

# upstategrad update

transforming students from consumers of knowledge into producers of knowledge

winter 2016

## HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

It is that time of year when we submit our annual report to the institution. It gives us an opportunity to see what we have accomplished over the last year, and what we still need to do. This year after finishing our report, I was truly dumbfounded by how much we have accomplished and how much we have done for our students and the college. By “we”, I mean the royal “we”. In other words, I sat back and watched as our fantastic staff in graduate studies, along with the students and faculty did everything. This includes a reorganization of the staff and the hiring of my new assistant, Cheryl. It includes recruiting and admitting one of our best classes in several years for both PhD and MD/PhD programs. It includes providing our students a rich and busy mentoring and career development program. It includes running innumerable events from the Distinguished Alumni Day to the Student Research Day and the Beyond the Doctorate Day. It also includes many, many small things that are seemingly intangible, but are just as important, if not more so, to the success of our students.

I would like to take this moment to thank all of the staff – Terri, Krystal, Jen and Cheryl – for all that they do, and to thank all the students and faculty who are working hard to make the College of Graduate Studies great.

Happy Holidays to all of you, and may you have a fantastic New Year.

– Mark E. Schmitt, PhD

Dean, College of Graduate Studies  
schmittm@upstate.edu

## Valproic Acid Alters Angiogenic and Trophic Gene Expression in Human Prostate Cancer Models.

Chelluri R, **CAZA T**, Woodford MR, Reeder JE, **BRATSLAVSKY G**, Byler T. *Anticancer Res.* 2016 Oct;36(10):5079-5086.

## INF2- and FHOD-related formins promote ovulation in the somatic gonad of *C. elegans*.

**HEGSTED A**, **WRIGHT FA**, Votra S, **PRUYNE D**. *Cytoskeleton (Hoboken).* 2016 Oct 22. doi: 10.1002/cm.21341. [Epub ahead of print]

## Abnormalities in brain white matter in adolescents with 22q11.2 deletion syndrome and psychotic symptoms.

Kikinis Z, Cho KI, Coman IL, **RADOEVA PD**, Bouix S, Tang Y, Eckbo R, Makris N, Kwon JS, Kubicki M, Antshel KM, Fremont W, Shenton ME, **KATES WR**. *Brain Imaging Behav.* 2016 Oct 11. [Epub ahead of print]

## Longitudinal study of cerebral surface morphology in youth with 22q11.2 deletion syndrome, and association with positive symptoms of psychosis.

**RADOEVA PD**, Bansal R, Antshel KM, Fremont W, Peterson BS, **KATES WR**. *J Child Psychol Psychiatry.* 2016 Oct 27. doi: 10.1111/jcpp.12657. [Epub ahead of print]

## Eyes shut homolog is required for maintaining the ciliary pocket and survival of photoreceptors in zebrafish.

Yu M, **LIU Y**, **LI J**, Natale BN, Cao S, Wang D, **AMACK JD**, **HU H**. *Biol Open.* 2016 Nov 15;5(11):1662-1673. doi: 10.1242/bio.021584.

## Assembly and Maintenance of Myofibrils in Striated Muscle.

**SANGER JW**, Wang J, Fan Y, **WHITE J**, **MI-MI L**, Dube DK, **SANGER JM**, **PRUYNE D**. *Handb Exp Pharmacol.* 2016 Nov 11;. [Epub ahead of print]

## LRBA is Essential for Allogeneic Responses in Bone Marrow Transplantation.

Park MY, **SUDAN R**, **SRIVASTAVA N**, **NEELAM S**, Youngs C, Wang JW, Engelman RW, **KERR WG**. *Sci Rep.* 2016 Nov 8;6:36568.

## Blood transcriptomic comparison of individuals with and without autism spectrum disorder: A combined-samples mega-analysis.

**TYLEE DS**, **HESS JL**, Quinn TP, Barve R, Huang H, Zhang-James Y, Chang J, Stamova BS, Sharp FR, Hertz-Picciotto I, **FARAONE SV**, Kong SW, **GLATT SJ**. *Am J Med Genet B Neuropsychiatr Genet.* 2016 Nov 11;. [Epub ahead of print]

## Mcl-1 small-molecule inhibitors encapsulated into nanoparticles exhibit increased killing efficacy towards HCMV-infected monocytes.

Burrer CM, **AUBURN H**, **WANG X**, **LUO J**, Abulwerdi FA, Nikolovska-Coleska Z, **CHAN GC**. *Antiviral Res.* 2016 Nov 30. pii: S0166-3542(16)30578-2. doi: 10.1016/j.antiviral.2016.11.027. [Epub ahead of print]

## Postnatal Gene Therapy Improves Spatial Learning Despite the Presence of Neuronal Ectopia in a Model of Neuronal Migration Disorder.

**HU H**, **LIU Y**, Bampoe K, He Y, Yu M. *Genes (Basel).* 2016 Nov 29;7(12). pii: E105.

## Hic-5 remodeling of the stromal matrix promotes breast tumor progression.

**GORECZNY GJ**, **OUDEKIRK-PECONE JL**, **OLSON EC**, **KRENDEL M**, **TURNER CE**. *Oncogene.* 2016 Nov 28. doi: 10.1038/onc.2016.422. [Epub ahead of print]

## Evolution and Expression of Paxillin Genes in Teleost Fish.

**JACOB AE**, **TURNER CE**, **AMACK JD**. *PLoS One.* 2016 Nov 2;11(11):e0165266. doi: 10.1371/journal.pone.0165266.

## Mitochondrial Dysfunction in the Liver and Antiphospholipid Antibody Production Precede Disease Onset and Respond to Rapamycin in Lupus-Prone Mice.

**OAKS Z**, **WINANS T**, **CAZA T**, Fernandez D, Liu Y, Landas SK, Banki K, **PERL A**. *Arthritis Rheumatol.* 2016 Nov;68(11):2728-2739. doi: 10.1002/art.39791.

# presentations



**PARISA AFSHARI**, a postdoc in Neuroscience & Physiology, presented at the Fourth Annual Molecular Psychiatry Meeting in Maui, Hawaii from October 6th through 9th. Her presentation title was: "Behavioral and Immune Alterations in Mice Haploinsufficient for Slc1a."



Six students from Microbiology & Immunology attended the New York Immunology Conference in Bolton Landing, NY October 24th through 27th: **OLESEA COJOHARI**, a PhD student, presented "Small molecule inhibitors of the PI3K/SHIP-1/Akt pathway sensitize human cytomegalovirus-infected monocytes to apoptosis."

**KEVIN KENDERES**, a PhD student, presented "IgM Memory B cells Reconstitute Multiple B cell Lineages and Provide Protection."

**SCOTT MINCHENBERG**, an MD/PhD student, presented "Cytokine-mediated Regulation of Oligodendrocyte Metabolism."

**AMBER PAPILLION**, a PhD student, presented "Regulation of IgM memory B cell pool size by the inhibitory receptor FcγRIIb."

**MEGAN PEPPENELLI**, a PhD student, presented "Human cytomegalovirus stimulates the synthesis of select Akt-dependent antiapoptotic proteins during viral entry to promote survival of infected monocytes."

**KARIN SCHNEIDER**, a PhD student, presented "Influence of Colony Stimulating Factors on Virus Infections of Monocyte Lineage Cells"



Eighteen of our MD/PhD students attended the American Physician Scientists Association, or APSA, Northeast Regional Meeting at the University of Buffalo on October 29th. The day included student oral presentations, a Keynote Address, poster session and two panel discussions. **SCOTT MINCHENBERG**, who is currently in his fourth year of his PhD in Microbiology & Immunology, was a panelist for a discussion on "F30 Application Preparation." **DAN TYLEE**, who is currently in his third year of his PhD in Neuroscience, gave an oral presentation titled "Blood Transcriptomic Comparison of Individuals with and without Autism Spectrum Disorder: A Combined-Samples Mega-Analysis."





# from our students

**SUNGSU LEE**, an MD/PhD student in Neuroscience, successfully passed his qualifying exam in October. Sungsu's dissertation advisor is Dr. Peter Calvert.

**Congratulations, Sungsu!**

**HANNAH PHILLIPS**, a PhD student in Neuroscience, successfully passed her qualifying exam in October. Hannah's dissertation advisor is Dr. Wei-Dong Yao.

**Congratulations, Hannah!**

**WEIYI XU**, a PhD student in Anatomy & Cell Biology, successfully passed her qualifying exam in October. Weiyi's dissertation advisor is Dr. Chris Turner.

**Congratulations, Weiyi!**

**ERIC ZLUHAN**, a PhD student in Neuroscience, successfully passed his qualifying exam in October. Eric's dissertation advisor is Dr. Eric Olson.

**Congratulations, Eric!**

**ERIC ZAJICEK**, a PhD student in Neuroscience, successfully passed his qualifying exam last month. Eric's dissertation advisor is Dr. Wei-Dong Yao.

**Congratulations, Eric!**

**CAMERON MACQUARRIE**, a PhD student in Anatomy & Cell Biology, successfully passed his qualifying exam last month. Cameron's dissertation advisor is Dr. Vladimir Sirotkin. **Congratulations, Cameron!**



**MEGAN GRIBBLE LLOYD**, a PhD student in Microbiology & Immunology, was selected as a fellow for SUNYCON 2016, held October 28th and 29th in New York City. According to a SUNY News Release, "SUNY developed SUNYCON, its Critical Issues in Higher Education conference series, to create a dynamic forum for conversations about the status and future of higher education among society's stakeholders—scholars, academic leaders, business and industry, and policy makers. As the largest comprehensive system of higher education in the United States, SUNY takes seriously its role in facilitating the idea exploration that empowers colleges and universities to master the social challenges of the 21st century. Since 2011, SUNY has convened the annual conference around a topic of pressing urgency in higher education, drawing hundreds of experts and participants". This year's theme was "Forces Shaping the Future of Higher Education." The fellows are SUNY students chosen for their interest in innovation in higher education.

The **ANNUAL COLLEGE OF GRADUATE STUDIES' FALL FORUM** was held last month. On October 5th, the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies, Dr. Mark Schmitt, and the Dean of Student Affairs, Dr. Julie White, met with students to answer any questions or concerns they might have. The meeting was organized by Aaron Altman. Aaron, an MD/PhD Student in Microbiology & Immunology, serves as the College of Graduate Studies' Vice President for Upstate Student Government.

Students in the College of Graduate Studies participated in Blizzard Pack Delivery through Meals on Wheels of Syracuse. On Saturday, November 5th, volunteers distributed "Blizzard Packs" to hundreds of local residents who depend on Meals on Wheels for their meals. Blizzard Packs provide shelf stable products that can be used should weather prohibit drivers from delivering meals. Students helped pack vehicles, drive and deliver. Keep up the great work!

# from our alumni



Alumni **NEVA WATSON, PHD** (Microbiology & Immunology '15) and **MATT MILLER, PHD** (Anatomy & Cell Biology '15) are engaged! Matt proposed atop Ampersand Mountain near Saranac Lake in the Adirondacks in September. **Congrats to the happy couple!**

**JUSTIN SIEBERT, PHD** started a new position as an Assistant Professor in the department of Biology at Slippery Rock University in Slippery Rock, Pennsylvania. Justin is responsible for teaching Anatomy and Physiology, and will eventually be getting a small research lab up and running. The work Justin plans on pursuing at Slippery Rock is largely a continuation and continued collaboration with his former lab at Upstate: Dr. Donna Osterhout. Justin earned his PhD in Anatomy & Cell Biology in 2010. His dissertation advisor was Dr. Dennis Stelzner. Justin then completed a postdoc at Cornell University (2010-2011) prior to an Assistant Professorship in Anatomy at Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine (2011-2016).

**SARAH HILL, PHD** is the Department Chair of Biology at Stark State College in North Canton, OH. She has been at Stark State College for the past 5.5 years. She started at the instructor level in January of 2011 and became Department Chair of Biology in November of 2013. In July of 2015 she was promoted to the rank of Assistant Professor as well.

As department chair, she oversees the Associate of Applied Science degree in Biotechnology, Associate of Science Biology, and recently created the Associate of Science Pre-Medical Professional degree. Located about 35 minutes from Stark State College, is the Northeast Ohio Medical University (NEOMED); which is somewhat similar to Upstate. They offer MD's, Pharm D's and PhD's. She has worked very closely with NEOMED over the last few years to create a direct pathway from our two-year school to their Pharm D program. So far there has been a 100% acceptance rate into their Pharm D program and students have been very successful there.

She's also worked with their Dean of Graduate Studies to build a direct connection for students to be able to do internships with their faculty. And she is currently working on building pathways to their medical school. This is proving more more challenging since Stark State is only a two-year college, but she is also working with local universities to build articulations. This year she is also trying to develop a Sustainable Agriculture program, and construction of a greenhouse should start this spring.

On the teaching side, she teaches a variety of courses, including cadaver-based A&P, General Biology, Cell & Tissue Culture, Biomanufacturing, and a seminar course. She applies much of what she learned at Upstate and shares this with her students. Sarah earned her PhD in Physiology in 2008. Her dissertation advisor was Dr. Matthew Allen.

**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!**

# from our alumni



**MELISSA ANDREWS, PHD** and **DAVID TUMBARELLO, PHD** married on October 1, 2005, while still students in the College of Graduate Studies. The couple just welcomed their first daughter, Sophia Rose Tumbarello, born on August 8th.

Both Melissa and David are currently Lecturers at the University of Southampton. In the UK, a "Lecturer" title is the equivalent of an "Assistant Professor" title in the US - a balance of teaching and research.

Melissa earned her PhD in Anatomy & Cell Biology in 2007; her thesis advisor was Dr. Dennis Stelzner. Melissa then completed her postdoc at the University of Cambridge Centre for Brain Repair. She was then a Lecturer in Anatomy at the University of St Andrews in the School of Medicine. She is now a Lecturer in Systems Physiology at the University of Southampton, Biological Sciences.

David earned his PhD in Anatomy & Cell Biology in 2006; his thesis advisor was Dr. Christopher Turner. David then completed a postdoc at the Cambridge Research Institute in Cancer Research UK. He then completed a second postdoc at the Cambridge Institute for Medical Research at the University of Cambridge. He is now a Lecturer in Biomedical Sciences at the University of Southampton, Biological Sciences along with Melissa.

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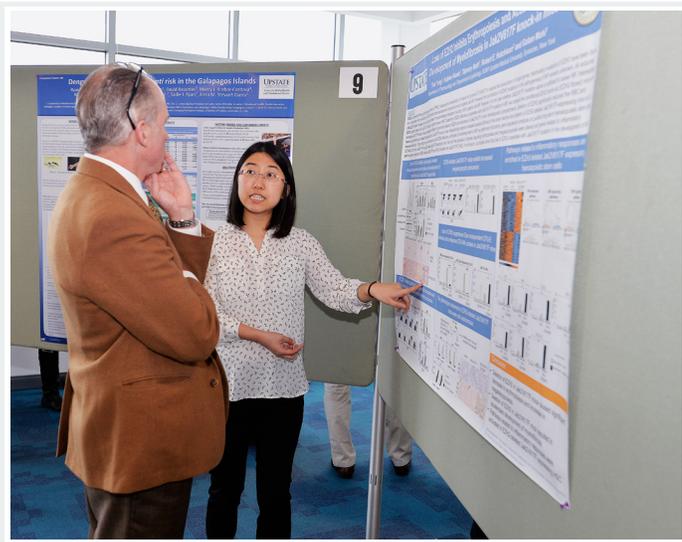
# around campus & in the community

Upstate President, Danielle Laraque-Arena, hosted the **FIRST PRESIDENTIAL SYMPOSIUM** on October 28th & 29th at Upstate's Biotech Accelerator, located at 841 East Fayette Street in Syracuse. The two day event focused on Genetics & Precision Medicine and included presentations and discussions featuring Upstate faculty, a poster session featuring Upstate students and two lectures by the Keynote: Mary-Claire King, PhD.

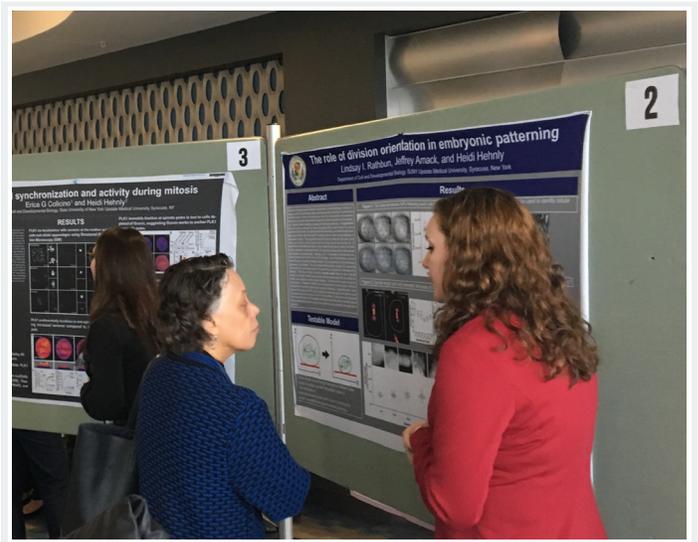
Dr. King, Professor of Medicine & Genome Sciences at the University of Washington School of Medicine, is a noted geneticist who discovered the BRAC1 gene that has been linked to increased breast cancer risk. Among her many accomplishments, Dr. King was awarded the nation's highest recognition for scientific achievement - the

National Medal of Science - earlier this year by President Obama in recognition of her research into the genetics of human disease. Two years earlier, she won the prestigious Albert and Mary Lasker Foundation Award for her work identifying oncogenes.

Events concluded with a poster session featuring approximately 25 Upstate students. Eleven current graduate students participated in the poster session: **ASHLEY CANNING, ARIJITA CHAKRABORTY, OLESEA COJOHARI, ERICA COLICINO, JONATHAN HESS, ANNA JOHN, JIE PENG, LINDSAY RATHBUN, ANGELINA REGUA, STUTI SHARMA, and YUE YANG.** Also participating was Graduate Studies alumnus **KYLE PLANTE.**



Pharmacology Graduate Student, Yue Yang, presents her poster to Dr. Mark Polhemus, Associate Professor of Medicine and Microbiology & Immunology. **Photo Credit:** William Mueller, Medical Photography



Anatomy & Cell Biology Graduate Student, Lindsay Rathbun, presents her poster to Upstate President Danielle Laraque-Arena.



Students and faculty from the College of Graduate Studies participated in the **CAROL M. BALDWIN BREAST CANCER RUN FOR THEIR LIFE** on October 2nd at Gillie Lake - the Camillus Veterans' Memorial Park. All proceeds raised support cancer research at Upstate. Some of our participants include: **ROBERT CARROLL, PAT FAUGHNAN, ERICA COLICINO, DR. PATTY KANE, HEATHER NELSON, AND LINDSAY RATHBUN.**

# holiday party: 11.30.2016



# in other news



**KEVIN NAMITZ**, a PhD Student in Biochemistry & Molecular Biology, and his wife, Samantha, welcomed their first child: Rhiannon Allegro Namitz, on October 17th. Rhiannon weighed seven pounds and seven ounces.



**NICK STAM**, a PhD Student in Biochemistry & Molecular Biology, married Katie Latanyshyn on Saturday, October 22nd at Holy Family Church in Auburn, NY. The newlyweds honeymooned in Vermont and Boston, MA.

**KAREN HOWARD**, an MD/PhD Student in Anatomy & Cell Biology, married James Shafer on Sunday, November 6th at Arrowhead Lodge in Oneida Shores Park. Their special day included smoke bombs, fire and swords. They honeymooned at Kaua'i (aka, Paradise), where they had lots of fun and went on grand adventures. Karen and James have also taken a new surname of Cyndari, because starting new traditions is fun.



# upcoming events & save the dates

## DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI LECTURE

**Tuesday, February 7, 2017**

Mark your calendars and save the date! The Distinguished Alumni Lecture will be Tuesday, February 7, 2017 at 11:00 AM in Weiskotten Hall 2231, hosted by the Graduate Student Association, with help from the College of Graduate Studies. This year's speaker is Georgia Tomaras, PhD. Dr. Tomaras is Professor of Surgery, Immunology, and Molecular Genetics and Microbiology at Duke University Medical Center. She will be presenting: "HIV-1 Immune Correlates of Protection." Dr. Tomaras earned her PhD from the Microbiology & Immunology Program in 1998. Her thesis advisor was Dr. Steven Taffet.

## COMMENCEMENT

**Sunday, May 21, 2017**

Mark your calendars and save the date! Commencement for the College of Graduate Studies will be held Sunday, May 21st at 1:45 PM at the Carrier Theater in the John M. Mulroy Civic Center. The ceremony is expected to last approximately one hour, and will include the hooding of PhD and MS graduates, presentation of awards, Distinguished Guest and Student Speaker talks, and conferral of degrees. Please refer to the commencement website for more information: <http://www.upstate.edu/commencement>



### AFTERNOON TEA:

**Every Wednesday at 3:00**

**First Wednesday of the month, tea is at the NRB 3708 (call 6-7753), all others in WH 3120.**

## STUDENT RESEARCH DAY

**Wednesday, April 26, 2017**

Mark your calendars and save the date! The Student Research Day, which highlights research from students in all four colleges at Upstate Medical University will be held Wednesday, April 26, 2017.

### ABSTRACTS ARE NOW BEING ACCEPTED!

All poster presenters for the Student Research Day receive one free poster print courtesy of Upstate Medical Photography (certain conditions and deadlines apply, details are on the abstract submission form and in your confirmation email after submission).

One student from each college will be selected to give a ten-minute oral presentation, with five minutes for Q&A. In order to have your abstract considered for an oral presentation, you must submit your abstract by the priority deadline below.

To submit an abstract, visit: [www.upstate.edu/grad/students/srday-form.php](http://www.upstate.edu/grad/students/srday-form.php)

**Priority Deadline: Wednesday, February 22nd at 12:00 Noon.**

**All Abstracts Due: Wednesday, March 29, 2017 at 12:00 Noon.**

The Student Research Day includes a keynote presentation, student talks and a poster session with a reception. This year's Keynote Speaker is Amita Sehgal, PhD. Dr. Sehgal is the John Herr Musser Professor of Neuroscience at the Perelman School of Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania. She is also an Investigator with the Howard Hughes Medical Institute.

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