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1200 New York Ave. NW, Suite 635
Washington, D.C. 20005
202-326-6424 • 202-371-9849 (FAX)
info@nationalpostdoc.org
Katie Kelm, PhD, Editor-in-Chief
Alexandra J. Fiocco, PhD, Associate Editor
Leah S. Fischer, PhD, Associate Editor
Melissa Muller, PhD, Associate Editor

The POSTDOCket

The Official Newsletter of the National Postdoctoral Association

The 2011 Annual Meeting: Innovate, Network, Collaborate

Mahadeo Sukhai and Schaun Korff

Spring is around the corner and so is the NPA 9th Annual Meeting! The meeting will be held March 25-27, 2011 at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) campus in Bethesda, MD. Kei Koizumi, Assistant Director for Federal Research and Development at the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP), will deliver the Keynote Address.

The Annual Meeting features a number of exciting sessions and many opportunities for networking and collaboration. The agenda kicks off early Friday morning with a First-Timer's breakfast and orientation session. This session will introduce newcomers to the Annual Meeting and the NPA at large, describing the work of the Association and

the committees of the membership. The aim is to provide first-time members with an opportunity to get to know each other, informally network, and meet the leadership of the NPA and the membership committees. The Annual Meeting will formally start with the Opening Plenary session at 9 a.m., which will include a welcome from



the Chair of the Meetings Committee, a message on the State of the NPA from the Chair of the NPA Board, and a presentation of the Kauffman Foundation Outstanding and Emerging Postdoctoral Entrepreneurship Awards.

Annual Meeting, continued on page 4

Train-the-Trainer: A Different Approach to Responsible Conduct of Research

Stephen Fuchs and Sibby Anderson Thompkins

Ending in early 2009, the NPA's "Bring RCR Home" project was a national initiative to foster programming on the responsible conduct of research (RCR) for postdoctoral scholars at their "home" research institutions. Supported by the federal Office of Research Integrity, it aimed to support postdoc offices and associations in the development and execution of local programs tailored to the unique role postdocs play in the research enterprise. Below is a description of a RCR program that was developed with the help of a NPA Seed Grant.

In 2008 the University of North Carolina (UNC) at Chapel Hill received a NPA RCR Seed Grant to develop a RCR Train-the-Trainer program for postdoctoral scholars. A collaboration between the Office of Postdoctoral Affairs (OPA) and the School of Medicine set two goals for the program: 1) to develop a new short didactic course in advanced biomedical research ethics tailored towards the needs of postdocs, and 2) to create a teaching opportunity for select postdocs to engage first-year graduate students in

RCR, continued on page 8

New Meetings Committee and Outreach Committee Chairs

Cathee Johnson-Phillips

The NPA Board of Directors appointed new Chairs for the Meetings and Outreach Committees. Joseph P. Bernstein, PhD, will lead the Outreach Committee, and Schaun Korff, PhD, will lead the Meetings Committee. Bernstein assumes full duties this month. Korff will begin training as Chair-Elect, working with the current Chair, Mahadeo Sukhai, PhD, until the 2011 Annual Meeting, after which he will assume full duties as Chair of the Meetings Committee.



Joseph P. Bernstein



Schaun Korff

Bernstein obtained a master's degree in physics from the University of Kentucky, earned his doctorate in astronomy and astrophysics from the University of Michigan in 2008, and currently holds a postdoctoral fellowship at Argonne National Laboratory. He also held a U.S. Department of Education Areas of National Need fellowship at Kentucky and Rackham Graduate School Regents' and NASA/Goddard Graduate Student

Research Program fellowships at Michigan. His research includes four distinct areas of astrophysics as well as condensed matter physics, and he has authored or co-authored papers in four subjects. In addition, he has taught collegiate astronomy and physics and has graduate and postdoctoral leadership experience. He has been a member of the Postdoctoral Society of Argonne leadership board since November 2008 and was leadership meeting convener from August 2010 through January 2011.

Korff, a native of South Africa, completed his undergraduate training in biochemistry at North-West University, South Africa in 1997; his Master of Science in molecular pharmacology at the University of Hertfordshire, England in 2004; and received his PhD in pharmacology at the North-West University, South Africa before moving to Memphis in 2008. He is currently a postdoctoral fellow in the Department of Genetics at St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, where his work focuses on the DNA damage

response in brain tumors and exploring the utility of manipulating DNA damage signaling as a means to enhance brain tumor therapy. He is the current deputy chair of the Postdoctoral Association Council at St. Jude Children's Research Hospital and serves as Co-Chair of the Innovation Sessions Sub-Committee for the NPA 9th Annual Meeting.

Cathee Johnson Phillips is the Executive Director of the NPA.

ATTENTION: POSTDOCS

Do you need health insurance?

If your institution or PI does not provide health insurance or does not subsidize your premiums, you may be eligible for health insurance through a new NPA member benefit.

The National Postdoctoral Association (NPA) and Garnett-Powers and Associates, Inc. have joined together to offer the [Postdoctoral Scholar Injury and Sickness Insurance Plan](#).

- Low monthly cost, ranging from \$182.50 to \$215.50 per month (subject to change)
 - Access to a large nationwide panel of physicians
 - Low co-pays and co-insurance for doctor's visits, hospitalization, lab, x-ray and prescriptions
 - Coverage is available for your eligible dependents, including domestic partners
 - Maternity is covered
 - Coverage is guaranteed regardless of any medical condition
 - All J1 visa requirements for medical coverage, repatriation and medical evacuation are satisfied by enrollment in this plan.
 - Benefit coverage is provided through StudentResources, a UnitedHealthcare company specializing in university health programs
 - The postdoc must be a **full, individual member** of the NPA to be eligible for the plan; the full, individual membership fee for postdoctoral scholars is only \$35 a year

For more information or to enroll in this plan, [click here](#).



Leah Fischer Joins *POSTDOCket* Editorial Staff

Katie Kelm

After a nationwide search, the NPA is pleased to announce the recent selection of Leah Fischer, PhD, as a *POSTDOCket* Associate Editor. Fischer will join *POSTDOCket* Associate Editors Melissa Muller, PhD, and Alex Fiocco, PhD. Upon hearing of her selection as Associate Editor, Fisher said, "I was thrilled to be chosen as an Associate Editor and have the opportunity to write and edit articles for *The POSTDOCket*. I really look forward to being part of the team."



Leah Fischer

ter in Business Administration in 2002 from Boston University. She is currently a postdoctoral fellow/co-investigator at the University of Texas Health Science Center working on projects involving emergency department utilization among children enrolled in Medicaid/Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) and knowledge translation interventions in public health. Fischer's expertise has given her the opportunity to review manuscripts for a peer-reviewed journal and act as a consultant for a medical device manufacturer.

Fischer will replace Anne Bell, PhD, who has served as a *POSTDOCket* Associate Editor since 2009.

*Katie Kelm, PhD, is the *POSTDOCket* Editor-In-Chief.*

JOIN US!



Keynote Speaker:

Kei Koizumi
Assistant Director for
Federal Research
and Development
White House Office of
Science and Technology Policy
(OSTP)

Featuring:

- Plenary Sessions
- Hands-on Workshops
- Poster Session

The NPA 9th Annual Meeting

March 25–27, 2011
Bethesda, MD
National Institutes of Health Campus
Natcher Conference Center,
45 Center Drive, Bethesda, MD

Hosted and sponsored by

The NIH Office of Intramural
Training & Education (OITE)

Also sponsored by

Garnett-Powers & Associates, Inc

Read more and register

at

<http://www.nationalpostdoc.org/annual-meeting>
Registration closes March 11, 2011

Annual Meeting, continued from page 1

The NPA Innovation in Action sessions will bring together all attendees in small groups to foster innovation, networking, and collaboration. This year's workshop content features a series of concurrent leadership development sessions for postdoctoral scholars, postdoctoral association leaders, and postdoctoral office leaders. Two complementary sessions on scientific teaching are also being planned.

This year, the NPA is pleased to present a featured plenary panel presentation on the future of the postdoc. As the NPA approaches its ten-year anniversary in 2012, the NPA leadership is increasingly considering new and emerging trends related to postdoctoral researchers. What can postdocs, mentors, and administrators expect five to fifteen years down the line? How will this change the way we work, live, and grow in our careers? Friday's plenary session, "**The Future of Postdoctoral Training**," will feature a distinguished panel of three speakers: James H. Light-

bourne, PhD, Director of the Division of Graduate Education and Division of Human Resource Development, National Science Foundation; Sharon Milgram, PhD, Director of the Office of Intramural Training and Education, National Institutes of Health (NIH); and Rodney Ulane, PhD, NIH Research Training Officer and Director of the Division of Scientific Programs, Office of Extramural Programs, Office of Extramural Research.

The 2011 Distinguished Service Award will be presented in a special session on Saturday. The NPA Poster Session, featuring more than thirty-five poster presentations, will take place that afternoon and will showcase projects, activities, and success stories to enhance the postdoctoral experience. A plenary presentation on the NPA Core Competencies and the NPA Town Hall will close out the Annual Meeting on Sunday.

The 2011 Meetings Committee has worked extremely hard to put together an

exciting and novel program for the 2011 Annual Meeting. Our Local Host Subcommittee has also gone to great lengths to ensure that our time in the Bethesda area and on the NIH campus will be a great one. The committee welcomes everyone in the postdoctoral community from across the United States, Canada, and beyond and looks forward to hosting the meeting on the NIH Campus in March!

For more information and updates on the Annual Meeting and to register, please visit the Annual Meeting Web site at: <http://www.nationalpostdoc.org/annual-meeting>.

Mahadeo Sukhai, PhD, is a Postdoctoral Scholar at the University Health Network (Toronto, Canada) and is the 2011 NPA Meetings Committee Chair. Schaun Korff, PhD, is a Postdoctoral Research Associate at St. Jude Children's Hospital and is the Chair-Designate for the 2012 NPA Annual Meeting.

New Items at the NPA Store



www.cafepress.com/thenpastore

In the Spotlight: Tim Coetzee, PhD

Leah Fischer

Congratulations to Tim Coetzee, PhD, one of the NPA's founding advisors, for his recent appointment as Chief Research Officer at the National Multiple Sclerosis (MS) Society. In this new role, Coetzee is in charge of the MS Society's research programs and also oversees Fast Forward, LLC, a subsidiary focused on speeding promising research discoveries into commercial drug development.

In light of this exciting news, *The POSTDOCket* had the opportunity to speak with Coetzee about his career, his involvement with the NPA and the advice he has for NPA members. In addition to being involved in successful start-ups, Coetzee has dedicated much of his career to endeavors that, in one way or another, bolster the MS Society's pipeline of postdoctoral talent.

He began his career researching catalytic RNA. Coetzee was, in his words, a "hard-core RNA person, interested in understanding how molecules like RNA were transported in polarized cells." Early on, however, he left the bench and a faculty position in the Departments of Microbiology and Neuroscience at the University of Connecticut, taking a 180-degree turn to work for the National MS Society, a non-profit patient advocacy organization.

Although he knew from his own experience the challenges of life as a postdoctoral scholar, it was in his capacity as Director of Research Training Programs [at the MS Society] that he recognized the importance, from a policy standpoint, of forming an association for postdocs. "I really believed we needed to do something about extending our postdoc pipeline and ensuring that we had good talent."

As the idea for the NPA was developing, Coetzee offered a unique perspective from a patient advocacy organization, provid-

ing his insight as to the business-side of forming an organization and counsel as to the best practices found in the non-profit sector. "It was a valuable opportunity," he said, "and I was proud to be able to contribute in my small way."

When asked about the skills he learned during his time with the NPA, Coetzee responded, "the experience with the NPA helped me see what it takes to start up an organization and organize my thoughts when I wrote the business plan for Fast Forward, LLC." Then, he added, "The work with the NPA exposed me to the policy side of the world in a way that I would not have gotten as quickly [without the NPA]."

Not long after his involvement with the NPA, Coetzee spearheaded an initiative to develop a career transition fellowship at the MS Society. Saying that the fellowship was "a bit of a challenge" to create, Coetzee recalled the common reaction to his idea to give a postdoc an award totaling \$500,000 was "*Are you nuts???*" Coetzee is very proud of the success of the MS Society's Career Transition Fellowship, recognizing, among other things, that exposure to the NPA gave him the knowledge base and policy framework to put it together.

Coetzee had some advice for postdocs who are interested in following a career path similar to his. "What people who aren't from the scientific world respect more than anything is somebody who has a track record of scientific accomplishment...so my advice is publish those papers; get as many high quality publications as you can..." Other advice for those interested in pursuing a non-scientific path included reading outside of one's discipline and learning how to do a self-assessment for performance evaluations. Finally, he stressed that "it's going

to take time to develop the perspective and skill set...it's going to take continual engagement, learning and evaluation... asking, 'what are the gaps that I have?' to move forward."

Coetzee said that he believed many of his entrepreneurial skills have come from being a scientist, "because if you pursue science, you're not going to get paid a lot of money; you're doing it purely for the love. To me, that's emblematic of what an entrepreneur really does...I actually believe most people who are successful scientists are highly entrepreneurial, and they just don't know it."

Leah Fischer, PhD, is a Postdoctoral Fellow at the University of Texas Health Science Center – Houston and is an Associate Editor of the POSTDOCket.

NPA MEETING ROUND-UP

DECEMBER

- National Academies Committee on Science, Engineering, and Public Policy (COSEPUP), Washington, DC; Cathee Johnson Phillips, MA, NPA Executive Director, was in attendance.

JANUARY

- Burroughs Wellcome Fund, Durham, NC; Breakfast for Area Postdoc Offices; Update on NPA activities by Johnson Phillips.

FEBRUARY

- Medical College of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, WI; presentation "Gender Issues for Early-Career Scientists: Navigating the Leaky Pipeline"; by Kathleen Flint Ehm, PhD, NPA Project Manager.

The O-1A Visa: A Viable Alternative?

Brendan Delaney and Adam Frank

The O-1A is a temporary visa that requires “extraordinary ability” in the field of science, business, or athletics. As an employer-sponsored application, the employer must support the applicant and sign the forms that are sent to the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). They are not required, however, to advertise the position or recruit in any way.

The O-1A visa holds a number of advantages. Firstly, there is no numerical cap placed on the amount of O-1A visas granted by USCIS. In contrast, at the time of writing this article, the H-1B cap for the 2011 federal year is close to being reached, which means that subject employers will soon no longer be able to apply for H-1B visas on behalf of potential employees. Secondly, unlike an H-1B applicant, an O-1A visa candidate is not required to obtain a waiver of the two-year foreign residence requirement (if subject based upon section 212(e)). Finally, there is no statutory limitation on the duration of time that an individual can

remain in O-1A status; initial approval can be up to three years, with one year increments thereafter.

Overall, the O-1A visa can be offered as an alternative when other temporary visas are unavailable. But is it a viable alternative? The standard for obtaining an approval for the O-1A is (for scientists) an exacting one. To be approved, an applicant must be able to show extraordinary ability in their field.

The requirements to qualify for O-1A status include evidence that the applicant has received a major internationally-recognized award (e.g., Nobel Prize) or evidence of at least three of the following documentations: receipt of nationally or internationally recognized prizes or awards for excellence in the field of endeavor; membership in associations in the field for which classification is sought, which requires outstanding achievements of their members, as judged by recognized national or international experts in the field; published material in professional or major trade publications, newspapers, or other major media about the applicant and the applicant’s work in the field; original scientific, scholarly, or business-

related contributions of major significance in the field; authorship of scholarly articles in professional journals or other major media in the field; a high salary or other remuneration for services as evidenced by contracts or other reliable evidence; participation on a panel, or individually, as a judge of the work of others in the same or allied field; and/or employment in a critical or essential capacity for organizations and establishments that have a distinguished reputation. If the above standards do not readily apply to the applicant’s occupation, the employer may submit comparable evidence in order to establish eligibility.

In order to fully evaluate an applicant’s credentials, including the types of evidence and documentation that will be required for the O-1A visa, a prospective applicant or employer should discuss their specific case with an attorney prior to proceeding with this type of application.

Adam Frank, Esq. and Brendan Delaney, Esq. are at the law firm of Leavy, Frank & Delaney, LLC (www.leavyfrank.com), which specializes in immigration law. The firm conducts legal seminars for international postdoctoral scholars on behalf of the NPA.

HELP LEAD THE NPA



The National Postdoctoral Association (NPA) is currently seeking a strong, dedicated leader to serve as Vice Chair of the Advocacy Committee.

This position provides great opportunities:

- To develop or hone leadership skills
- To expand professional networks
- To advance the mission of the NPA
- To work with a wonderful group of colleagues from across the United States.

Most business is accomplished via teleconference, e-mail, and long-distance communications. No experience is needed. Postdocs and administrators are strongly encouraged to consider service in this position.

If you would like to be considered for the position of Vice Chair of the Advocacy Committee, please **[follow this link](#)** for more details. The deadline for application is March 18, 2011.

Institutional Research and Academic Career Development Award Focuses on Diversity

LaShauna Myers Connell

The Institutional Research and Academic Career Development Award (IRACDA) is supported by the Minority Opportunities in Research (MORE) Division of National Institute of General Medical Sciences (NIGMS). IRACDA postdoctoral fellows conduct research at Research 1 (R1) institutions and teach at partnering minority-serving institutions. A major goal of the program is to enhance the research and science curricula at minority-serving institutions and to encourage these students to pursue careers in science. As a result of the program's mission, postdocs from underrepresented minority groups are especially attracted to the program. Another goal of the IRACDA program is to increase the number of underrepresented minority faculty who receive tenure at R1 universities. The National Study of Postsecondary Faculty found that the number of tenured PhD faculty in the biological and agricultural sciences in 2003 was 41,940 for non-underrepresented minorities, compared to 3,247 for underrepresented minorities, or less than 8 percent.

The PENN-Postdoctoral Opportunities in Research and Teaching (PORT) program at the University of Pennsylvania, which includes recipients of the IRACDA fellowship, sponsors postdocs in numerous research disciplines, and current alumni are in faculty positions nationwide. An interview was conducted with PENN-PORT alumni James Munoz, PhD, who was a recipient of an IRACDA fellowship and is now an Assistant Professor at Nova Southeastern University (NSU) in Fort Lauderdale, FL.

Connell: Did the IRACDA program help you prepare for your current position?

Munoz: By having a mentored teaching experience, I knew what to expect. Since

I was prepared for the first year, I transitioned smoothly and was able to effectively balance my time and teaching load.

Connell: Did the IRACDA program hinder your publication production?

Munoz: While it did slow down my productivity during my teaching year, it was worth it. Additionally, I think I still would have the same number of publications without the teaching experience.

Connell: What would you have done differently in your postdoctoral career to prepare for your faculty position?

Munoz: I would have picked my research model more carefully. There is no animal facility at NSU. I would have worked on an animal or species that would have allowed me to transfer my research to an undergraduate institution versus developing a new research program.

Connell: Any advice to postdocs who are preparing for faculty positions?

Munoz: You must find a way to stand out because there will be other candidates who can also give a good lecture and who have equal academic credentials. For example, prepare exam questions or study guides. This is something that I did during one of my interviews, and I later received positive feedback.

Connell: Do you keep in contact with past mentors at this stage of your career?

Munoz: I try to keep in touch regularly. It is very important to keep in touch with past mentors since they are great resources.

Connell: As a new faculty member, are you assigned a mentor?

Munoz: I received a faculty mentor and protective time from service committees.

Connell: Would you recommend the IRACDA program?

Munoz: I would definitely recommend the program. The postdoctoral cohort really helped me by giving me feedback. The similar goals and interests [of the postdocs] exposed me to different teaching styles and techniques and prepared me for interviews.

For more information on the IRACDA, please visit the following Web site: <http://www.nigms.nih.gov/Training/CareerDev/MOREInstRes.htm>

LaShauna Myers Connell is the Recruitment and Diversity Coordinator at The University of Pennsylvania Biomedical Postdoctoral Programs.

NEWS

Review of National Research Service Award Programs

The National Academies have released their most recent review of the National Research Service Award (NRSA) Program. The recommendations call for increased funding to support more NRSA positions; reinstating a 2001 commitment to increase pre-doctoral and post-doctoral stipends; expanding the Medical Science Training Program by at least 20%; changing the indirect rate on training grants and K awards; improving the professional and career development of trainees; and more reliable data management that can support improved program evaluation and future coordination. The full report can be found at the following Web site: http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=12983.

Proposal for a new Substance Use, Abuse, & Addiction Institute

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) received the formal recommendation from the Scientific Management Review Board to create a new Institute that would focus on substance use, abuse, and addiction research. The new institute would integrate the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA), and other NIH Institutes and Centers. For more information, please refer to the following Web site: <http://www.nih.gov/news/health/nov2010/od-18.htm>.

State of the NPA

Zoe Fonseca-Kelly

Dear NPA Membership:

The Board of Directors is charged with the leadership, governance and oversight of the NPA and outlines its long-term strategic goals. The 2011 Board of Directors welcomes four new members, who join the seven members serving the final year of their two-year term.

Introducing the incoming Board members, they are:

Zoe Fonseca-Kelly, PhD, Chair;
L. David Finger, PhD;
Jay Morris, PhD; and
Mahadeo Sukhai, PhD.

Recognizing the veteran Board members, they are:

Garth Fowler, PhD, Vice-Chair;
Stacy Gelhaus, PhD, Treasurer;

David Taylor, PhD, Oversight Officer;
Anthony J. Baucam, PhD;
Lori Conlan, PhD;
Rachel Ruhlen, PhD; and
Lorraine Tracey, PhD.



Recognizing the outgoing Board members, they are:
Ian Brooks, PhD;
Daniel Gorelick, PhD;
Andrew Hebbeler, PhD; and
Richard Nowakowski, PhD.

Three of the incoming members (Fonseca-Kelly, Finger and Morris) join the Board of Directors after serving on the Outreach Committee. Sukhai joins from the Meetings Committee, although he will continue to serve as the Chair of that committee until the Annual Meeting takes place in March.

In recognition of the significant achievements that the NPA has made in recent years and drawing upon its members' diverse and varied backgrounds, the Board will work together to foster the NPA's

continued growth and development as an association for postdoctoral scholars.

The NPA 9th Annual Meeting, to be held in Bethesda, MD, is soon approaching. The Annual Meeting is a great opportunity for postdocs, postdoc administrators, faculty and others interested in postdoctoral training to network and exchange ideas. This year's meeting features a variety of interesting workshops, such as *Leadership Skills for Postdoctoral Scholars; Marketing for Scientists; Balancing Work/Family Responsibilities; and Using Social Media to Build Relationships and Market Your Program Effectively*. You can also look forward to an exciting plenary session addressing the future of postdoctoral training.

The Board of Directors, all the Committee Leaders, and our Executive Director look forward to seeing you at the Annual Meeting to share ideas that will strengthen the NPA in the coming years.

Zoe Fonseca-Kelly, PhD, is a Postdoctoral Scholar at University of Pennsylvania and the Chair of the Board of Directors of the NPA.

RCR, continued from page 1

the biomedical sciences on concepts of RCR. The objectives for the course were to provide a basic overview of biomedical research ethics and to encourage postdocs to think about the impact of their research on society. The course included major contributions from the postdocs themselves, members of the Parr Center for Ethics at UNC, members of university oversight panels, and faculty both within and outside the field of biomedical research.

The RCR training program took advantage of the expertise on campus to give a more timely and applied perspective to the problems facing scientists. For example, the discussion on animal welfare was led by the Director of UNC's Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee. Similarly, discussions of authorship and academic practices were led by the University's Research Integrity Officer.

One of the primary objectives of the OPA at UNC is to help postdocs prepare for future careers. As such, this training pro-

gram was an opportunity for postdocs to obtain teaching experience. In partnership with the biomedical graduate programs at UNC, an annual small group discussion course in RCR was developed for nearly 100 graduate students. After completing the postdoc RCR course, postdoc instructors received additional instruction in leading small group discussions and then developed instructional materials in the core areas of RCR (plagiarism, authorship, mentorship, research misconduct, animal and human studies, and societal responsibility).

To date, RCR training has had a positive impact in three respects: there is enhanced interest in RCR training, evidenced by increased enrollment in the postdoc course from 30 to 100 attendees over the past two years; interest in teaching the graduate RCR course has more than doubled, allowing for the development of a team approach where two postdocs partner to offer a wider perspective on RCR issues; and lastly, RCR training has allowed postdocs to take ownership and leadership on campus. Overall, teaching

and organizing RCR has built relationships all across campus with students, faculty, and administrators. In turn, the university is beginning to realize the value of postdocs, not just as researchers, but as future faculty and mentors.

By the end of this academic year, more than 200 postdocs will have completed the ethics course and nearly 300 graduate students will have received RCR instruction. The course has successfully encouraged postdocs to think about the impact of their research on society. Moreover, by building a community of scholars trained in RCR who discuss ethics on a regular basis, a cultural shift is created within the basic science departments that promotes open discussions among faculty, students and staff.

Stephen Fuchs, PhD, is a Postdoctoral Research Associate at UNC-Chapel Hill in Biochemistry and Biophysics and the Postdoc RCR Coordinator. Sibby Anderson Thompson, PhD, is the Director of Postdoctoral Affairs at UNC-Chapel Hill.

NPA Committee Quarterly Reports

The following section is devoted to summarizing the vast array of activities underway within each of the four NPA Committees of the Membership – Advocacy, Outreach, Resource Development and Meetings. If you are interested in gaining professional experience in postdoc issues at the national level, please contact a Committee Leader directly. We seek interested and dedicated individuals who are willing to volunteer 3-10 hours/month. A comprehensive list of NPA Committee leaders can be on the NPA Web site (<http://www.nationalpostdoc.org/about-the-npa/our-leadership-a-governance/committees-officers/committee-leaders-a-officers>).

Advocacy Committee

Rashada Alexander and Juliet Moncaster

In February 2010, President Obama released his FY2011 budget that included a 6% increase in the amount of money allocated to the National Institutes of Health (NIH) National Research Service Award (NRSA) training stipends. Although FY2011 began on October 1, 2010, Congress passed a Continuing Resolution (CR) at the end of September 2010 to fund federal programs for FY2011 at FY2010 levels through December 3, 2010. Late in December 2010, Congress passed a short-term CR to appropriate funds through March 4, 2011. On February 19, the House passed HR 1, a CR for the remainder of 2011 that would cut NIH funding by \$1.6 billion below the 2010 level and National Science Foundation funding by \$369 million. The Senate is expected to vote on this bill the week of February 28.

The Budget for the United States Government, Fiscal Year 2012 was released on Feb. 14, 2011. The President's Budget includes "an across-the-board increase of four percent for stipends under the Ruth L. Kirschstein National Research Service Award (NRSA) training program."

The Advocacy Committee (AdCom) is not only still advocating for increases in the NRSA stipends through advocating against cuts in funding for research and development for FY2011 but is also concentrating advocacy efforts in support of the 4-percent increase in stipends for FY2012.

AdCom is currently looking for a volunteer with PLONE software IT experience to help with updating and managing the institutional database that holds information on the postdoc policies for different institutions throughout the nation. If any of the topics discussed above interest you, or if you have other ideas that should be brought to the attention of the committee, please feel free to contact Juliet Moncaster or Rashada Alexander. Additionally, AdCom will be presenting a workshop at the NPA 9th Annual Meeting and encourages anyone interested in postdoc-related advocacy issues to attend.

Juliet Moncaster, PhD, is a Senior Postdoctoral Associate at the Boston University School of Medicine and is the Chair of the NPA Advocacy Committee. Rashada Alexander, PhD, is an AAAS-NIH Science and Technology Policy Fellow and is Vice-Chair of the NPA Advocacy Committee.

Outreach Committee

Joe Bernstein

With the approach of the NPA 9th Annual Meeting, the Outreach Committee's (OC) related activity is in high gear, including strategy development for National Postdoc Appreciation Week exposure, digital and social media coverage planning, T-shirt design, and preparation of the OC poster. In addition, the committee is reviewing its operational and organizational setups during the New Year committee chair transition.

Highlights from the 2010 OC report by outgoing Chair Zoe Fonseca-Kelly, PhD, showed the committee's effectiveness, as supported, for example, by another successful National Postdoc Appreciation Week. This event took place last fall in 31

states plus Canada at 87 institutions with a total of 141 events. On September 23, 2010, the U.S. House of Representatives passed H. Res. 1545, officially recognizing National Postdoc Appreciation Week as the week beginning the third Monday of September annually.

Additional OC news includes the continued success of the growing NPA social media presence as exhibited by healthy efforts on sites such as LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter. If you are not a member of the NPA group on those sites, please consider joining.

In addition to general OC membership openings, there is currently an opportunity to have an immediate impact on the national stage as the 2011 OC Vice-Chair (see the NPA Web site for details about the call for candidates). If you are interested in this position, feel free to contact me directly at jpbernst@anl.gov.

Joseph P Bernstein, PhD, is a Computational Postdoctoral Fellow at the U.S. Department of Energy's Argonne National Laboratory and Chair of the NPA Outreach Committee.

Resource Development Committee

Pallavi Eswara and Sanjukta Chakraborty

In what turned out to be a great (and busy) year, the Resource Development Committee (RDC) achieved several significant milestones. With the gracious help of many volunteers, the committee completed a number of projects and began others to further develop useful tools and resources for the postdoctoral community.

Fulfilling one of its charges, the RDC planned, developed, and distributed the Annual Survey to all NPA members. The committee very much values member feedback, translating survey data into a clear message about how the team can more effectively serve the postdoctoral community. The RDC also worked diligently to compile a comprehensive database of professional societies repre-

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senting a range of disciplines. In addition to the Professional Societies Database, the committee developed a resource for international grants, which can be used to get an overview of the various agencies that will fund research conducted by international postdoctoral scholars. Lastly, the RDC assembled and uploaded to the NPA Web site a list of resources containing an assortment of Web sites and books covering subjects of interest to postdocs (e.g., job search and career advancement). These resources were recommended by volunteers and members of the NPA leadership – Thank you! A work in progress, this list is expected to grow as more interesting resources for postdocs are identified.

The RDC has many exciting projects lined up for 2011, which will add to the array of tools and resources currently available on the NPA Web site. But, the committee needs your help! Would you like to make a difference in your peers' postdoctoral training experience? Provide your ideas and input concerning the career development section of the NPA Web site before it undergoes a facelift. Alternately, join the team and assist with the development of several guides addressing important issues, such as loan deferment, dual careers, and conflict management. Or, come to work with the RDC as it takes a closer look at careers beyond the bench, and help identify other hot topics in the postdoc world. If you are interested in learning more about any of these projects specifically or more about the RDC's action plan for the year, please contact either Pallavi Eswara (email: pxe10@psu.edu) or Sanjukta Chakraborty (email: schakraborty@tamhsc.edu). Hope to see you on the team soon!!

Pallavi Eswara, MS, is a Postdoctoral Office Administrator and is Chair of the NPA Resource Development Committee. Sanjukta Chakraborty, PhD, is an AHA Postdoctoral Research Associate at Texas A&M Health Science Center and is Vice-Chair of the NPA Resource Development Committee.

Meetings Committee

Mahadeo Sukhai and Schaun Korff
The major focus of the Meetings Committee has been the upcoming NPA 9th Annual Meeting. For more information, please see "The 2011 Annual Meeting: Innovate, Network, Collaborate" in this issue [POSTDOCKET 9(1)].

Mahadeo Sukhai, PhD, is a Postdoctoral Scholar at the University Health Network (Toronto, Canada) and is the 2011 NPA Meetings Committee Chair. Schaun Korff, PhD, is a Postdoctoral Research Associate at St. Jude's Children's Hospital and is the Chair-Designate for the 2012 NPA Annual Meeting.

NPA Member Round-Up

Thank you to the following Sustaining Members that have joined or renewed their membership since the last issue of *The POSTDOCKET*.

NEW

- California Institute of Technology
- Life Tech
- Max Planck Florida Institute
- The Research Institute at Nationwide Children's Hospital

RENEWED

- American Association for Cancer Research
- American Chemical Society
- American Society for Microbiology
- Brigham and Women's Hospital
- City of Hope Beckman Research Institute
- Colorado State University
- Dartmouth College Postdoctoral Association
- Desert Research Institute
- Emory University School of Medicine
- Ernest Gallo Clinic and Research Center
- Harvard Medical School
- Indiana University
- Los Alamos National Laboratory
- Maine Medical Center Research Institute
- Medical University of South Carolina
- Michigan State University
- National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases
- National Organization of Gay and Lesbian Scientists and Technical Professionals
- Pacific Northwest National Lab
- Penn State University

- Rice University
- Rockefeller University Postdoctoral Association
- Rutgers University
- Syracuse University
- TGen Translational Genomics Research Institute
- Thomas Jefferson University
- Tufts University
- University of Alberta
- University of Arizona
- University at Buffalo, State University of New York
- University of California, Irvine
- University of Chicago
- University of Georgia
- University of Nebraska-Lincoln
- University of Nebraska Medical Center
- University of North Carolina-Charlotte
- University of North Texas Health Science Center
- University of Rochester
- University of South Florida
- University of Tennessee Health Science Center
- University of Texas M.D. Anderson Cancer Center
- University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston
- University of Virginia
- Vanderbilt University Medical Center
- Washington University in St. Louis
- Whitehead Institute for Biomedical Research
- Wistar Institute