signaling axis promotes MSC to differentiate into osteoblasts.

*J Orthop Res.* 2015 Dec 19.

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/26687326>

Wolfgeher D, **DUNN DM**, Woodford MR, **BOURBOULIA D, BRATSLAVSKY G, MOLLAPOUR M**, Kron SJ, Truman AW.

The dynamic interactome of human Aha1 upon Y223 phosphorylation.

*Data Brief.* 2015 Nov 6;5:752-5.

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/26693507>

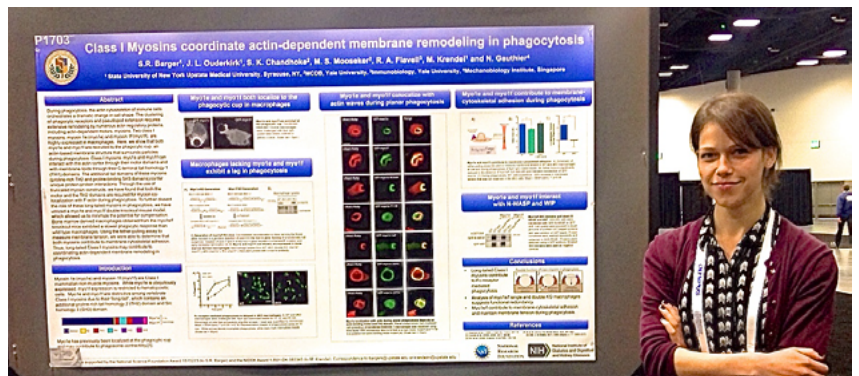
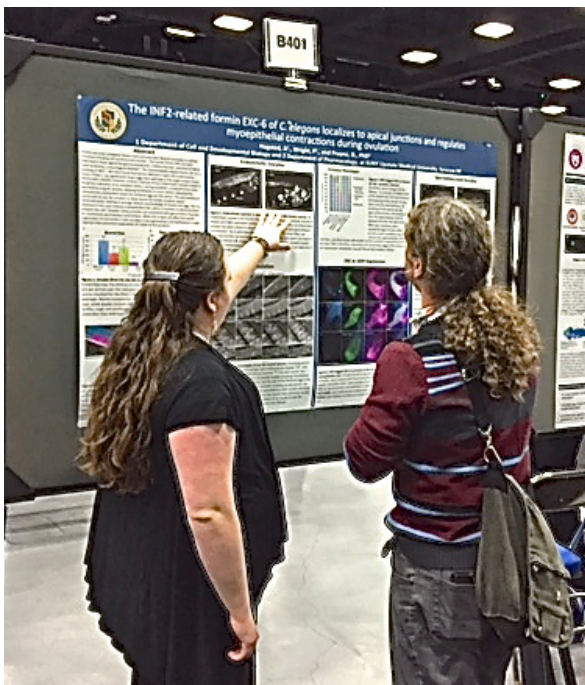
**PATRICK SWEENEY** and **Y. YANG.**

An excitatory ventral hippocampus to lateral septum circuit that suppresses feeding.

*Nat Commun.* 6:10188 (2015).

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/26666960>

*In the past month, the following researchers have attended, and presented, at conferences:*



**American Society for Cell Biology Annual Meeting**

San Diego, CA | December 12 - 16, 2015

**SARAH BARGER & ANNA HEGSTED**, PhD Students in Anatomy and Cell Biology, presented.

# from our students:

**GEOFFREY EILL**, a student in Neuroscience, successfully passed his qualifying exam last month. Geoff's advisor is Dr. Rick Matthews.

**Congratulations, Geoff!**

**MARIA POPESCU**, a student in Neuroscience, successfully passed her qualifying exam last month. Maria's advisor is Dr. Barry Knox.

**Congratulations, Maria!**

**KATHLEEN "KATIE" SMITH**, a student in Neuroscience, successfully passed her qualifying exam last month. Katie's dissertation advisor is Dr. Brian Howell.

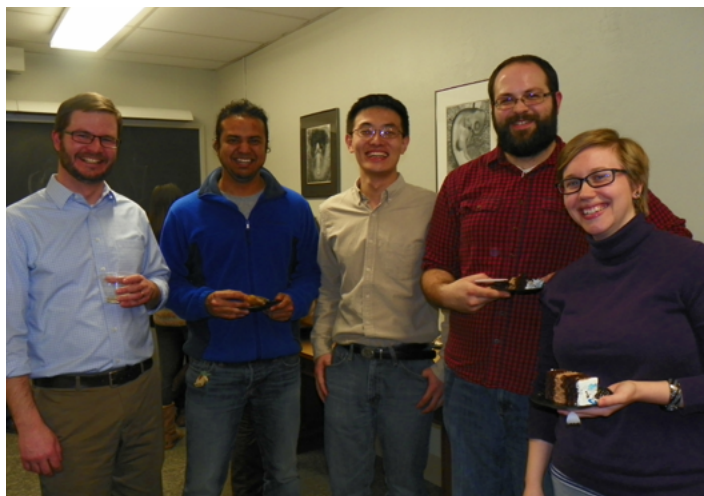
**Congratulations, Katie!**



**"ARTURO BARBACHANO-GUERRERO**, Microbiology & Immunology PhD student, and Christina Lupone, MPH, of Upstate Medical University, have been recognized by the International Center of Syracuse (ICS) for their involvement in research on infectious diseases at the 2015 Central New York International Citizen Awards Dinner, held Nov. 13 in the Institute for Human Performance.

Arturo received an ICS International Student Leadership Award. He is studying the origin and development of dengue, a mosquito-borne viral disease, and Kaposi's sarcoma-associated herpes virus. Arturo works in the Upstate laboratories of Timothy Endy, MD, MPH, and Christine King, PhD, both of whom lead research teams on dengue in the Far East and South America. Prior to Upstate, Arturo researched infectious diseases in a laboratory of the Mexico City Health Ministry and taught college students in the Mexican National Polytechnic Institute in Mexico City. He has published in the American Society for Microbiology Journal of Virology and other scientific publications."

- Read more in Upstate Online [here](#)



**YONGCHANG JI**, a student in Anatomy and Cell Biology, successfully defended his Dissertation last month. Yonchang's dissertation advisor is Dr. Jeffrey Amack. Pictured above is Yonchang, at center, with Dr. Amack at far left and the rest of his lab mates. **Congratulations, Yonchang!**



Rebecca Sager, an MD/PhD Student in Biochemistry & Molecular Biology, received the 2015 Joy Cappel Young Investigator Award. "The award is intended to foster research conducted by a promising post-doctoral fellow, graduate student or young investigator performing research in the areas of oncology, nuclear signaling, developmental biology, epigenetics, immunology, microbiology, neuroscience, signal transduction or stem cell technology. This year, a total of \$100,000 was awarded to 25 qualified candidates.

For more than 30 years, Rockland was guided by Joy Cappel, President and CEO. Mrs. Cappel's vision to help define mechanisms underlying cell function and disease through antibody targeted detection is the motivational force behind the award. The award is in the form of a \$4,000 credit for polyclonal antibody development provided by Rockland."

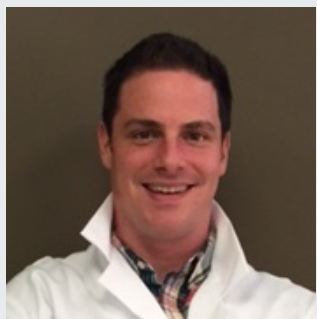
- Read more [here](#)

# from our alumni:



**GEORGIA TOMARAS ('98)** was recently promoted to Professor with Tenure in the Departments of Surgery, Immunology, and Molecular Genetics and Microbiology at Duke University Medical Center. She is also promoted to Director of Research for the Duke Human Vaccine Institute, and is the Director of the Duke Center for AIDS Research Immunology Core and Associate Director for the HIV Vaccine Trial Network Laboratory Center.

Georgia informs us that she has over 150 peer reviewed publications on the identification of humoral immune correlates for preventative vaccines, interrogation of the ontogeny and breadth of humoral immunity, and identification of the CD8+ T cell subsets and mechanisms responsible for potent virus inhibition. Notably, her laboratory defined HIV-1 antibody correlates of HIV-1 risk and breadth of HIV-1 immunity (New England Journal of Medicine 2012, Nature Mucosal Immunology 2013, PNAS 2013, Science Translational Medicine 2014, PLoS Pathogens 2015, Nature Mucosal Immunology 2015). Congratulations Georgia!



**AARON GLASS ('13)** has returned to Upstate after completing a postdoc at Masonic Medical Research Laboratory in Utica, NY with Charles Antzelevitch, PhD and Matthew Betzenhauser, PhD.

Aaron is now an Instructor in the Department of Microbiology and Immunology. His current research is focused on the immune response to vaccination. This academic year, Aaron has lectured to first year medical students in the Molecules, Cells and Microbes (MCM) course. Welcome back, Aaron!



**ANUDARIYA (BATBOLD) DEAN, PHD ('14)** was recently highlighted in Upstate Online for her presentation sponsored by the Center for Bioethics & Humanities. Anu, who immediately entered SUNY Upstate's College of Medicine, upon completing her doctoral degree in Anatomy & Cell Biology, is currently a second year medical student. Her presentation was based on her trip to Mongolia last summer.

- Read more in Upstate Online [here](#)

**KIMBERLY ZACCARIA ('11)** recently passed the American Board of Toxicology exam to gain the certification of Diplomate of the American Board of Toxicology, which recognizes experts in the field of toxicology. After completing her post-doctoral position at SRC, inc. in North Syracuse, NY in 2013, Kim remained at SRC working as a regulatory toxicologist. She conducts human health risk assessments for various government agencies, including the Environmental Protection Agency and the Department of Health and Human Services. Kim, her husband Mike, and their two children Tony (8) and Joey (6) have enjoyed remaining in Central New York.



**SAM MACKENZIE, MD, PHD ('15)** and his wife, Natalie, proudly announced that their son Henry now has a baby sister, Alice Harper Mackenzie. Sam has started his Pediatric Neurology residency at the University of Michigan – Ann Arbor.

**We love hearing from you ...  
Drop by our website &  
let us know how you're doing!**

**IS THERE SOMETHING WE MISSED??**

**Email Jennifer Brennan at [brennanj@upstate.edu](mailto:brennanj@upstate.edu) to get it included in the next issue!**

# college happenings

## INTERESTED IN MENTORING A SURF STUDENT?

We are looking for mentors for the 2016 session of our Summer Undergraduate Research Program. The program runs Monday, June 6th through Friday, August 12th. The College of Graduate Studies picks up half the cost of the students, and it is agreed that the basic science departments will pick up the other half. If you are a member of a clinical department, we will work with your chair to offset the cost of the student. Thus, these students come to you free of charge, plus you have the chance to help us attract the best students to Upstate and possibly even into your lab!

If you're going to be here over the summer and are interested in participating, please email [brownt@upstate.edu](mailto:brownt@upstate.edu) by Friday, January 29th with a one line description of your research and a link to your website.



Our graduate students are putting together a team to participate in the **AMERICAN HEART WALK** on **SATURDAY, APRIL 2ND AT 10:00 AM** at **ONONDAGA COMMUNITY COLLEGE**.

Sign up today to walk or you can donate by contacting one of our team captains:

**JACQUALYN SCHULMAN** - [schulmaj@upstate.edu](mailto:schulmaj@upstate.edu) or

**LIZ SNYDER** - [snydere@upstate.edu](mailto:snydere@upstate.edu).

Any donation gets your name written on a heart to be featured proudly in the halls of Upstate. A Donation of \$20 (by March 3rd) gets you a long sleeve, moisture-wicking tech shirt pictured here! Donations also being accepted in the Graduate Studies Office.

**JOIN THE TEAM, SUPPORT THE CAUSE!**

**HOLIDAY PARTY**



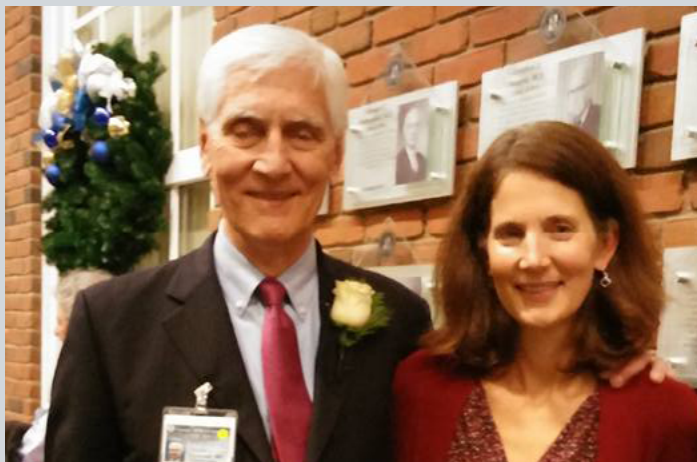
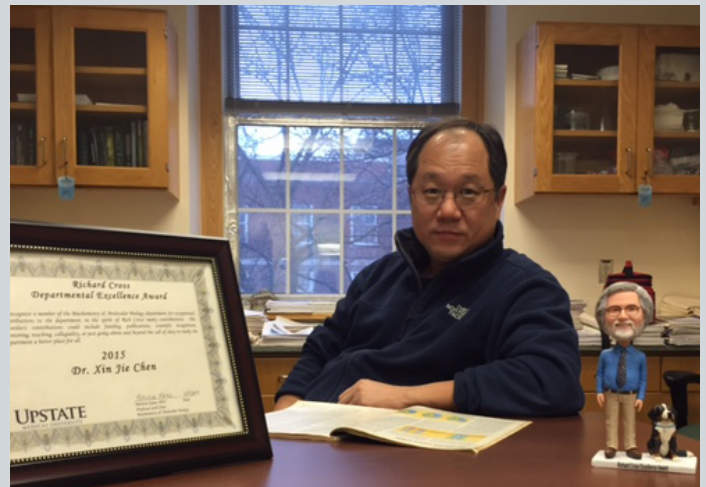
# around the university



The Department of Biochemistry & Molecular Biology honored their previous chair and SUNY Distinguished Professor, Richard Cross, PhD, with a portrait. Dr. Cross retired from SUNY Upstate in 2014. The portrait was unveiled at a ceremony on December 14th, 2015. The portrait artist is Mark Topp. The Department also created an award in honor of Dr. Cross, entitled the Richard Cross Departmental Excellence Award, to recognize a member of the Biochemistry & Molecular Biology department for exceptional contributions to the department, in the spirit of Rich Cross' many contributions. The awardee's contributions could include funding, publications, scientific recognition, mentoring, teaching, collegiality, or just going above and beyond the call of duty to make the department a better place for all. Dr. Xin Jie Chen, pictured at right, was honored as the first recipient of the award – a bobblehead of Dr. Richard Cross.



Pictured above is Dr. Cross surrounded by a group of our current graduate students, plus one alumnus for good measure!



A farewell reception was held for Interim President Eastwood on December 17 to thank him for his service. The State University of New York Board of Trustees appointed Danielle Laraque-Arena, MD, FAAP, as president of SUNY Upstate Medical University, effective January 14, 2016. Dr. Eastwood is pictured at the reception with his daughter.

# upcoming events & save the dates!

## CAREER DEVELOPMENT

### Intellectual Property

Thursday, February 4, 2016

12:00 PM | WH 3113

*There's so much you can do with a PhD! Join us for an informal look into the world of Intellectual Property with alumnus Blaine Bettinger. Blaine graduated from the PhD program in Biochemistry & Molecular Biology in 2006. His thesis sponsor was Dr. David Amberg. Blaine, who also earned his JD, is currently working as a Patent Attorney at Bond, Schoeneck & King.*

## CAREER DEVELOPMENT

### An Introduction to the CNYBAC & Optional Tour of the Facility

Monday, February 29, 2016

12:00 PM | NRB 4709

*This workshop is a must attend for anyone interested in industry or looking to gain some experience outside of the academic lab! Join us as Director of Operations, Kathi Durdon, MA, CCRP explains what the CNY Biotech Accelerator is and what opportunities they have to offer you. Plus, join us after the workshop for the chance to tour the facility to see the lab space first hand - you won't want to miss it!*

## CAREER DEVELOPMENT

### Research without a Bench: Pursuing a Career in Patent Law

Thursday, February 4th

12:00 PM | WH 3113

*Looking for career options outside of academia?*

*Want to make connections for your professional network?*

*Possibly interested in patent law?*

*If you answered yes to any of these, this workshop is for you! Join us as CGS Alumnus Blaine Bettinger talks about how he got into patent law and what it's like. Blaine graduated from the Biochemistry and Molecular Biology Program in 2006; his thesis advisor was Dr. David Amberg.*

## SAVE THE DATE!

### Distinguished Alumni Lecture

Wednesday, February 24, 2016

1:15 PM | WH 103

*The Graduate Student Association, assisted by the College of Graduate Studies, hosts the annual Distinguished Alumni Lecture Series. This year's guest is: Dr. Mary Fowkes, MD, PhD. Mary is now the Director of Neuropathology and Autopsy Service at Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai. Mary earned her PhD from the Anatomy & Cell Biology program in 1999. Her thesis sponsor was Dr. David Mitchell.*

## SAVE THE DATE!

### Beyond the Doctorate Research Day: Postdocs, Residents & Fellows

Wednesday, March 9, 2016

12:00 Noon | WH 103

*The College of Graduate Studies and the Office of Graduate Medical Education are hosting the annual Beyond the Doctorate Research Day, featuring the research of Upstate postdocs, residents and fellows. The day includes a keynote speaker, platform presentations and a poster session. This year's keynote speaker is Dr. Leszek Kotula, MD, PhD, Associate Professor of Urology and Biochemistry & Molecular Biology, SUNY Upstate Medical University.*

## SAVE THE DATE!

### Student Research Day

Friday, April 8, 2016

1:30 PM | WH 2231

*This day is devoted to showcasing all of the student researchers here at Upstate. The Research Day features four student talks, a keynote presentation and an early evening poster session in the atrium of the Institute for Human Performance. Our keynote speaker is Dr. Michael Caligiuri, MD, Professor of Internal Medicine, Hematology, Ohio State University and CEO James Cancer Hospital and Solove Research Institute.*

**Abstracts are now being accepted through February 29th!**

Please visit: <http://www.upstate.edu/grad/students/celebration.php>

**AFTERNOON TEA | Every Wednesday at 3:00 | WH 3120 or NRB 3708\* | \*First Wednesday of the month, tea is at the NRB.**

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**Email Jennifer Brennan at [brennanj@upstate.edu](mailto:brennanj@upstate.edu) to get it included in the next issue!**