Graduate Programs Newsletter
June 2021 Edition

NEWS

Graduate Student Publications!

Mohammed Almatani and Atham Ali (Dr. Alachiak, advisor: CXPT Program) were first and second author respectively, on a publication titled, “Strategies targeting FLT3 beyond the kinase inhibitors” published in Pharmacology and Therapeutics, September 2021. The article can be accessed here. Mohammed completed his MS degree in May and was recently accepted into a PhD program at Utah State University. Pictured on right.

Yuqiao Liu and Yiling Meng (Dr. Alachiak, advisor: CXPT Program) were first and second author respectively, on a publication titled, “Ceregulation of apolipoprotein C2 gene in cancer: A potential metabolic vulnerability” published in Clinical and Translational Medicine, May 2021. The manuscript can be accessed here. Yiling completed her MS this Spring and will be joining the PHTS PhD Program this Fall at the USC School of Pharmacy. Pictured on left.

Dr. Karui Peng (Drs. Mangul and Alachiak, co-advisors, CXPT Program) was first author on a publication titled, “Diversity in immunogenomics: The value and the challenge” published in Nature Methods, May 2021 and can be accessed here. This manuscript was a collaborative effort that involved 52 researchers from 17 regions including the USA, Canada, Norway, France, Sweden, the UK, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Israel, South Africa, Nigeria, Chile, Peru, China, India, Japan, Taiwan, and French Polynesia. Karui also won the Best TA Award from the School of Pharmacy. Pictured on right.

Jeffrey Yu (Dr. Lakdawalla, advisor: HLEC Program) was second author on a manuscript titled, “The economics of alternative payment models for pharmaceuticals” published in the European Journal of Health Economics. March 2021 and can be accessed here. Jeffrey was also invited to give a Podium presentation at ISPOR 2021 for his research project titled, “Development of a Survey-Based Predictive Model for Clinical Dementia Rating.” Jeffrey will give a different podium presentation for his project titled, “The Impact of Non-Binding FDA Guidelines on Primary Endpoint Selection in Alzheimer’s Disease Trials” at ASHEcon 2021. Jeffrey was awarded the Best RA Award from the School of Pharmacy in recognition of his efforts. Pictured on left.

National Fellowships and University-Funded Student Awards!

AFPE Fellowships - Kabir Ahluwalia (Dr. Louie, advisor: CXPT Program) was selected as a recipient of the 2021-2022 American Foundation of Pharmaceutical Education (AFPE) Pre-Doctoral Fellowships in Pharmaceutical Sciences! Mansour Dughbah (Dr. Beringer, advisor: CXPT Program) secured a second year of AFPE funding for the 2021-2022 academic year. Kabir and Mansour will each receive $10,000 to be used toward educational expenses.

USC Student Recognition Awards - Joshua Silva (Dr. Davies, advisor, CXPT Program) was awarded the PhD Achievement Award, which is a highly selective honor and is reserved for students with exceptional academic profiles, in fact, the School of Pharmacy only awards up to six awards annually. Josh was also awarded the Translational Award from the School. Kabir Ahluwalia (Dr. Mangul, advisor, MS in PSCI Program) received the Order of Arete Award, which is awarded to graduating students who demonstrated significant depth and scope of responsibility in leadership roles benefiting their peers and their broader communities. Karui Peng will be joining the PHTS PhD Program this Fall.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Graduate Student Town Hall on Thursday June 24th at 12 pm: The Graduate Affairs Office and the PGA will be hosting a virtual Town Hall meeting to address any questions or concerns students may have about the graduate student experience. All graduate students are encouraged to attend. To submit concerns or topics for discussion anonymously, click here. Zoom link can be accessed here. Please email phargrad@usc.edu for any additional questions.

20th Annual Moving Targets Symposium on Thursday, August 19 and Friday, August 20: This year the Annual Moving Targets Symposium will focus on “Stem Cell Therapy: Healing the Body with Regenerative Medicine.” This conference will be hosted via Zoom by the American Association of Pharmaceutical Scientists (USC Chapter) over two half-days on Thursday and Friday.

Conversations, Connections, and Community (CCC) drop-in sessions on Thursdays at 3:30 PM: All graduate students are welcome to join us at the CCC drop-in sessions on Thursdays at 3:30 PM. These drop-in sessions are casual virtual conversations with Dr. Aguilinga and Wade Thompson-Harper. These conversations are meant to be a safe space to vent, share good news, or even just catch up with peers! Drop in every Thursday-No need to RSVP, no appointments, and webcam use is optional Zoom Meeting ID #: 971 9337 8073; Password: 027745 or click HERE.

The student seminar series will go on break for the summer.

PROFESSOR WELLNESS RESOURCES

Project Wellness has compiled a list of resources to help students cope during the time of physical distancing.

MindfulUSC Mindfulness and Self-Compassion Zoom Sessions on Mon, Wed, and Fri - 12:00 - 1:00 PM: MindfulUSC will be hosting Online Mindfulness and Self-Compassion Drop-in sessions every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 12:00 - 1:00 PM. This is a great way to destress, gain perspective, practice self-compassion, and cultivate your mindfulness skills to stay in the present. Join here.

Virtual Yoga Classes on Tues at 5:15 PM and Wed at 6:30 PM: Project Wellness is offering live yoga classes via zoom every Tuesday at 5:15 PM and every Wednesday at 6:30 PM. Log in to zoom for these live weekly yoga session led by Jennifer Watson. Join Here. (Password: 401706)

Web-based Long-term Counseling with In pathology: In pathology, a web-based individual counseling service, is available as a long-term counseling option for students at SHIPAlum.

USC Counseling and Mental Health Services: Students continue to have access to counselors, even as academic programs have moved online. Students have the option of 1) “Let’s Talk” On Zoom Sessions, which are informal community sessions facilitated by a counselor; 2) individual appointments to talk to counselors, these are “one-on-one” appointments available both through TeleHealth and can be done in-person if necessary; or 3) Group Counseling via TeleHealth, the group counseling schedules will be posted soon online. For more information on all the options mentioned above, please check: studenthealth.usc.edu

Free Fitness Classes/Workouts: Project Wellness has compiled a list of free videos and workouts that can be done at-home: click here.

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CONGRATULATIONS

Mario Alba (Dr. Stiles, advisor; PSCIS Program) won the Best TA Award.

Dr. Yuna Ban-Sheen (Dr. Soond, advisor; HLEC Program) received the Outcomes Award.

Amy Tran (Dr. Guth, advisor, MPTX Program) was selected as an intern in the 2021 Investigative Laboratory Science in Developmental and Reproductive Toxicology Intern at Merck.

Zhefu Dai (Dr. Zhang, advisor; PSCI Program) received the Best RA Award.

Tiange Dong (Dr. Louie, advisor; CXPT Program) won the Best RA Award.

Hao Guo (Dr. Hamm-Alvarens, advisor; PSCIS Program) won the Discovery Award.

Eunjun Hong (Dr. Beringer, advisor, CXPT Program) won the Best TA Award.

Dr. Lequina Myers (OMS Reg Sci Pro- gram) was awarded the Regulatory Science Award.

Prashil Pandelali (Dr. Duncan, advisor; PSCIS Program) was the 1st Place winner of the FoodChefs by Bon Appetit magazine.

Rachel Reyes (Dr. Davies, advisor, CXPT Program) was hired as a Postdoctoral research fellow at CILA/Urban Research Institute.

Dr. Anh Truong (Dr. MacKay, advisor, MPTX Program) was awarded the Rom Alkana Award. Dr. Truong defended his dissertation titled, “Thermost-responsive Biopolymers modulate cell signaling” in May and began his new position as Field Application Scientist at Agilent Technologies.

Photo credit: Isaac Mora

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Photo credit: (Dr. MacKay, advisor; MPTX Program)