

Nurturing Relationships:

Updates from the JHU/NHGRI Genetic Counseling Training Program

Welcome to the Fall 2013 edition of the Johns Hopkins University/National Human Genome Research Institute Genetic Counseling Training Program Newsletter. This newsletter is intended to highlight achievements and events in the Hopkins/NHGRI community. In this issue we introduce the class of 2016, share summer stories from the class of 2015 and provide exciting alumni updates. Enjoy!

WELCOME, CLASS OF 2016!!

In August 2013, the following members of the class of 2016 arrived. Please give them a warm welcome if you see them in your clinic, around campus or attending classes!



Claire Anderson

Claire Anderson

Claire grew up in northeast Ohio and graduated from Kenyon College in 2010, where she majored in biology and minored in anthropology. After graduation, she went abroad to Copenhagen, Denmark where she studied chromosomal translocations in Danish patients as part of her Fulbright Grant. Claire has spent the two years since then researching testicular cancer in a genetics lab at Cornell University and volunteering with the Finger Lakes Cancer Resource Center. She is thrilled to begin training to become a genetic counselor and looks forward to getting to know the people of Hopkins and Baltimore.



Kyle Davis

Kyle Davis

Kyle was born and raised in Austin, Texas. He graduated from Purdue University in 2006 with a degree in Psychology and Behavioral Neuroscience. He has held a series of positions in healthcare, from a summer internship at the Sydney Children's Hospital in Sydney, Australia, to working as a Clinical Coordinator at PPD, Inc. running phase I pharmaceutical trials, to volunteering as a recovery aid at Planned Parenthood of New York, to most recently working in an administrative capacity at Weill Cornell Medical College in the ophthalmology department. In between working at PPD and Weill Cornell, he became interested in publishing and worked in the editorial department at the Writers House Literary Agency and Viking/Penguin Publishing. There, he was able to work with many fantastic authors for both fiction and non-fiction books. However, he is excited to be back among his science- and biology-loving peers, and is thrilled to be seeking a degree in genetic counseling at JHU/NHGRI. Within genetics, he is interested in cancer and cardiac genetics, genomics, and hopes to write about genetics as well.



Jennifer Kohler

Jennefer Kohler

Born and raised in the San Francisco Bay Area, Jennefer recently graduated from the University of Washington with a BS in Molecular, Cellular, and Developmental Biology. Realizing her love of genetics early on, Jennefer began working in a genomics lab at UW her freshman year and continued through her junior year. She also spent two summers interning in a genetics lab at Stanford University. Jennefer learned an incredible amount during her time in the labs: sequencing skills, the delicacies of RNA editing, and how to track positive selection. In the excitement of the labs, she began exploring career options and found that genetic counseling was the perfect fit: she can stay on the cutting edge of genomics while using her skills to better healthcare. Since then, she has volunteered at Cancer Lifeline, an emotional support clinic, and anxiously awaited graduation. She is very excited to have moved to Baltimore to experience the other coast!



Wendy Su

Wendy Su

Wendy hails from Chiayi City, Taiwan, and immigrated to California when she was 10. She graduated from the University of California, Berkeley with BA's in music and neurobiology in 2011. After graduating, she worked as a research assistant in a cardiovascular and cancer genetics lab in the Academia Sinica in Taiwan, during which she saw the potency harbored in a single nucleotide substitution mutation within a single gene in guiding the increased aggressiveness of human cancer cells. This piqued her interest in human genetics research and its indications in the clinical environment. Her internship at the genetics department in The Center for Cancer Prevention and Treatment in Orange, California solidified her passion for genetic counseling, especially in the advent of whole-genome sequencing. Wendy is a travel enthusiast and enjoys composing music, reading, thrifting, and learning about different cultures in her free time.

Orientation to the program was jam-packed this year, and we are grateful to the faculty and students who participated! We ended with a student-led scavenger hunt to introduce the first year students to the sites and sounds of the NIH campus.

Summer Activities

The GCTP has long-encouraged its students to take advantage of the wealth of genetics opportunities available to them locally and globally over the summer. We asked the class of 2015 to describe how they embraced these experiences during their training.



Cari in Australia

Cari Young

I spent a wonderful summer in two very different places. I began the summer in Brisbane, Australia with two weeks each at Specialized Obstetric and Gynaecological

Imaging, a private prenatal clinic, and Genetic Health Queensland at the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital. Then I headed to Phoenix, Arizona, where I spent five weeks at the Virginia G. Piper Cancer Center. It was a fabulous summer seeing such different clinics and healthcare systems, and I was able to meet some great people and see some amazing places along the way.

Megan Bell

I spent my summer in St. Cloud, MN rotating with the genetics team at Centracare Health. It was inspiring to watch this team work together in their well established cancer and prenatal clinics and set up a general genetics clinic. The highlight of my summer, though, was spending a week at the Minnesota MDA camp with my eight year-old camper, Hallie. We had a blast swimming, fishing, and playing basketball, and I was so thankful to be a part of such a special week!



Megan and her camper, Hallie, at MDA Camp

Nina Harkavy

In June, I was lucky enough to spend a week with alumna **Megan Truitt Cho ('09)** and her genetic counseling colleagues at Columbia Presbyterian Hospital in New York observing prenatal and pediatric cases. June and July were spent with genetic counselor Jill Goldman at the Taub Institute and Neurological Institute of New York. I had an amazing experience participating in neurogenetics counseling with Jill and her colleagues, seeing a range of cases from Huntington's Disease to ALS to prion disease. I'm so grateful for this fascinating experience and for the chance to spend the summer at home in New York!

Marci Barr

I spent six weeks this summer with the Genomes2People research group (including alumna, **Sarah Kalia '11**) at Brigham and Women's hospital in Boston, Ma. While there I worked

on a variety a translational genomics research projects and also had a small taste of both clinical and laboratory genetic counseling settings. Afterward, I flew to Salt Lake City, Utah for the Myriad Genetic Counselor Student Internship Program. This was a two-day experience where we

(one student from each GC program) met genetic counselors in various roles and toured their laboratory.!

Graduation 2014!

Save the date for graduation on **January 17th, 2014** at the Cloisters on the NIH campus, where our third year students will present their theses (topics listed below) and we will celebrate their many accomplishments in the program.

Ellen Macnamara

The Role of Uncertainty in Coping Efficacy: The Experience of Parents of Children with Undiagnosed Medical Conditions
Ellen's study addresses the uncertainty parents face when raising a child with an undiagnosed medical condition. It explores dimensions of uncertainty and the relationship between uncertainty, coping efficacy and the moderating affects of personality traits.

Rachel Shapira

Adaptation to Living with a BRCA1/2 Mutation in Carriers and their Partners

Rachel's study aims to describe adaptation and dyadic adjustment in unaffected BRCA1/2 carriers and their partners. It is not fully understood how women and their partners adapt to high-risk status over time, nor how different aspects of living at risk relate to this process. This will be the first study to systematically measure psychological adaptation and dyadic adjustment in this population.

Presentations at the NSGC Annual Education Conference

All four of our recent graduates and several of our students will be presenting at the NSGC Annual Education Conference in Anaheim this year.

On **Saturday, October 12th, at 3 pm**, **Sally Rodriguez ('13)** will present her thesis work, titled "*Translation and Validation of a Spanish-language Genetic Literacy Screening Tool*" and, concurrently, **Cari Young ('15)** will present an abstract she submitted in collaboration with the ClinSeq® study team titled, "*Preferences for results delivery from Whole Exome Sequencing/Whole Genome Sequencing: Results from ClinSeq® Focus Groups.*"

Additionally, several of our GCTP alumni and students will be presenting posters at this year's AEC. On **Thursday, October 10, from 6:00pm – 7:00pm**, the following posters will be presented:

Weiyi Mu ('13) *"Challenges of Living with Frontotemporal Dementia: Understanding the Perspective of the Affected Individual Through Blog Content Analysis"* (Poster #54)

Dana Petry ('13) *"Likelihood of Use of a New Adult Genetic Risk Assessment Clinic"* (Poster #88)

Ilana Solomon ('13) *"Living in Lynch Syndrome Limbo: Understanding the Meaning of Uncertain Genetic Test Results"* (Poster #60)

Nina Harkavy ('15) *"Intersex Differences: Implications for Genetic Counseling Practice Guidelines"* (Poster #48)

On **Friday, October 11, from 12:45-1:45 pm**, the following posters will be presented:

Marci Barr ('15) "Understanding and Preferences: Informed Consent for Genetic Research in Individuals with Sickle Cell Disease" (Poster #75)

Megan Bell ('15) *"Intimate Partner Violence During Pregnancy: The Role of the Prenatal Genetic Counselor"* (Poster #151)

2013 Program Reunion at the AEC

Our program reunion will be held on the evening of **Friday, October 11, at 7:30 pm** at Tortilla Jo's in the Downtown Disney district. Hoping to see many of you there!

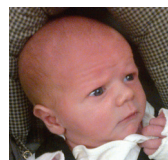
SBRB Anniversary Event

On October 30th, 2013, SBRB will be celebrating its 10th anniversary with a day of scientific celebration on the NIH campus. There will be scientific presentations starting at 10 am in the morning with featured speakers, Richard Street

and Robert Green, and a poster session and exhibit hall in the afternoon, starting at 1 pm. All festivities will take place on the first floor of building 50 on the NIH campus and all GCTP alumni are welcome to attend!

ALUMNI UPDATES

Congratulations to our alumni who successfully passed the ABGC board exam this summer: **Yue Guan ('12)**, **Leila Jamal ('12)**, **Weiyi Mu ('13)**, **Dana Petry ('13)**, **Sally Rodriguez ('13)** and **Ilana Solomon ('13)**. Well Done!!!



Adam Piquado

Meredith Weaver ('06) wrote to share that Baby Boy Adam Piquado was born Aug 20th at 6:40pm, 8 lb 21 in. All doing well... especially big sister Danica who has started to give him kisses on the head when he cries (not sure it helps, tho!)"



Nora Jane Burnette

Baby Nora Jane Burnette was welcomed on August 21st, at 8:21 pm by her mom, **Gillian Hooker ('09)**, dad and big brother Oliver. She is excited to be joining the GCTP community!

Morgan Butrick ('10) is excited to be starting a new position at the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Disease. Welcome back to the NIH, Morgan!

We invite you to continue sharing your personal and professional news with us so that we can update the JHU/NHGRI GCTP community. Gillian can be reached at hookerg@nih.gov and Barb can be reached at barbarab@mail.nih.gov.