A note from Glenn...

Welcome to our second Newsletter, and a new tradition! It was tremendously gratifying to have heard so many positive comments about our first newsletter. To all of you who reached out with recollections of “your” Fox Chase, they have been most welcome. As you’ll see in this edition, while much has changed about Fox Chase in the past decade, the spirit of innovation, collaboration, mentorship and collegiality, I believe, have remained constant.

On June 11, we celebrated our 20th Annual Research Day (formerly: “Postdoc Day”). To commemorate this milestone, it was held at Knowlton Mansion... a beautiful site about a mile up the road. In addition to trainee presentations and posters, we heard talks from three former trainees (Katrina Cooper from Randy Strich’s lab, Dave Allman from Randy Hardy’s lab, and Caretha Creasy from Jon Chernoff’s lab), who linked their training here to their current roles in academia and biotech. Moreover, other former trainees came back to talk about careers in government relations, scientific writing, law, and teaching. Plus, we mined the archives for some great old photos – probably some of you were in them! This is our scientific highlight each year, and we will be sure to include plenty of photos of the event in our Fall newsletter. I mentioned this in some detail because we are hoping to continue having former trainees join us for future Research Days. Please let us know if this would be something you might be interested in doing.

Second, please take a look at the back page of this newsletter. I’m going to be bold about asking you to consider donating to the Fox Chase Training Program: as you’ll see from the interview with Bruce Ruggeri and Mother Marge, your support helps us to bring in terrific lecturers, offer travel grants to our trainees, and expose postdoctoral fellows to fresh ideas for their “post Fox Chase” lives. And: 100% (!) of your gift goes to support these initiatives.

Finally, if you have not done so already, please sign up to our LinkedIn group (FCCC Trainee Association): this has been a great way for our grad students and postdocs to connect with alums in various professional walks of life, and makes it easy for us to keep you updated on news at the Center.

And remember: we'd love to hear from you. Just see the back page to find out how to be in touch. Your input, remembrances, and advice are most welcome.

From all of us at Fox Chase, we wish you a terrific summer, and we’ll see you in these pages in the Fall.

Glenn F. Rall, Ph.D.
Director, Postdoctoral Program
It started small—a personal note from an old friend that rekindled memories of a formative time in one scientist’s life, which now promises to influence a generation of researchers.

Marge Einenkel, the retired administrative coordinator of the postdoc program, and Bruce Ruggeri, a former Fox Chase postdoc met recently to discuss the program and how they recently reunited. Their story is one of reconnection that highlights how the walls, faces and leadership at Fox Chase may change, but the amazing training environment is unwavering. Drs. Amanda Purdy, the Academic Programs Director and postdoctoral alum of Fox Chase, and Glenn Rall, the Associate Chief Academic Officer and Leader of the Postdoc Program, joined the discussion.

Dr. Bruce Ruggeri trained with Dr. Andres Klein-Szanto from 1989-1992. Although he has had many training environments and mentors throughout his career, Bruce points to his time at FCCC as his most formative. Bruce is currently the Senior Director at Incyte, a biotech company in the greater Philadelphia area.

Marge Einenkel, affectionately referred to as “Mother Marge” by Fox Chase’s postdocs for decades, was more than the administrative coordinator for the Center’s Postdoc Program: she was its heart. Overseeing the program from 1975 till her retirement in 2014, Marge watched over all the trainees, and was thought of by many as a mother away from home.
A tale of reconnection...

AMANDA: How did you reconnect after all these years?

MARGE: I've always joked that I read the obituaries every day just to make sure I wasn't in them! One day I came across a name that seemed familiar. After checking my files, I found that Ruggeri was indeed a familiar name; the woman who had passed was the mother of one of my old postdocs from the late 80’s-early 90’s. I wanted to reach out, to express my condolences about his mom’s passing, so I wrote him a hand-written letter and the rest, I guess, is history.

GLENN: Bruce, what were some of the things that came back to you about the Center after reading Marge’s letter?

BRUCE: Marge’s letter brought back a wave of memories about Fox Chase. That time in my career was very positive and formative, and Marge’s letter touched something that was very strong from the past. For most postdocs, you do your postdoc for additional scientific and technical training. What you don’t always think about is getting a good mentor. What I really value about this place is that I received such quality mentoring. That was due to people like Marge and my postdoc boss, Dr. Andres Klein-Szanto. It wasn’t just about the science. They taught you how to be a quality person, how to communicate.

GLENN: Indeed! There’s an environment, a culture about Fox Chase that is supportive of its trainees and their growth as scientists in addition to their science.

GLENN: Bruce, what were the main reasons that you wanted to give back to the Center?

BRUCE: My time at Fox Chase made me not just a better scientist, but a better person. I wanted to support Fox Chase’s trainees, support their development in and outside the lab. I want the money to act as a catalyst. Given to her by one of her beloved charges, this cross-stitch illustrates Marge’s supportive role within the Postdoctoral Association.

With this donation, we’ve invited speakers chosen by trainees, sponsored a scientific writing class, awarded travel grants, and ran various career development seminars. In addition, the money has helped to sponsor social events like Frickle Night at the Hop Angel Bauhaus, a local pub in Fox Chase. All of these things have helped to build a community. What we hope is that the readers of this Newsletter will read this story and it will incentivize them to give to the program to then inspire the next group of postdocs.
This year marks the 20th anniversary of the Postdoc and Graduate Student Research Symposium, a conference that provides the Center’s trainee community with an opportunity to present their work as oral and poster presentations. In previous years, 8-10 trainee talks would speak alongside a keynote speaker selected by graduate students and postdocs. This year, to celebrate this milestone, we decided to change things up a bit. First, the event has moved to Knowlton Mansion, a local historic venue in Northeast Philadelphia. Second, three of the Center’s postdoc alums (Dr. Katrina Cooper, Caretha Creasy and David Allman) served as keynote presenters, each presenting their research and sharing stories about their time at FCCC.

Finally, in response to a growing need to educate our trainees about additional careers in science, we invited five speakers (4 of whom are FCCC alums!) to discuss their careers in science writing (Dr. Josh Miller, ETHOS Health Communications), teaching (Dr. Joy Little, Drexel University), intellectual property (Dr. Matt Hartman, Akin Gump Strauss Hauer and Feld), knowledge management (Dr. Zachary Baquet, USAID Bureau for Food Security), and biotech (Dr. Marie Maradeo, Merck).

Professional Development beyond the bench
Fox Chase is committed to the growth and development of its trainees beyond the lab. In support of this commitment, the Academic Affairs team launched the HOW TO seminars, a series solely devoted to the development of those skills needed beyond talent at the bench to secure challenging jobs. Through the series, trainees learned how to manage conflict and handle difficult situations, as well as how to prepare for (and survive) an interview. With a goal of generating better communicators, Academic Affairs also hosted several sessions aimed at networking in face-to-face situations such as scientific conferences, and networking in silico through social media platforms, including LinkedIn and Research Gate.

This training in networking was put to the test for 11 postdocs awarded conference travel grants. The grants were made possible through a generous donation from Dr. Bruce Ruggeri, a postdoc alum of the Center (see the previous article).

**New Faces: 2014 and 2015**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>New Faces</th>
<th>Year</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JOHN KRAIS</td>
<td>December, 2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>joined Neil Johnson’s lab in December, 2014. John received his Ph.D. from Dr. Roger Harrison at the University of Oklahoma.</td>
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<td>November, 2014</td>
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<td>received his Ph.D. from Dr. Dimitri Pestov at Rowan University. Minshi joined Dr. Dave Wiest’s lab in November, 2014.</td>
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<td>November, 2014</td>
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<td>After receiving her Ph.D. in Dr. Jon Chernoff’s lab through collaboration with University of Pennsylvania, RACHELLE KOSOFF began her postdoctoral training in Dr. Sid Balachandran’s lab in January, 2015.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>November, 2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>YONGGUIANG LIU</td>
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<td>is a new postdoc in Dr. Zeng-Jie Yang’s lab as of November, 2014. He received his Ph.D. with Guang-Biao Zhou at the Chinese Academy of Sciences</td>
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<td>November, 2014</td>
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<td>ERIC WONG</td>
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<td>received his Ph.D. from Dr. Zia Rahman at the Penn State Hershey College of Medicine. Eric joined Dr. Luis Sigal’s lab in November, 2014.</td>
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<td>November, 2014</td>
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<td>ALISON KURIMCHAK</td>
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<td>joined Dr. James Duncan’s lab in September, 2014 after receiving her Ph.D. from Dr. Xavier Grafa at Temple University.</td>
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<td>November, 2014</td>
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<td>HAN-WEN CHANG</td>
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<td>received her Ph.D. in Dr. Vasily Studitsky’s lab at the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey. She began her postdoctoral studies when Dr. Studitsky’s lab joined the Fox Chase’s Cancer Epigenetics Program in October, 2014.</td>
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**Highlighting our achievements**

**Fellowships**

Yifan Wang from Neil Johnson’s lab was awarded a DoD Ovarian Cancer Teal Scholar Award

**Notable new jobs**

Daniel Rubio from Dr. Luis Sigal’s lab is now an Investigator at GSK

Lori Rink who trained in Dr. Andrew Godwin’s lab was recently promoted to Assistant Professor at Fox Chase

Tiffney Hartman, who trained in Drs. Lisa Henske and Alana O’Reilly’s lab, was promoted to Assistant Research Professor at Fox Chase

**Notable papers**


FOX CHASE CANCER CENTER POSTOC ALUMNI NEWSLETTER

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

FCCC excels in training postdocs to join the next generation of scientists. Recently the Academic Affairs team met with two of our trainees – Drs. Ilsiya Ibragimova and Krisna Duong-Ly – to discuss how their time at FCCC has helped propel their careers. Dr. Amanda Purdy, the Academic Affairs Director and postdoc alum herself, led the discussion.

AMANDA: Many scientists point to a defining moment in their lives that put them squarely on the path to a career in science. I was always interested in figuring out how organisms worked, how all the cells in the body cooperated to create a working, thinking being. This early love of biology, and a later interest in immunology naturally progressed into a career in science. How about you guys?

KRISNA: Growing up, I was very interested in diverse fields of study including science, math, and linguistics. The summer before college, I got an opportunity to work in a cancer research lab at Penn State. I've been hooked ever since.

ILSIYA: When I was a kid, I lived in the pages of the detective stories from Arthur Conan Doyle and Agatha Christie to James Hadley Chase. I dreamed of becoming a police detective and later of being a forensic scientist. During my undergraduate studies, however, I lost my mentor to brain cancer. This loss changed my focus to cancer research and I have never regretted the decision.

AMANDA: Fox Chase offers a unique training opportunity to its postdocs... with patients, trainees, clinicians and researchers all mixing together...FCCC has an excellent reputation for training postdocs with strong programs in cancer research, basic science and translational medicine. What brought you to FCCC?

ILSIYA: When I joined Paul Cairns’ lab, finished my Ph.D. and decided to further my career by doing a postdoc at FCCC in the same lab.

KRISNA: Prior to FCCC, I primarily studied enzyme actions and protein structure using biophysical methods. During my search for a postdoc, I sought a research project that was more broadly focused, and a research environment where I'd be closer to the clinical and translational aspects of my work. After visiting FCCC and interacting with members of the Peterson lab, I decided that FCCC was a great fit for me.

AMANDA: One of the things that I love about FCCC is the diverse origins of its trainees. People come from all over the world to be trained at FCCC! For instance, the Center currently has postdocs from India, China, Brazil, Mexico, Romania, Taiwan, Japan, Russia, Spain, Italy and of course the US. Krisna, what do you think about this diversity? How do you think this diversity contributes to FCCC’s success?

KRISNA: I think that diversity among the postdocs helps to foster a wide range of perspectives and approaches to science. No two of us have the same cultural and educational experiences. I have certainly benefited from interacting with colleagues from all different backgrounds and have incorporated new ideas and approaches into my research as a result of these interactions.

AMANDA: How about you Ilsiya? As someone that hails from almost halfway around the globe, what do you think about the diversity of FCCC’s trainees?

ILSIYA: The diversity within the postdoctoral community of FCCC creates a comfortable working environment for international trainees because people are more open-minded, patient and understanding. When people come from all over the world, they bring and share their own experience, knowledge and way of thinking and that has greatly influenced my approach to solving scientific problems and the way I perceive the world, and undoubtedly improved my communication skills.

AMANDA: The road to becoming a scientist is a long and twisty trail where one has to acquire a range of skills away from the bench. How has FCCC helped in preparing you for the next step in your scientific career?

ILSIYA: FCCC offers opportunities for professional development: career-oriented seminars, lunches with invited speakers, a grant writing course, and teaching and reviewer opportunities. We all are trained to be good researchers at FCCC, but when you are out to pursue an independent career in academia or elsewhere, you realize that excellence in bench science is not enough. Writing, communication and presenting skills are essential and I believe FCCC provides a unique opportunity not only to work in a stimulating scientific environment but also to be surrounded by scientific leaders who are willing to share their knowledge and help you advance on every step of your career path.

KRISNA: The collaborative nature of FCCC as a whole has been great for me as a trainee. I have gotten a lot of useful advice during internal seminars and poster presentations. I also greatly benefited from several programs specifically geared toward postdocs including the scientific writing course and the “How To” series.

Ilsiya Ibragimova
After receiving her MSc degree in Biochemistry in 2005 in Russia, Ilsiya joined Paul Cairns’ lab at FCCC to study epigenetic markers in prostate cancer. She received her Ph.D. in 2009 and has recently followed up her graduate studies in the same lab where her work now focuses on developing an epigenetic map focused on changes at the promoter level in kidney and bladder cancers.

Krisna Duong-Ly
With varied research interests including enzymology and protein structure, Krisna received her Ph.D. from Johns Hopkins School of Medicine in 2011. Later that same year, Krisna moved to Jeff Peterson’s lab at FCCC to pursue an interest in kinase signaling and inhibition of kinases by small molecules.
Looking forward

In the interview, Bruce pointed out the importance of giving back, and the gratification he has experienced in reconnecting with today’s trainees at the Center. Realizing that not everyone can be a presence at the Center due to distance or other commitments, we nevertheless want our trainees to know that they are being supported by previous generations of scientists. Thus, we plan to develop a “Postdoctoral Alum Donation Wall” on the second floor of the West Building, adjacent to the Postdoc Affairs office. All donations to the Center over $50 will be acknowledged with your name, and years that you were at the Center. More than just a list of names of donors, we’re also hoping to use old photos from the archives to underscore the connection across the years. We envision this will be a visible and powerful way to acknowledge your continued support, and to inspire our trainees. Please consider making a gift!

Pay us a visit!

We would love to show you around, and have you meet with some of our current trainees. If you’re going to be in Philly—or just haven’t been on campus in a while—reach out to us and we would be happy to schedule a visit. We think you’ll like what you see!

Help us make a difference!

1) Online donations can be made at: http://www.foxchase.org/giving/postdocs

2) Alternatively, donations can be made payable to FOX CHASE CANCER CENTER and mailed directly to:

Fox Chase Cancer Center
Attn: Academic Affairs
333 Cottman Ave
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Philadelphia, PA 19111

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