GRADUATE STUDENT RECOGNITION DAY

AWARDS CEREMONY

April 21, 2016
Department of Biological Sciences
University of Illinois at Chicago
PROGRAM

Welcome: Dr. Henry F. Howe, Director of Graduate Studies

Presentation of Awards: Department Faculty

Award for Excellence in Teaching:

Deanna Arsala       Bios 220 Mendelian and Molecular Genetics
John Belcik          Bios 100 Biology of Cells and Organisms
Jenny Dalton        Bios 101 Biology of Populations and Communities
Kristin Gallik       Bios 100 Biology of Cells and Organisms
Kellen Marshall    Bios 101 Biology of Populations and Communities
Jason Palagi        Bios 220 Mendelian and Molecular Genetics
Yesha Patel         Bios 100 Biology of Cells and Organisms
Daniel Pers         Bios 223 Cell Biology Laboratory
Alyssa Ray          Bios 220 Mendelian and Molecular Genetics
Yanina Tovpeka      Bios 220 Mendelian and Molecular Genetics

Award for Research Achievement:

Maria Elena Blanc-Betes
Victoria Hunt
Jane Kim
Mark Lloyd
David Lowenstein
Laura Manning
Matthew McCary
Yanina Tovpeko
Sandra Troxell-Smith
Leon Venegas

Reception
GRADUATION LIST
The following students were awarded degrees in 2015-2016

Katherine Barkus  M.S.
Deebika Balu   Ph.D.
Zane Deliu   M.S.
Michelle Frack  M.S.
Paul Huber   Ph.D.
Victoria Hunt   Ph.D.
Mark Lloyd   Ph.D.
Ashley Martin   Ph.D.
Robin Mores   Ph.D.
Hilmarie Muniz-Talavera Ph.D.
Yanina Tovpeko   Ph.D.

PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION
The following students passed their preliminary exams in 2015 -2016

Susan Alterio    Beth Drewniak
Deanna Arsala    Brian Grewe
Dina Beeler Muscat  Abdel Halloway
Nolan Bielinski   Jason Palagi
Brigitte Browe   Honghu Quan
Ji-In Choi    Alyssa Ray
Lorna Cohen    Sarah Zinn

ENTERING CLASS OF 2015-2016

Rashida Abdul-Ganiyu
Kimberly Atteberry
John Belcik
Chih-Wei Chen
Jennifer Dalton
Margaret Dickson
Megan Garfinkel
Valentina Gomez
Jarrad Hampton-Marcell
Anika Hazra
Chih-Yu Pai
Emily Potratz
Sarah Turner
Fellowships

Rashida Abdul-Ganiyu, American Association of University Women International Fellowship
Natalia Cortés-Delgado, Colciencias Graduate Fellowship
João Marcos Guimarães Capurucho, CAPES Science without Borders Scholarship
Anna Czupryna, Lincoln Park Zoo Fellowship
Abdel Halloway, National Science Foundation Fellowship
Amanda Henderson, Illinois Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation Bridge to the Doctorate Fellowship
Percy Jinga, Fulbright Scholarship
David Lowenstein, Dean’s Scholar Fellowship
José-Cristian Martinez, Diversifying Higher Education Faculty in Illinois Fellowship
Matthew McCary, National Science Foundation Postdoctoral Research Fellowship in Biology, University of Wisconsin at Madison
Matthew McCary, Institute for Environmental Science and Policy Predoctoral Fellowship, University of Illinois at Chicago
Lillian Perez, Illinois Louis Stokes Alliance for Minority Participation Bridge to the Doctorate Fellowship
Sandra Troxell-Smith, National Science Foundation Fellowship
Dawson White, National Science Foundation Fellowship
Publications

Ecology and Evolution:

Maria Elena Blanc-Betes

João Marcos Guimarães Capurucho

Nicholas Crouch
Thomson, Caroline E., Bayer, Florian, Cassinello, Mar, Crouch, Nicholas, Farrell, Samantha, Heap, Elizabeth, Mittell, Elizabeth and Hadfield, Jarrod D. 2016, Selection on parental performance opposes selection for larger body size in a wild population of blue tits, Evolution, accepted manuscript.

Anna Czupryna

Jennifer Dalton

Beth Drewniak
Megan Garfinkel
Milligan, Megan; Johnson, Matthew D.; Garfinkel, Megan; Smith, Chris; and Njoroge, Peter. February 2016. Quantifying pest control services by birds and ants in Kenyan coffee farms. Biological Conservation 194: 58-65.

Victoria Hunt

Percy Jinga
Jinga, P., Palagi, J. and Ashley, V. M. (2016). Development of microsatellite loci of pod mahogany, Afzelia quanzensis (Fabaceae), by Illumina shotgun sequencing, and cross-amplification in Afzelia africana. Applications in Plant Sciences. [Accepted].

Mark Lloyd
"Evaluation of PAX8 Expression and Its Potential Diagnostic and Prognostic Value in Renal and Extra
"Darwinian dynamics of intratumoral heterogeneity: not solely random mutations but also variable

David Lowenstein
Lowenstein, D.M., K.C. Matteson, and E.S. Minor. 2015 Diversity of wild bees supports pollination
Lowenstein, D.M., and E.S. Minor. Diversity in flowering plants and life history characteristics:
Integrating humans as a driver of urban floral resources. Accepted. Urban Ecosystems.

Jose Cristian Martinez
restoration and management on the community of surface-active arthropods. Biological Conservation. 190: 154-166.

Matthew McCary
restoration and management on the community of surface-active arthropods in the metropolitan Chicago
region. Biological Conservation 190: 154-166.
McCary, M.A., R. Mores, M. Farfan, and D.H. Wise. 2016. Invasive plants have different effects on
trophic structure of green and brown food webs in terrestrial ecosystems: a meta-analysis. Ecology
Letters 9: 328-335.

Robin Mores
McCary, M.A., R. Mores, M. Farfan, and D.H. Wise. 2016. Invasive plants have different effects on
trophic structure of green and brown food webs in terrestrial ecosystems: a meta-analysis. Ecology
Letters 9: 328-335.

Michael Ricketts
Ricketts MP, Poretsky RS, Welker JM, Gonzalez-Meler MA. 2016. Soil bacterial community and
functional shifts in response to thermal insulation in moist acidic tundra of Northern Alaska. SOIL.

Sandra Troxell-Smith
Troxell-Smith, Sandra M., Miller, Lance J. (2016) “Utilizing Natural History Information for Zoo Animal
Management: A Case Study with Okapi (Okapia johnstoni).” Journal of Zoo and Aquarium Research 4:
38-41.
Troxell-Smith, Sandra M., Tutka, Michael J., Albergo, Jessica M., Balu, Deebika, Brown, Joel S.,

**Todd Widhelm**


**Molecular, Cell, and Developmental Biology:**

**Lorna Cohen**


**Jane Kim**


**Honghu Quan**


**Yanina Tovpeko**


**Leon Venegas**

Xin Wang

Nicholas Waszczak

Neurobiology:
Laura Manning

Manuscripts Submitted or In Review
Yang Chen
Muhammad, D., Huot, Bethany; Oh, Sookyung; Chen, Yang; Wu, Huini; Baek, Jennifer; Montgomery, Beronda; Warpeha, Katherine M. ADT5 and ADT6 coordinate light-directed development in the seed-to-seedling transition in Arabidopsis thaliana. Plant, Cell & Environment. March, 2016 [Manuscript submitted].

Lorna Cohen

Paul Huber
Huber, P. Title: Function of the C. elegans T-box factor TBX-2 depends on interaction with the UNC 37/Groucho corepressor, Developmental Biology. [In review].

Sandra Troxell-Smith
Todd Widhelm

Huini Wu
Presentations

**Elsa Anderson**
Anderson, E., Minor, E., Evaluating historic, local, social, and landscape drivers of species diversity in vacant lots in Chicago, IL, USA. International Association of Landscape Ecologists Annual Meeting, Asheville, NC, April 3-7, 2016
Anderson, E., Minor, E., Evaluating low-input techniques for increasing plant diversity in highly degraded sites. Midwest-Great Lakes Society for Ecological Restoration Meeting, Bloomington, IN, April 1-3 2016

**Deanna Arsala**

**Dina Beeler**

**Maria Elena Blanc Betes**
Blanc-Betes, ME, Gomez-Casanovas, N, Welker, JM, Gonzalez-Meler, MA. Deeper winter snow reduces ecosystem C losses but increases the global warming potential of Arctic tussock tundra over the growing season. Presentation at the American Geophysical Union Meeting. December 2015.

**Brigitte Browe**
Browe, Brigitte. The role of the Endocannabinoid System on the Extreme Neuroprotection of the African Naked Mole Rat. Invited Speaker at the Medical University of Vienna Department of Molecular Neuroscience Conference. August 2015.

**João Marcos Guimarães Capurucho**

Stephanie Chancellor

Adit Chaudhary

Yang Chen
Chen, Yang, Montero, Carlos, Okkema, Benjamin, Orozco-Nunnelly, Danielle, Muhammad, D, Williams, A, Ronan, T, Warpeha, K. Light regulation of Arabidopsis PIRIN1 indicates plant and human pirin functions. Poster presentation at Plant meeting 2015.

Lorna Cohen

Natalia Cortes-Delgado

Anna Czupryna

Beth Drewniak
Drewniak, B., Dynamic root impacts on productivity and evapotranspiration, CESM Working Group Meeting, Boulder, CO, February 9, 2016. (oral presentation)
Drewniak, B., Dynamic Root Distribution in the Community Land Model, AGU Fall Meeting, San Francisco, CA, December 17, 2015. (poster)
Drewniak, B., Dynamic Roots in ALM, ACME PI Meeting, Albuquerque, NM, November 2, 2015. (poster)
Valentina Gomez  

Brian Grewe  
Grewe, Brian. Characterization of the novel mouse gene, Vwa8. Poster presentation at the Annual American Society of Cell Biology Meeting; San Diego; December 2015

Brook Herman  

Paul Huber  

Imrose Kauser  

Jane Kim  

David Lowenstein  
Lowenstein, D.M. West Cook Wild Ones Native Plant Conference, Pollinators, Predators and, Parasitoids: who are these insects and how can they be attracted to our gardens? Dominican University, May 2015, River Forest, IL

**Margaret Malone**

**Laura Manning**
Invited to speak at Loyola Neuroscience Society at Loyola University in Chicago. November 2016.
Entitled "Talk nerdy to me: The importance of science communication and outreach."

**Ashley Martin**
Martin, A. The C. elegans sarcoplasmic reticulum calcium-ATPase regulates nicotinic acetylcholine receptor ACR-16 expression. 2015, Poster, Neuroscience 2015, Chicago, Illinois
Martin, A. Regulation of the nicotinic acetylcholine receptor ACR-16” 2015, Poster, 20th International C. elegans Meeting, Los Angeles, CA
Martin, A. The C. elegans sarcoplasmic reticulum calcium-ATPase regulates nicotinic acetylcholine receptor ACR-16 expression. 2015, Presentation, Midwest C. elegans Meeting 2016, Grand Rapids, MI

**José Cristian Martinez**

**Matthew McCary**

**Daniel Pers**
Sandra Troxell-Smith

Yanina Tovpeko
Tovpeko, Y.*, and Morrison, D.A. September 2015. Bacteria give each other the best gifts: DNA exchange in Streptococcus pneumoniae is mediated by sigma factor switching. Ripon University, Wisconsin. Invited Speaker.

Huini Wu

Sarah Zinn

Grants, Scholarships, Honors, and Awards
Elsa Anderson: Chancellor's Graduate Research Award; Graduate College Excellence in Undergraduate Mentorship Award; Best Student Oral Presentation at Midwest-Great Lakes SER Chapter Meeting
Brigitte Browe: LAS Faculty of Science Grant awarded to Thomas Park and Jennifer Schmidt
João Marcos Guimarães Capurucho: City College of New York Research Foundation / Dimensions of Diversity Travel Grant 2015
Stephanie Chancellor: UIC Provost's Award for Graduate Research. Fall 2015
Lorna Cohen: Peer-to-Peer Training Fellowship - Insect Genetic Technology Research Coordination Network, November, 2015; Fellowship to Princeton to work with Dr. Peter Andolfatto and learn multiplexed shotgun genotyping
Anna Czupryna: Columbus Zoo Conservation Fund- grant, June 2015; IFAW (International Fund for Animal Welfare) sponsorship to attend the 2nd International Dog Population Management Conference, Istanbul; UIC WISE Graduate Research Award awarded on April 14, 2015
Jennifer Dalton: NSF Graduate Research Fellowship Program Honorable Mention, 2016
Jason Davlantes: Bodmer International Travel Award, 2015
Megan Garfinkel: Chancellor's Graduate Research Award
Valentina Gomez: Best Talk Award - The X Neotropical Ornithology Conference and XXII Congresso Brasileiro de Ornitologia. Manaus, Brasil; The Society for Integrative and Comparative Biology Fellowship of Graduate Student Travel Award.
Eun Sun Kim: Chicago Consular Corps Scholarship for the academic year of 2015-2016
Percy Jinga - 2015 Elmer Hadley Graduate Research Grant award; ROAAP Fund to cover publication costs awarded by the UIC Library
Margaret Malone: Bodmer International Travel Award; UIC Elmer Hadley Award
Ashley Martin: Finalist - UIC Image of Research Competition
Alexis Smith: Public Art to Reduce Bird-Window Collisions was funded last year by UIC's Sustainability Fund
Yanina Tovpeko: Award for Best Graduate Student Talk -59th Annual Wind River Conference on Prokaryotic Biology, Estes Park, Colorado.
David Lowenstein: Urban Ecosystems Ecology Springer Travel Award, August 2015
Jose-Cristian Martinez: Elmer Hadley Graduate Research Award
Alexis Smith: scholarship from Transmitting Science to attend the course Introduction to Agent Based Models using NetLogo; Elmer Hadley Graduate Research Grant
Sarah Zinn: UIC Provost's Award for Graduate Research.

Other Research, Teaching, and Service Activities

Elsa Anderson: Judge at Chicago Area Undergraduate Research Symposium on April 9, 2016;
Mentored Independent Research and Honors College students for Capstone Project: Dina Saadeh (BIOS 399), Ify Ndwuku, (BIOS 399), Denisse Herrera (BIOS 399, recipient of Honors College travel grant to present her work at MEEC), Sara Colin (BIOS 399, capstone, recipient of Honors College travel grant to present her work at SER)
Deanna Arsala: MCDB Journal & Troubleshooting Club Director
Brigitte Browe: Departmental tour of the neurobiology group's animal facilities; University of Nevada, Reno's Upward Bound program;
Stephanie Chancellor: Research Mentor for Honors Senior Project
Adit Chaudhary: Mentored Honors College students for Capstone Project: Jennifer Arista (Summer 2015), Hillary Pham (Summer 2015)
Lorna Cohen: Biological Graduate Student Association Event Coordinator; Graduate Employee Union Elected Steward
Anna Czupryna: Windsor Elementary School (Arlington Hts, IL) "Scientists on Safari" presentation; Professional Women's Panel Discussion- DePaul University; Young Researchers Collaborative-inquiry-based science for middle school - Science Celebration Speaker; Prosser High School Career Day speaker; HOBY- Lunch with Leaders- career day seminar for high school students; Resurrection High School Women in Science Science Club Chat; Resurrection High School Women in Science Career Day speaker; UIC-GWIS- Women in Science Panel for Undergrads; Expanding Your Horizons- workshop to provide middle school girls opportunities in STEM fields; Workshop volunteer
for "Saving Species with Feces" with Dr. Stacy Rosenbaum (University of Chicago-Lincoln Park Zoo); GEMS- Girls Exploring Math and Science keynote speaker and workshop volunteer.

Ece Eksi: UIC Graduate Student Council (GSC) Representative

Valentina Gomez: Reviewer of manuscript for Checklist Journal; Active member of the non-profit conservation biology organization SELVA: Research for Conservation in the Neotropics

Brian Grewe: Elected representative of the Biological Sciences Graduate Policy Committee; Organizing member: 2016 Laboratory of Integrated Neuroscience’s Spring Symposium; Biological Graduate Student Organization Neurobiology Liaison; Undergraduate Student Liaison – Annual Meeting of the Society for Neuroscience; Undergraduate poster judge - UIC BioS 485, Neuroscience II; Undergraduate poster judge - UIC BioS 286, Biology of the Brain; Upward Bound Q&A panel discussion

Imrose Kauser: Graduate Student Council- Biological Sciences Representative.


Margaret Malone: UIC Image of Research Competition Finalist - "One Fish, Two Fish"; Field Museum of Natural History, Members’ Night volunteer, Fishes Division; Summer 2015 - John G. Shedd Aquarium High School Marine Biology Program mentor

Laura Manning – Hosted two undergraduates at Society for Neuroscience Meeting

José Cristian Martinez: Tropical Woodland Restoration with NAPIRE (Native American and Pacific Islander Research Experience). Las Cruces Tropical Biological Station, Costa Rica; Tropical field instructor for undergraduates at Las Cruces; Mentored 3 undergraduate students (1 from UIC, 2 from University of Hawaii); Graduate student field assistant for the Biology Colloquium week long field trip to Mammoth Caves, Kentucky May 2015; Curation and digitalization of the Hamilton insect collections house at UIC: Hamilton: 3,774 specimens from 402 species; Invited presentation to the Evanston North Shore Bird Club; College Prep STEM Expo; Science Club, a science tutoring club led by a partnership between Northwestern's Science in Society and the Boys and Girls Club of Chicago; Volunteer at the True Value Club in Little Village; Expanding Your Horizons, a STEM outreach

Michael Ricketts: SES Biological Sciences Colloquium organizer; E&E Happy Hour organizer; Elected E&E student representative for the Graduate Policy Committee

Alexis Smith: Field Museum Volunteer entering data from years of dead birds donated by Willowbrook Wildlife Center

Yanina Tovpeko: Advisor for Alpha Phi Omega - Sigma Sigma Chapter, the co-ed community service fraternity on campus.

Leon Venegas: Big Brothers Big Sisters; Biology Graduate Student Association-President; Graduate Policy Committee-Student Body representative

Nicholas Waszczak: Internship - EPA's Office of Research and Development under the direction of the National Homeland Security Research Center (NHSRC) at the Threat and Consequence Assessment Division; Forest Preserve District of Cook County volunteer in ecological restoration

Dawson White: Founder – UIC Evolution Discussion Group

Todd Widhelm: Pritzker Laboratory at the Field Museum Mentor; Public Outreach at the Field Museum: Talk to a Scientist Hour, This is How We Science, Members’ Night, Boy Scout Badge Day, and Dozin with the Dinos