



# What's New in Biochemistry

## PERSONNEL NEWS:

	Caitlin White joined Bruce Knutson's lab as an Student Assistant. Caitlin is a SU undergraduate.
	Hetalben Kalariya joined Ed Berry's lab as a Sr. Research Support Specialist.

Late congratulations to Cherry Mae Ignacio who was awarded the 2014 International Student Leadership Award by the International Center of Syracuse in a ceremony on November 14, 2014.



## GRANTS:

Congratulations to Michael Cosgrove who was awarded a Research Supplement to Promote Diversity in Health-Related Research Program for Dr. Nilda Alicea-Velazquez beginning 01/01/2015, in the amount of \$99,741. (DC: 61,951; IDC: 37,790).

Congratulations to Wenyi Feng who recently received notification that she will be awarded a Department of Defense grant entitled "Global Identification of Disease-associated Genes in Fragile X Cells" for 1.5 years for a total of \$200,000.

## AWARDS, RECOGNITIONS, AND OTHER ACTIVITIES:

Tom Duncan visited Gettysburg College (PA) on March 2<sup>nd</sup> and gave a Visiting Lecture Series talk entitled "Rotary motor ATP synthase – A bacteria-specific wrench that jams its gears and the potential for targeted development of antibiotics". He met with a number of enthusiastic students interested in graduate programs like ours. One recent Gettysburg graduate will be joining Upstate's graduate program this coming Fall.

Congratulations to Xin Jie Chen who was promoted to Professor on March 1, 2015.



Congratulations to Adam Blanden who received a 4<sup>th</sup> percentile on his NIH F30 grand and for being selected as the College of Graduate Studies' Student Speaker for the Student Research Day on March 25<sup>th</sup>.

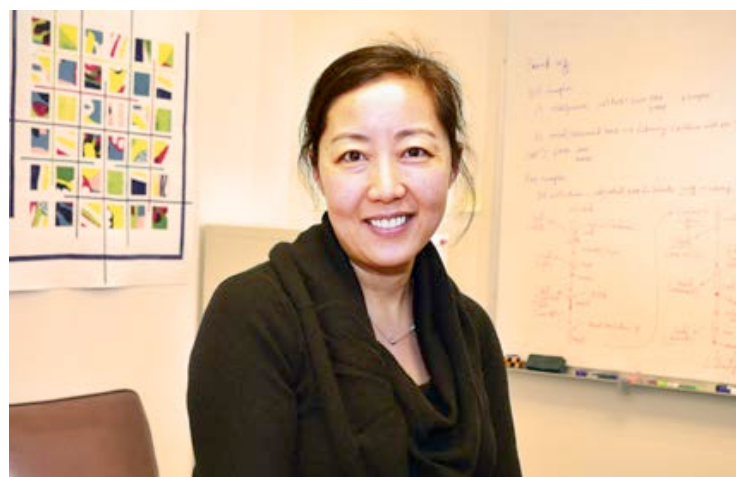
Congratulations to Stewart Loh who was awarded the College of Graduate Studies 2015 Outstanding Teacher Award.

Wenyi Feng gave a seminar to the Department of Biological Sciences at SUNY Albany on April 10, 2015.

Congratulations to Rebecca Sager who completed her Qualifying Exam on April 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Congratulations to Stephen Shinsky who received the Honorable Mention for the 2015 John Bernard Henry, MD, Endowed Scholarship, for his paper “A Non-Active-Site SET Domain Surface Crucial for the Interaction of MLL1 and the RbBP5/Ash2L Heterodimer within MLL Family Core Complexes” and “Biochemical Reconstitution of Phylogenetic Comparison of Human SET1 Family Core Complexes Involved in Histone Methylation” and to Adam Blanden who won the College of Graduate Studies’ Research Presentation Award—Oral Presentation, 2015. These awards will be given at the College of Graduate Studies’ Commencement on Sunday, May 17<sup>th</sup>.

Wenyi Feng’s lab research was highlighted in the Upstate Online April 23 to April 30, 2015 issue. An excerpt is below. The full article can be found at: <http://upstateonline.info/static/April23-April302015/blog/story-1/index.html>



*“Using a novel method they developed to map chromosome breaks in a model organism, the budding yeast, **Wenyi Feng, PhD**, of Upstate Medical University and her colleagues have discovered new information as to how and where chromosome fragile sites can occur in human DNA. These sites are frequently observed in cancer cells and are responsible for causing genomic rearrangements. Their findings offer a better*

*understanding of the mechanisms of chromosome fragile sites and could lead to a breakthrough in identifying new cancer-associated genes.*

*The study was recently published in **Genome Research**. Feng, assistant professor in the Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology at Upstate, was joined in the study by Elizabeth A. Hoffman, Andrew McCulley, Brian Haarer, PhD, and Remigiusz Arnak, PhD.....”*

**PERSONAL NEWS:**



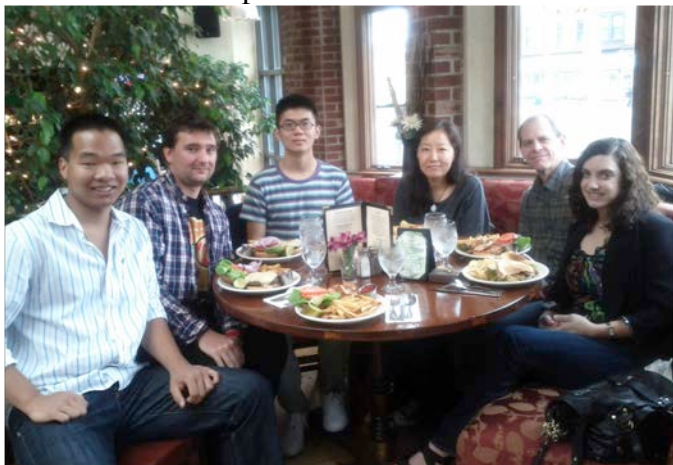
Michael Cosgrove’s daughter, Ireland Fernandez-Cosgrove, won a Silver Key award in the CNY scholastic art competition for drawing and illustration (see attached photo). Her work was on display at OCC's Whitney Applied Technology Center until February 27<sup>th</sup>.

Michael Cosgrove’s current lab members:



From left to right: Sue Viggiano, Dr. Nilda Alicea Velazquez, Stephen Shinsky, Dr. Michael Cosgrove, and Kevin Namitz

Wenyi Feng's lab members (5/13) that contributed to her most recent publication.



From left to right: Andrew McCulley, Dr. Remigiusz Arnak, Jie Peng, Wenyi Feng, Dr. Brian Haarer, and Elizabeth Hoffman

Michael Cosgrove's dog, Suki, gave birth to 10 healthy puppy laberdoodles (see picture below). Suki gave birth to 11 puppies back in December of 2013. She is doing fine and will be coming back to work in early March.



Nilda Alicea Velazquez's husband, Ryan O'Dell, successfully defended the PhD part of his MD/PhD thesis on March 9<sup>th</sup>. Ryan's advisor was Dr. Eric Olson from Neuroscience and Physiology here at Upstate. He will be moving onto his third year of medical school in May.



Believe it our not, Jenny (Jeung-Hoi) Ha won the Biochemistry 2015 NCAA Basketball pool run by no other than her husband, Stewart Loh. Imagine that!!!

### NEWS ABOUT ALUMNI:

Dr. Cherry Mae Ignacio won the coveted "Loser Award" for the Biochemistry 2015 NCAA Tournament. Cherry has actually won the pool once and this is her second time at the bottom of the pack. Along with the beautiful certificate, Cherry was awarded a Pabst Blue Ribbon and Pork Rinds compliments of Dr. Stewart Loh.



Dr. Meg Stratton, one of Stewart Loh's graduate students, has accepted an Assistant Professor position in the Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology at UMass (Amherst).

Negin Dehdar Nasab, who got her MS with Patty Kane, is going to attend Dental School at Western University of Health Sciences in Pomona, CA starting later this summer. She and her family are planning to move to Southern California at the end of June.