

# upstate grad update

transforming students from consumers of knowledge into producers of knowledge

Fall/Winter 2018/2019

## SOME THINGS DO CHANGE

I often hear from faculty, students and staff that things never change around here. In some ways I agree with them, in others I don't. I arrived at Upstate in 1994, and for those of you doing the math, yes that was 25 years ago. Since then I have seen an incredible amount of change, most of which has happened slowly but has never let up. At that time the library had just finished being built, and it would be two more years until the furniture arrived so they could open it (yes some things are still the same). Since then we built the Institute for Human Performance, the Children's Hospital, the East Garage, the West Garage, the Cancer Center, the New Academic Building, the Simulation Center, the Biotech Accelerator, the Cord Blood Bank and the Neuroscience Research Building. In addition, we have acquired Community General, Sarah Logan's Crossing and Geneva Tower. Along the way there has been an incredible amount of renovations that are too numerous to count. There have been two presidents, and two interim presidents, along with at least eight College of Medicine Deans and four College of Graduate Studies Deans. Things have clearly changed. However, I often hear the same issues from folks that were discussed in the 90s. These include unions, low salaries, lack of research support, lack of state support, high fringe rate, changes in curriculum and of course parking. There are others, but they are clearly getting fewer and fewer. Some of these will always be issues and are unfortunately out of any one's control.

We are undergoing new change again, with a new interim president and an upcoming search for a permanent one. This will bring many more changes that we will need to be ready for. So expect more of a roller coaster ride with lots of ups and downs and a return to where we got on, with some changes mostly to ourselves.

– Mark E. Schmitt, PhD

Dean, College of Graduate Studies

[schmittm@upstate.edu](mailto:schmittm@upstate.edu)

**GUO S., LU H.**

**Novel Mechanisms of Regulation of the Expression and Transcriptional Activity of Hepatocyte Nuclear Factor 4 $\alpha$ .**

J Cell Biochem. 2018 Sep 7. doi: 10.1002/jcb.27407.

**ZHANG X., Patel D., Xu Q., VEENSTRA R.**

**Differences in Functional Expression of Connexin43 and NaV1.5 by Pan- and Class-Selective Histone Deacetylase Inhibition in Heart.**

Int J Mol Sci. 2018 Aug 4;19(8). pii: E2288. doi: 10.3390/ijms19082288.

**NATH D., White J.R., BRATSLAVSKY G., KOTULA L.**

**Identification, Histological Characterization, and Dissection of Mouse Prostate Lobes for In Vitro 3D Spheroid Culture Models.**

J Vis Exp. 2018 Sep 18;(139).

**SAGER R., WOODFORD M., MOLLAPOUR M.**

**The mTOR Independent Function of Tsc1 and FNIPs.**

Trends Biochem Sci. 2018 Oct 22. pii: S0968-0004(18)30203-2. doi: 10.1016/j.tibs.2018.09.018.

**COLICINO E., HEHNLY H.**

**Regulating a Key Mitotic Regulator, Polo-like Kinase 1 (PLK1).**

Cytoskeleton (Hoboken). 2018 Nov 10. doi: 10.1002/cm.21504.

**LAROCCA D., BARNES S., Hicks S.D., Brindle A., Williams J., Uhlig R., Johnson P., Neville C., MIDDLETON F.A.**

**Comparison of Serum and Saliva miRNAs for Identification and Characterization of mTBI in Adult Mixed Martial Arts Fighters.**

PLoS One. 2019 Jan 2;14(1):e0207785. doi: 10.1371/journal.pone.0207785. eCollection 2019.

**ALTMAN A., MAHMUD M., Nikolovska-Coleska Z., CHAN G.**

**HCMV Modulation of Cellular PI3K/AKT/mTOR Signaling: New Opportunities for Therapeutic Intervention?**

Antiviral Res. 2019 Jan 19. pii: S0166-3542(18)30711-3. doi: 10.1016/j.antiviral.2019.01.009.

**SAGER R., WOODFORD M., BACKE S., Makedon A.M., BAKER-WILLIAMS A., DiGregorio B.T., Loisel D.R., Haystead T.A., Zachara N.E., Prodromou C., BOURBOULIA D., Schmidt L.S., Linehan W.M., BRATSLAVSKY G., MOLLAPOUR M.**

**Post-Translational Regulation of FNIP1 Creates a Rheostat for the Molecular Chaperone Hsp90.**

Cell Rep. 2019 Jan 29;26(5):1344-1356.e5. doi: 10.1016/j.celrep.2019.01.018.

**OAKS Z., STAGE A., MIDDLETON B., FARAONE S., Johnson B.**

**Clinical Utility of the Cold Pressor Test: Evaluation of Pain Patients, Treatment of Opioid-Induced Hyperalgesia and Fibromyalgia with Low Dose Naltrexone.**

Discov Med. 2018 Nov;26(144):197-206.

**SÁNCHEZ-POZO J., BAKER-WILLIAMS A.J., WOODFORD M.R., Bullard R., Wei B., MOLLAPOUR M., Stetler-Stevenson W.G., BRATSLAVSKY G., BOURBOULIA D.**

**Extracellular Phosphorylation of TIMP-2 by Secreted c-Src Tyrosine Kinase Controls MMP-2 Activity.**

iScience. 2018 Mar 23;1:87-96. doi: 10.1016/j.isci.2018.02.004. Epub 2018 Mar 23.

Mita-Mendoza N., McMahon E., Kenneson A., BARBACHANO-GUERRERO A, Beltran-Ayala E., Cueva C., KING C.A., Lupone C.D., Castro-Sesquen Y.E., Gilman R.H., ENDY T.P., Stewart-Ibarra A.M.

**Chagas Disease in Southern Coastal Ecuador: Coinfections with Arboviruses and a Comparison of Serological Assays for Chagas Disease Diagnosis.**

Am J Trop Med Hyg. 2018 Oct 22. doi: 10.4269/ajtmh.18-0441.

Erdemci-Tandogan G., CLARK M.J., AMACK J.D., Manning M.L.

**Tissue Flow Induces Cell Shape Changes During Organogenesis.**

Biophys J. 2018 Nov 6. pii: S0006-3495(18)31217-7. doi: 10.1016/j.bpj.2018.10.028.

# publications

Brasch M.E., Passucci G., **GULVADY A.C.**, **TURNER C.E.**, Manning M.L., Henderson J.H.

**Nuclear Position Relative to the Golgi Body and Nuclear Orientation are Differentially Responsive Indicators of Cell Polarized Motility.**

PLoS One. 2019 Feb 13;14(2):e0211408. doi: 10.1371/journal.pone.0211408.

Umino Y., Guo Y., Chen C.K., **PASQUALE R.**, **SOLESSIO E.**

**Rod Photoresponse Kinetics Limit Temporal Contrast Sensitivity in Mesopic Vision.**

J Neurosci. 2019 Feb 8. pii: 1404-18. doi: 10.1523/JNEUROSCI.1404-18.2019.

**MINCHENBERG S.B.**, Chaparala G., **OAKS Z.**, Banki K., **PERL A.**

**Systemic Lupus Erythematosus-Myasthenia Gravis Overlap Syndrome: Presentation and Treatment Depend on Prior Thymectomy.**

Clin Immunol. 2018 Sep;194:100-104. doi: 10.1016/j.clim.2018.07.007.

**OAKS Z.**, Stage A., Middleton B., Faraone S., Johnson B.

**Clinical Utility of the Cold Pressor Test: Evaluation of Pain Patients, Treatment of Opioid-Induced Hyperalgesia and Fibromyalgia with Low Dose Naltrexone.**

Discov Med. 2018 Nov;26(144):197-206.

**HOWELL B.W.**, **SMITH K.M.**

**Synaptic Structural Protein Dysfunction Leads to Altered Excitation Inhibition Ratios in Models of Autism Spectrum Disorder.**

Pharmacol Res. 2018 Nov 19. pii: S1043-6618(18)31295-7. doi: 10.1016/j.phrs.2018.11.019.

Quinn T., **TYLEE D.**, **GLATT S.**

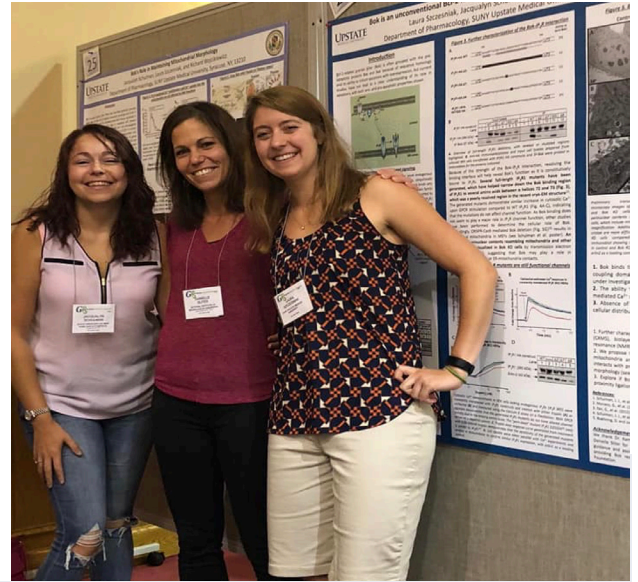
**Exprso: an R-package for the Rapid Implementation of Machine Learning Algorithms.**

F1000Res. 2016 Oct 27;5:2588. doi: 10.12688/f1000research.9893.1.

# presentations



Cell and Developmental Biology students **ANDREW BRAWNER, SUMANA SUNDARAMURTHY, PEU SANTRA, CURTIS YINGLING, CAMERON MACQUARRIE** and **ERIC PLANTE** attended the 2018 American Society for Cell Biology meeting in San Diego, CA in December.



Pharmacology students from Dr. **RICHARD WOJCIKIEWICZ's** lab **JACQUALYN SCHULMAN** (left) and **LAURA SZCZESNIAK** (right) are pictured with Upstate alumn **DANIELLE SLITER** (alumn from 2010, middle) at the 2018 Gordon Research Seminar on cell death Newry, ME.



**NYCOLE MAZA** (pictured far left) attended the 2018 Retinal Degeration meeting in Killarney, Ireland in September.

# from our students



**ANGELINA REGUA**, a PhD student in Biochemistry & Molecular Biology, successfully defended her dissertation in November. Angelina's dissertation advisor is Dr. **LESZEK KOTULA**.  
**Congratulations, Angelina!**



**ANUSHREE GULVADY**, a PhD student in Cell & Developmental Biology, successfully defended her dissertation in November. Anushree's dissertation advisor is Dr. **CHRIS TURNER**.  
**Congratulations, Anushree!**



**AVIK DUTTA** a PhD student in Pharmacology successfully defended his thesis in December. Avik's dissertation advisor is Dr. **GOLAM MOHI**.  
**Congratulations, Avik!**



**DISHAREE NATH**, a PhD student in Biochemistry & Molecular Biology successfully defended her thesis in December. Disha's dissertation advisor is Dr. **LESZEK KOTULA**.  
**Congratulations, Disha!**



**MADELINE CLARK**, a MS student in Cell & Developmental Biology successfully defended her thesis in November. Madeline's dissertation advisor is Dr. **JEFFREY AMACK**.  
**Congratulations, Madeline!**

# from our students



**SUBHRAJIT BANERJEE**, a PhD student in Biochemistry & Molecular Biology, successfully defended his dissertation in July. Subhra's dissertation advisor is Dr. **PATTY KANE**. He will be joining Dr. Roberto Zoncu's lab at Berkley.

**Congratulations, Subhra!**



**DMITRI SERJANOV**, a PhD student in Neuroscience & Physiology successfully defended his thesis in August. Dmitri's dissertation advisor is Dr. **WILLIAM BRUNKEN**. Dmitri has accepted a post doc position at Notre Dame.

**Congratulations, Dmitri!**



**SWETHA VELIVELA**, a PhD student in Biochemistry & Molecular Biology, successfully defended her dissertation in December. Swetha's dissertation advisor is Dr. **PATTY KANE**.

**Congratulations, Swetha!**



**ERIC MILLER**, a PhD student in Cell & Developmental Biology successfully defended his thesis in September. Eric's dissertation advisor is Dr. **SCOTT BLYSTONE**.

**Congratulations, Eric!**

# from our students

**ALAN BLAYNEY**, a PhD student in Biochemistry & Molecular Biology, successfully passed his qualifying examination. Alan's dissertation advisor is

**DR. STEWART LOH.**

**Congratulations, Alan!**

**KRYSTEN O'HARA**, a MS student in Physiology, successfully defended her thesis in July. Krysten's thesis advisor is Dr. **YUNLEI YANG.**

**Congratulations, Krysten!**

**REBECCA WINKLER**, a PhD student in Pharmacology, successfully passed her qualifying examination. Rebecca's dissertation advisor is **DR. RICHARD VEENSTRA.**

**Congratulations, Rebecca!**

**S.M. JAMIL MAHMUD**, a PhD student in Microbiology & Immunology, successfully passed his qualifying examination. S.M. Jamil's dissertation advisor is **DR. GARY CHAN.**

**Congratulations, S. M. Jamil!**

**NICHOLAS ZEHRBACH**, a PhD student in Cell & Developmental Biology, successfully passed his qualifying examination. Nick's dissertation advisor is

**DR. CHRISTOPHER TURNER.**

**Congratulations, Nick!**

**JOSHUA ENCK**, a PhD student in Neuroscience successfully passed his qualifying examination. Josh's dissertation advisor is **DR. ERIC OLSON.**

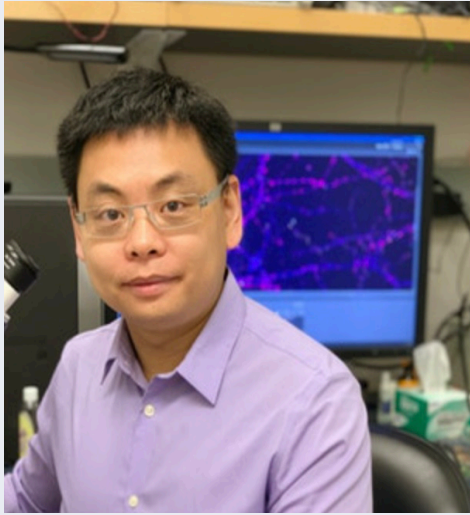
**Congratulations, Josh!**



**XIANG ZHANG**, a PhD student in Pharmacology successfully defended her thesis in February. Xiang's dissertation advisor is Dr. **RICHARD VEENSTRA.**

**Congratulations, Xiang!**

# alumni corner

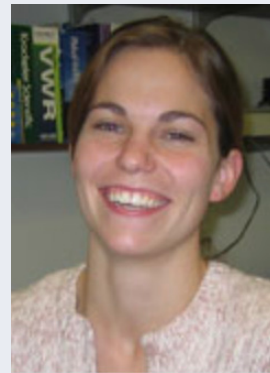


**PENG ZHANG**, a neuroscience PhD alumni, has won the Simons Foundation Autism Research Initiative Bridge to Independence award. Peng graduated from Upstate in 2011 from the laboratory of **DR. HUAIYU HU**. After graduation, he continued on as a postdoctoral fellow at the University of British Columbia under Dr. Ann-Marie Craig. Peng's research focuses on neurexin-ligand binding and the effects on an autistic mouse model.

The full article can be found at: <https://www.sfari.org/team/peng-zhang/>

**Congratulations, Peng!**

**DANIELLE SLITER**, a Pharmacology PhD alumni, recently published a first author article in the prestigious Nature Journal entitled "Parkin and PINK1 mitigate STING-induced inflammation". Danielle graduated from Upstate in 2010 from the laboratory of **DR. RICHARD WOJCIKIEWICZ**. She now works as a postdoctoral fellow in the Biochemistry Section of the Surgical Neurology Branch of the NIH in Bethesda, MD.



The full article can be found at: <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41586-018-0448-9>



**Congratulations, Danielle!**

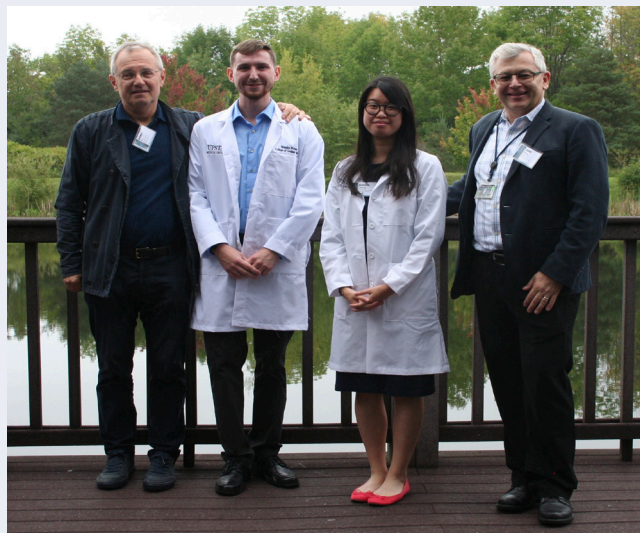


# from our md/phd students



**JOSHUA HARRIS, ARNAV RANA, GENTRY HEARN, and HARSIMRANJIT SEKHON**, pictured from left to right, are our four new MD/PhD students which are starting in the College of Medicine this fall.

**Welcome, Josh, Arnav, Gentry, and Harsimranjit!**



**JENNIFER CHEUNG** and **BRANDON WYMAN** recently received their white coats at the Biomedical Sciences Retreat on September 11, 2018. Jennifer and Brandon are pictured with the two MD/PhD co-directors Dr. **Andras Perl** and Dr. **Leszek Kotula**.

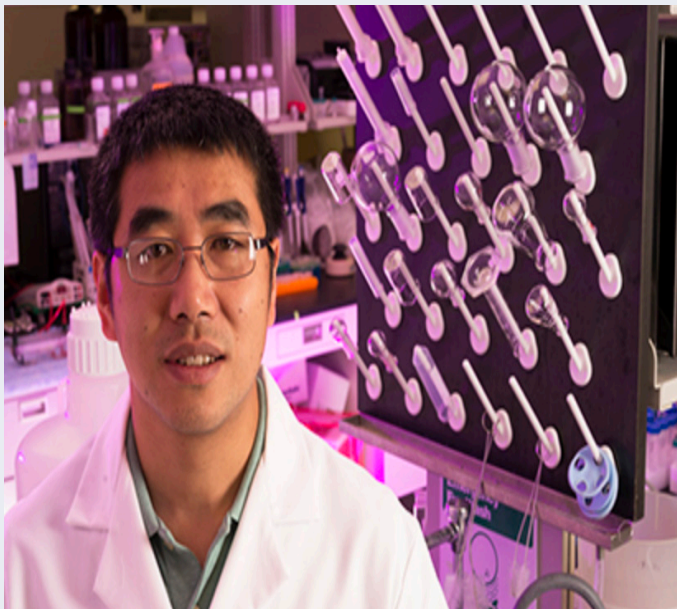
**Congratulations, Jennifer and Brandon!**

# from our faculty



**PATRICIA KANE**, professor and chair of the biochemistry and molecular biology department, has been awarded a four-year \$1.1 million NIH grant to continue her lab's research into how cells regulate pH. The grant supports Kane's project titled "Regulation of V-ATPases by Phosphoinositides."

**Congratulations, Dr. Kane!**



**JUNTAO LUO**, an assistant professor in Pharmacology, has been awarded a four-year \$1.5 million NIH R01 research grant for his project "An innovative hemoperfusion nanotrap for sepsis treatment." His lab is developing a "highly efficient nanotrap for hemoperfusion therapy to remove the range of triggers and mediators of sepsis."

**Congratulations, Dr. Luo!**

# our office - new faces!



The College of Graduate Studies would like to welcome four new faces!

Tracy Balduzzi, our new Executive Coordinator of Graduate Programs, joins us from Utica College where she was the Director of Graduate Program Operations. Tracy loves being in higher education and will be defending her doctorate in Education in Fall 2019. Tracy lives in Jamesville with her husband Kevin and two dogs, Abbie and Toby.

Welcome, Tracy!



Samuel Castleberry, our new Assistant Director of Admissions and MD/PhD Coordinator, joins us from Syracuse University where he was a senior advisor in the Colleges of Arts and Sciences. Sam holds two Master's Degrees and two advanced certificates. Sam is also currently a PhD student at Syracuse University where he is studying medical anthropology. Sam lives in Syracuse with his husband Chris.

Welcome, Sam!



Jennifer Plencner, our new Coordinator of Curriculum, Assessment, and Analytics joins us from Bristol-Myers Squibb where she was a scientist. She has worked in the pharmaceutical industry for over 15 years and provides the team with a broad spectrum of project management skills and data analytics.

Jennifer lives in Baldwinsville with her husband and two boys, ages 8 and 5.

Welcome, Jennifer!



Natalie Andrianos, our new Postdoctoral and Career Development Coordinator, joins us from the financial aid office at Syracuse University. Previously, Natalie lived in Tampa, Florida where she worked for the Tampa Bay Buccaneers. Go Bucs! Natalie now resides in Eldbridge.

Welcome, Natalie!

# happening on and around campus

## WELCOME NEW STUDENTS!

On August 27th, we welcomed all our first year PhD, MD/PhD and MS students to Upstate! A welcoming reception was held in Setnor auditorium where faculty, staff, and current students had the opportunity to meet and mingle with the newest additions to the College of Graduate Studies.

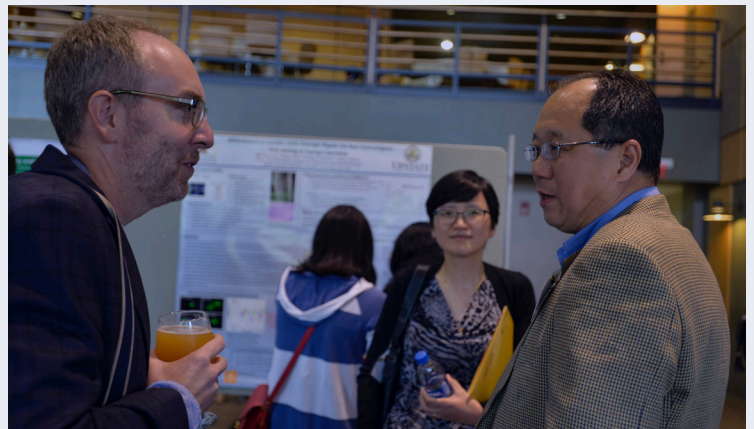
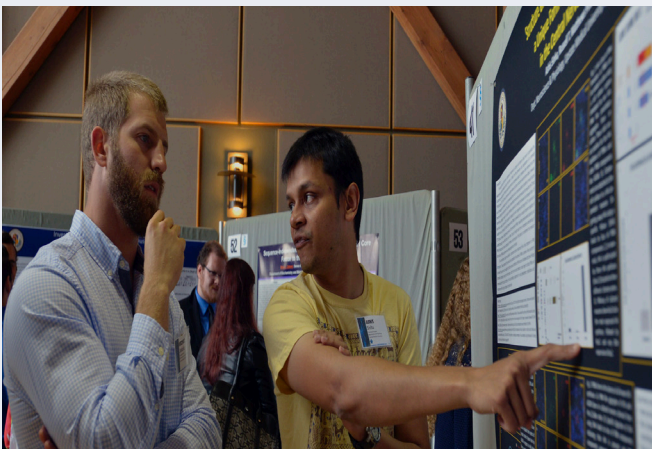
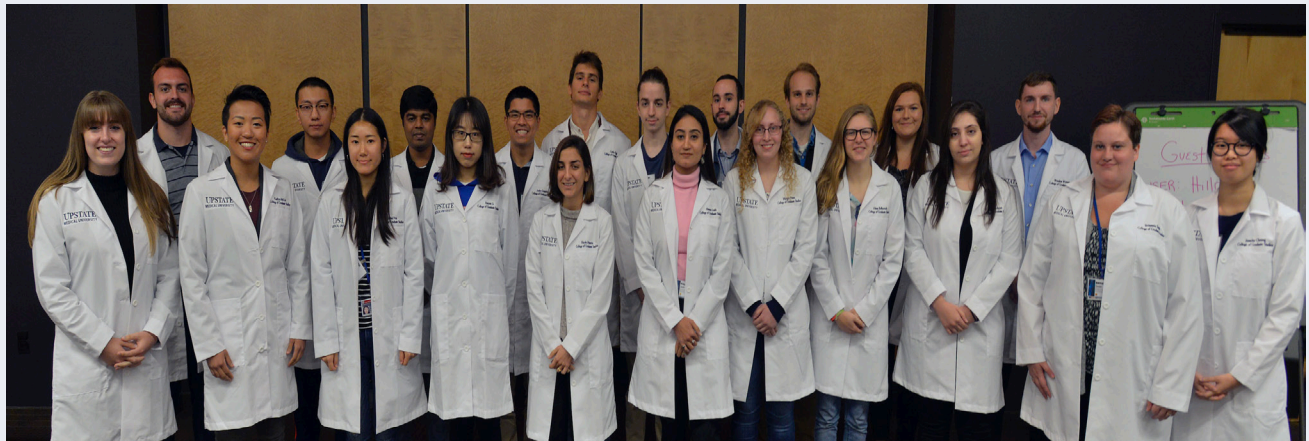
Please join us in welcoming the following students:

Sarah Backe  
Alana Belkevich  
Benjamin Capella  
Timothy Chaffin  
Jennifer Cheung  
Leonardo Dettori  
Brittany Geiler  
Andre Grageda  
Jiahui Hou  
Himani Joshi  
Md Murad Khan  
Aya Kobeissi  
Haiyan Li  
Nicole Maurici  
Kaitlyn McCue  
Csaba Papp  
Morgan Pimm  
Samuel Winkley  
Brandon Wyman  
Xiguang Yang



# Biomedical Sciences Retreat - 09.11.2018

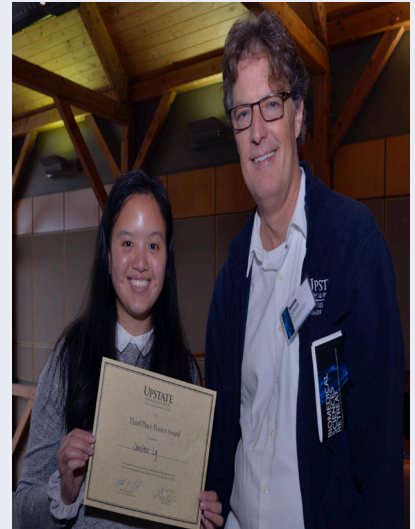
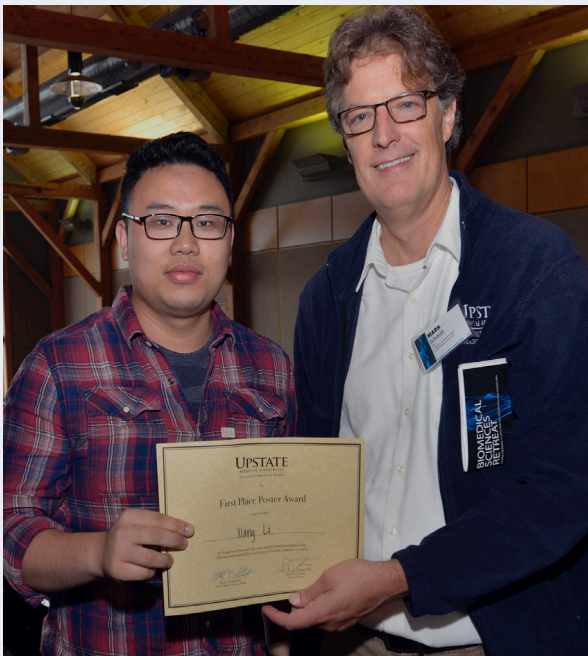
On September 11th, the College of Graduate Studies held the 18th annual Biomedical Sciences Retreat at the Lodge at Welch Allyn in Skaneateles, NY. This day long event featured two keynote speakers presented by Urology and Biochemistry and Molecular Biology departments as well as a talk by an Upstate alum.



# Biomedical Sciences Retreat - 09.11.2018

At the end of the day-long talks, students from all across Upstate were given the opportunity to present a poster; first author Graduate Studies students were eligible for awards.

There was a two-way tie for first place by **ALEXANDER BAKER-WILLIAMS** and **XIANG LI** (pictured below) and a three-way tie for third place by **CHRISTINE LY**, **ELIZABETH EILL**, **AND LIAM COYNE** (pictured right).



# in other news



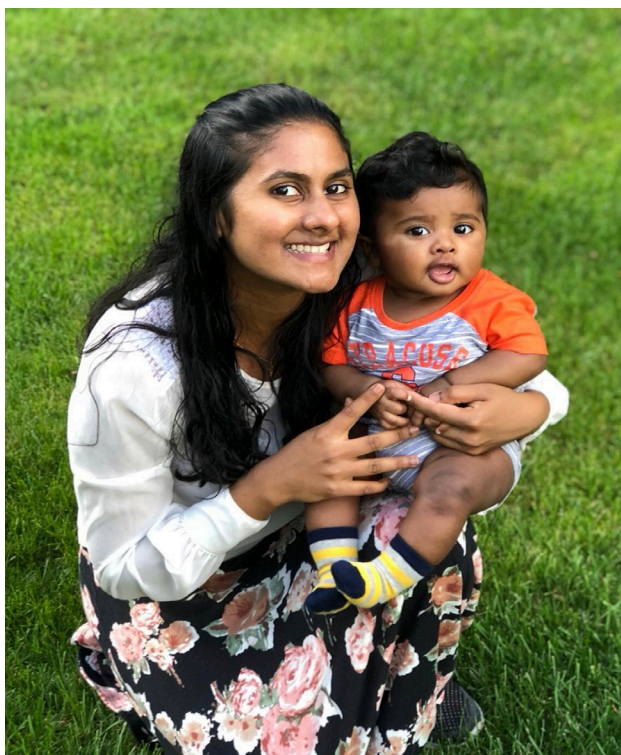
**ASHLEY SWEENEY**, a second year PhD student in Cell & Developmental Biology recently got engaged.

**Congratulations Ashley!**



**JACQUALYN SCHULMAN**, a PhD postdoc in Pharmacology, was recently featured in a NYAS article entitled "A Mentor's Advice: Focus on Your Mentee's Personal Goals". The article highlighted all the work Jacqualyn does mentoring younger girls interested in the STEM field. **Congratulations, Jacqualyn!**

Full article can be found at: <https://www.nyas.org/news-articles/academy-news/a-mentor-s-advice-focus-on-your-mentee-s-personal-goals/>



**ANNA JOHN**, a PhD student in Biochemistry & Molecular Biology, welcomed her first child - a baby boy.

**Congratulations Anna!**



**BAYLEE PORTER**, PhD student in Biochemistry & Molecular Biology, got engaged on Christmas Eve in Chicago, IL.

**Congratulations Baylee!**

# upcoming events & save the dates

## YOUR NEXT NIH F30 & F31 FELLOWSHIP DEADLINE IS:

April 8, 2019

August 8, 2019

December 8, 2019



### 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 3104.**

## BIO-ART MIXER 02.22.19

SAVE THE DATE! The Bio-Art Mixer has an event on February 22, 2019 at 6:30 PM at 121 Shaffer Art Building, 1st floor, Syracuse University. The Bio-Art Mixer is an event where art and life-sciences meet, where faculty and graduate students are invited to share their research, to get ideas for their new projects, or to simply view their own work from the perspective of another discipline. The goal is to make the Bio-Art Mixer a foundation for future exhibitions, demonstrations, and new collaborative projects involving art and life-sciences, and to inspire interdisciplinary research across the universities in the region and to engage local communities.

## BEYOND THE DOCTORATE RESEARCH DAY- 03.06.19

SAVE THE DATE! The College of Graduate Studies is happy to announce that the Beyond the Doctorate Research Day will take place on March 6, 2019. The full day symposium features postdoctoral presentations and poster session, and a keynote speaker. This year we are featuring Dr. Molly Brewster, DVM, MD, MS, Professor and Chair, Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology from University of Connecticut. If you have any questions, please contact Natalie Andrianos in the College of Graduate Studies at [andriann@upstate.edu](mailto:andriann@upstate.edu) or 315-464-4547.

## STUDENT RESEARCH DAY- 04.03.19

SAVE THE DATE! The College of Graduate Studies is happy to announce that the Charles R. Ross Memorial Student Research Day will take place on April 3, 2019. The full day symposium features oral presentations and a poster session featuring research being performed at all four colleges at Upstate Medical University. This year our keynote address will be given by Dr. Susan Amara, PhD, Scientific Director of Intramural Research at the National Institute of Mental Health. If you have any questions, please contact Natalie Andrianos in the College of Graduate Studies at [andriann@upstate.edu](mailto:andriann@upstate.edu) or 315-464-4547.

## BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES RETREAT - 09.10.19

SAVE THE DATE! The College of Graduate Studies is happy to announce that the 19th Annual Biomedical Sciences Retreat will take place on September 10, 2019. The Retreat will once again be held at The Lodge at Welch Allyn Conference Center in Skaneateles Falls. The full day symposium features faculty presentations, guest speakers, an alumni presenter and a poster session. This is a great opportunity to catch up on the research happening around you at Upstate and to meet the new faculty and incoming graduate students.

**IS THERE SOMETHING WE MISSED??**

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