



Special points of interest:

- Thoughts on entering the job market
- Exploring Careers in Non-Profits event
- Postdocs attend the Annual Genomic Science program

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Committee Updates

Professional Development

Exploring Careers in Non-Profits. 11:30am-1:00pm Thursday, March 28th, Atrium in the Food Safety and Toxicology Building

Guests: Sheril Kirshenbaum - Executive Director of Science Debate, hosts NPR's "Serving Up Science", Author (<http://www.sherilkirshenbaum.com/>) and Sarah Pinder - Engagement Director of the Michigan Non-Profit Association (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/sarah-pinder-03641329/>) **Sign-up:** <https://goo.gl/forms/AdWBTW96RLOcTjvv1>

Optimizing Research Mentoring Relationships with Your Graduate and Undergraduate Mentees. Friday, March 29th from 9am-4pm (8:30am, light breakfast; lunch included). Chittenden Hall, Rm 110. Sign up here: <https://grad.msu.edu/events>

Check out Professional Development events at grad.msu.edu/calendar

Additional events/workshops open to postdocs can be found at the COGS website: <https://cogs.msu.edu/calendar/>

Fall Travel Award

Applications are due April 12, 2019 at 5pm. Call for applications will be sent out soon.

Social

Tuesday, March 26th , MSU PDA goes to Biology On Tap—Event is free! Doors open at 7pm, event starts at 7:30pm at The Loft (414 E Michigan Ave, Lansing). Learn about avian and insect immunity. Drinks available for purchase and you can bring your own food.

RSVP: <https://goo.gl/forms/Y1hvf6MOXgXgedDu1>

Postdoctoral Accomplishments

-**Ana Sofia Mendes Leal** (Department of Pharmacology and Toxicology) was awarded a travel award to attend the AACR-Targeting RAS-Driven cancers meeting, held in San Diego in December 2018.

-**Marielle N. Smith** (Department of Forestry) published a [paper](#) in *New Phytologist* which describes their use of fine-scale ground lidar to investigate how the structure of Amazon forests responds to seasonal water stress and drought. Watch a [short video](#) on their field site in the Brazilian amazon.

Published a paper? Awarded a grant? Have something else to celebrate? Let us know! Email the PDA Newsletter (grad.newsletter.pda@msu.edu) your accomplishment and we will feature it in our next newsletter.

Postdoc news and activities

MSU Postdocs attend the Department of Energy's 2019 Annual Genomic Science Program

A few of our postdocs attended the Department of Energy's 2019 Annual Genomic Science Program in Tysons Corner, VA February 25-27 to represent the Great Lakes Bioenergy Research Center (GLBRC). It was a perfect occasion to visit the Lincoln Memorial and see a few other landmarks in Washington D.C. Pictured from left to right: **Pedro Beschoren da Costa** (PSMS), **Anne-Sophie Bohrer** (BMB), **Acer VanWallendael** (DOE-PRL), **Matthew Reid** (PSMS) and **Lukas Bell-Dereske** (Kellogg Biological Station).

Anne-Sophie Bohrer, postdoc in the Takahashi lab (BMB department, GLBRC) was selected to be an ASPB Ambassador. ASPB Ambassadors are enlisted to communicate the mission and vision of the American Society of Plant Biologists to fellow plant biologists and the general public. Throughout the year, Anne-Sophie will have to complete two activities to communicate the importance of plant sciences. As one of the activities, Anne-Sophie is coordinating the organization of the Fascination of Plants Day event at MSU that will take place Saturday, May 18 2019 at the Art Lab, the newest extension of the MSU Broad Museum.



Michigan State University, Postdoctoral
Association (MSU-PDA)

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MSU-PDA Steering Committee—Nov. 2018

The MSU PDA is an association of postdoctoral fellows from all disciplines across the Michigan State University campus.

Special Opportunities

Publications

Dear fellow postdocs,

Wishing you all a very productive New Year! Hope everything is going great for your organization and your research. The Journal of Postdoctoral Research [www.postdocjournal.com] has been publishing postdoc research for several years now and is currently working on a spin-off journal entitled 'Postdoc Life Science'. This new journal will be focusing only on life sciences research with the goal to be indexed in MEDLINE/PubMed. The launch date is set for 1st April 2019.

Please note of the following rich possibilities and benefits of the new Postdoc Life Science Journal and how it can make a difference in your research career:

- 1. Call for papers:** We are inviting research papers, reviews, methodologies, commentaries, perspectives, progress articles, clinical case summaries and research highlights to be published in the upcoming issues of Postdoc Life Science. Submissions for the inaugural issue may be sent-in by March 1st.
- 2.** We are inviting nominations for our **Postdoc of the Month award**. Please send-in nominations [self, or PI recommended] to Editor-in-Chief@PostdocJournal.Com. Only Postdocs in life sciences are eligible to apply.
- 3. Editorial and other activities** are available for postdocs, please touch base with us with a brief description on your interests. In addition, we are proposing an associate editor position for a post-doc association (PDA) board member who could bridge between the journal and PDA to update the editorial board on current postdoctoral publications and activities. This new initiative will showcase and highlight former, current and future postdoc's contribution to life sciences research, conduct exclusive international conferences, recognize accomplished postdocs with monetary awards and institute postdoctoral research grants, just to name a few. Please send in your thoughts, comments and your willingness to participate in this endeavor.

We look forward hearing from you soon!

Sincerely,

Nimrat Chatterjee, M.S., PhD
Postdoctoral Associate
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Editor-in-Chief
Postdoc Journal

Theo van den Broek. M.D., Ph.D.
Postdoctoral Associate
Boston Children's Hospital/Harvard Medical School
Editor-in-Chief
Postdoc Journal

Training

R-Ladies, East Lansing

Spring Workshop Series continues on March 18th from 6-7:30pm in 1400 BPS. Sign up here: bit.ly/rlel-meetup

From the Newsletter Committee

We are soliciting short commentary pieces for the newsletter. Topics can include anything deemed relevant to post-docs at MSU. Including: professional development opportunities and/or advice, "a day in the life" blog-type pieces, book reviews, etc.

Please send an article pitch to: grad.newsletter.pda@msu.edu



Freelance Scientific Consultant

Does helping someone stuck with a complex problem excite you? Are you eager to put your expertise to good use? Join Kolabtree (www.kolabtree.com) – the world's leading freelance platform for scientists that matches freelance PhD-qualified experts with projects that need their skill set. As a freelance scientific consultant, you get the freedom to decide your own rates and work on projects that match your interests.

With [projects](#) worth more than \$3.5 Million posted on the platform, Kolabtree is trusted by over 2400 businesses and researchers. We currently have [6000+scientists](#) and academics from across 2000+ scientific disciplines, including PhDs from prestigious institutions such as Stanford University, Harvard University, MIT, and Oxford University.

Kolabtree functions on a marketplace model where experts can bid for high value projects across services such as data science, scientific consulting, statistical analysis, food science and technology, medical writing, scientific writing, literature search, experimental design, and scientific editing.

So, you could help someone find the best software to conduct a statistical analysis, or guide someone to the right resource for obtaining their next round of funding, help a startup design the right algorithm for their platform, or maybe advise someone stuck with designing a suitable test for a research study.

You quote your own price while bidding for projects. Kolabtree's service fee is automatically calculated while you're submitting your quote. Clients are required to deposit the entire project fee in an escrow account, and freelancers are paid once the client indicates that s/he is satisfied with the output. For long-term projects, payouts can be done based on mutually decided milestones.

If you're a Postdoc/PhD looking to explore an exciting freelance consulting opportunity, get started by signing up on Kolabtree as a freelancer: <https://www.kolabtree.com>. It only takes a few minutes to create a free profile and get featured on our website.

Connect with us on [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#), and [Facebook](#) to remain abreast with the latest developments.

Research on Postdoc Career Perceptions

My name is John Vasquez and I am a 4th year PhD Doctoral Candidate in Higher, Adult, and Lifelong Education at Michigan State University. I am seeking participants for my dissertation, which is under the supervision of Dr. Brendan Cantwell. The purpose of this study is to gain a more in-depth understanding of how postdocs differ in terms of their perceptions of tenure-track faculty careers, their self-appraisal for readiness for a career, and their ability to access and use career resources to help in their decision-making process about future career paths.

Participation in this study is voluntary and involves completing a brief screening survey that will take approximately 2-3 minutes to complete. If selected, you will then be asked to participate in a three-part interview regarding your career and professional development. There is minimal to no risk associated with participating in this study. The minimal risk is that you may feel mildly uncomfortable due to being asked questions about your future career trajectory, however the benefits could include more clarity on what you want to do in the future. In addition, if selected and you participate in all three interviews, you will be compensated with a \$75 electronic Amazon gift card.

In order to participate in this study, you must: (a) have received a doctoral degree in a science or engineering field and (b) be currently employed in a postdoc position.

Should you have any questions prior to or during the research study, you may email me at johnnav@msu.edu, or email my academic advisor at brendanc@msu.edu. You may also contact, anonymously if you wish, the Michigan State University's Human Research Protection Program at 517-355-2180, Fax 517-432-4503, or e-mail irb@msu.edu or regular mail at 4000 Collins Rd, Suite 136, Lansing, MI 48910.

This study was approved by Michigan State University's Human Subjects Institutional Review Board Project #00001984 on January 22, 2019.

If you are interested in participating in the study, please click the link below to access the pre-survey questionnaire. Your responses will be completely anonymous and confidential.

(Screening survey TBD)

Thank you for your time and interest in this study!

Sincerely,

John A. Vasquez
Doctoral Candidate
Michigan State University

Professional Development—Special Opportunity

The Postdoc Academy

Digital professional development for postdocs

NIGMS grant number: [1R25GM121257-01A1](#); \$1.8M over five years

Partner institutions: Boston University, Northwestern University, Michigan State University, and University of Wisconsin-Madison

Goal: To create a comprehensive digital and in-person professional development program called the Postdoc Academy, available to postdocs nationwide.

Project overview: The *Postdoc Academy* blends interactive online and in-person content built on the National Postdoctoral Association (NPA) competencies to support skill development throughout postdoc training, from orientation to the next career step. Content uses inclusive, active-learning approaches and is delivered flexibly to be a resource for the postdoc audience directly as well as the postdoc offices and associations across the country that support postdocs. Delivery will include free Massive Open Online Courses, open educational materials, in-person workshops, and supported learning communities.

Postdoc Academy: New Postdoc Orientation - This series of modules will address foundational skills and career planning, establishing the professional habits postdocs will need to strategically prepare for their career and succeed in their postdoc. Themes explored include managing the transition from graduate training to postdoc, maximizing the utility of career planning tools, working effectively in multi-cultural research environments, and developing work-life resilience. **(Launch: January 2020)**

Postdoc Academy: Preparing for the Workforce - This series of modules will build advanced skills that will enable postdocs to transition to independence. Themes explored in this MOOC include project management, transitioning from trainee to mentor to career professional, dealing effectively with conflict, leveraging classroom experiences, successful networking, scientific communication, and developing leadership skills. **(Launch: January 2021)**

Postdoc Academy: Train-the-trainer - We will partner with professional societies and national networks to deliver a *Postdoc Academy* train-the-trainer program to cultivate the capacity within institutions around the nation to adopt and adapt our materials to serve the professional development needs of their postdocs. **(Launch: April 2020 at the National Postdoctoral Association Annual Conference.)**

Sarah Hokanson, PhD (sch1@bu.edu)

Bennett Goldberg, PhD (bennett.goldberg@northwestern.edu)

Director, Professional Development & Postdoctoral Affairs
Boston University

Professor of Physics and Astronomy
Director, Searle Center for Advancing Learning and Teaching

Feedback opportunity:

Our team is building two MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses), in-person workshops, and local learning communities. We are planning an official launch in January 2020.

We want to hear from you and would like to invite MSU postdocs (all stages and disciplines) to join our feedback group - connecting with us online. We have 3 sessions scheduled for:

- Monday, March 11th
- Thursday, March 14th
- Tuesday, March 19th

Each feedback session will be held on Zoom, and postdocs will review content of the first part of our course around succeeding throughout your postdoc. Participants will provide feedback in response to a few short prompts and will receive swag and a gift card!

Postdocs can sign up here: www.tinyurl.com/PostdocAcademyMarch

Feel free to reach out with any questions and I'm happy to talk on the phone about the project and these sessions!

Thanks,

Celine Hartman, PhD
Program Manager, Postdoc Academy
Professional Development & Postdoctoral Affairs
Boston University

Outreach Opportunity

Hello,

My name is Joe Esquibel. I am a faculty member in Biology at Lansing Community College. I am helping coordinate volunteers for the Science Olympiad event we are coordinating this year at our college (we run a regional one and then MSU runs the state level one). We need some additional volunteers and this year, I thought I would ask my request be shared with the wondrous postdocs of MSU. As you know volunteer opportunities bolster CVs and increase prospective faculty applicant's chances of being hired.

What do we need? Roving volunteers to help with some behind the scenes logistics to make Science Olympiad work, things like scoring students tests based on pre-made rubrics

When do we need volunteers? Saturday March 16th, from 10AM-3PM

How long do we need them? Usually need to volunteer for few hours but you don't need to be there for the full time, unless you want to.

What is Science Olympiad? A competitive science based event, where middle school and high school students compete events based on different science fields. As a society, we heavily reward sports. This is one of the few events that tries to reward the young people of our society for their knowledge and intellect.

Will there be free food for volunteers? Yes

How do I sign up or express interest? Email Joe at esquibej@lcc.edu, let him know what times as well

Where is it and how do I get there? LCC Main campus downtown, in the Arts & Science building. There will be free parking all weekend for this on any of our lots

What will you get out of it? Many things. volunteer experience that should go right onto that already stellar CV, pride in knowing that you helped keep the torch of knowledge and intellectualism alive for future generations, free food, some networking.

If you could share this with your group, I would greatly appreciate it.

Joe Esquibel
Associate Professor of Biology
Arts & Science Building, 3105

Featured Editorial

Thoughts on getting through the job marathon in academia

By Andrea Glassmire, Dept. of Entomology

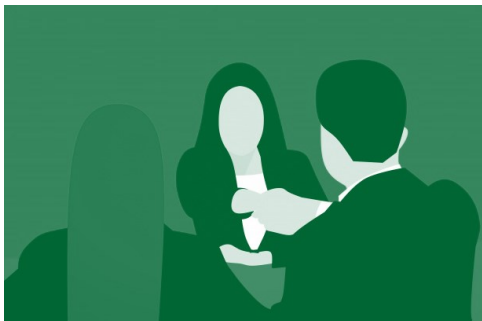
Getting a job is stressful. It seemed as soon as I started my postdoc position, I was encouraged to start applying for another, more permanent job. It was overwhelming at the time because I had just moved across country for this job, but temporary is part of the process.

Luckily, my lab and the MSU community has fostered my professional growth. This past February, the “Postdoc Anonymous” group from Integrative Biology (IBIO) hosted a workshop on tips for getting an academic job. There was a panel of five faculty members, ranging from newly hired faculty, to faculty coming up for tenure, to full professors with tons of search committee experience. The panel covered several topics, including research and teaching statements, formatting CVs, what to expect during a Skype interview, on-site interviews, and when to negotiate (which by the way don’t hint or question about things such as space, salary, and how many classes you will teach until there is an offer). It was extremely helpful, and I encourage other postdocs in different departments to organize similar sessions with faculty because the hiring process differs between departments.

Many of us want to know the trick to succeed during the on-site interview. While obvious things were mentioned (publish a lot!), I learned some useful tips that extended beyond research or teaching experience. For example, while it doesn’t matter how long it took to obtain your PhD, the search committee does pay attention to the length of your postdoc. The average time for a postdoc is 2-5 years and any longer than that period portrays a *weird vibe* to the search committee. “*Weird vibe*” is an odd phrase, but that’s how the faculty panel described it! Basically, anything that makes the panel feel off (whether or not they can name it) will be evaluated. Similarly, there was a lot of discussion about “fit.” The often unmeasurable qualities that can make or break a candidate.

Honestly, half way through the discussion I thought there must be some sort of randomness at work, such as the lunar cycle, what the committee ate for breakfast that day, etc. Despite this challenge, there are some things we can control.

- Publish your dissertation research.



- Make a website.
- Make connections and network. This is the time to go to conferences and socialize. Meet new people. I know this can be awkward and uncomfortable, but it is so important to get your face and name out there. Plus, you can think of it as practice for the on-site interview!
- Applying for jobs that fit for you. It takes a lot of time to apply to jobs. You can re-edit your research, teaching, and diversity statements over and over. Don’t waste time applying for jobs that don’t fit. Besides, it would be unpleasant if you got a job that wasn’t right for you.
- Have a cohesive theme to your research, in both your research statement and job talk.
- When doing the on-site interview, the key is to be able to *run the marathon* for a few days, which means to be outgoing and socialize with complete strangers. Another tip is to research who you will be meeting with before you go and bring a notepad with a few key things about each person you are meeting with, to help get the conversation going.

I hope these thoughts help. Please email us at the newsletter committee (grad.newsletter.pda@msu.edu) with any additional tips and advice that worked for you or others so we can share with everyone in the next issue. Or if you have a specific question about the job process, ask away, and we’ll do our best to find an answer.

Cheers!