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Postdoctoral Association
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY



Winter 2019/2020 Newsletter

► Committee Updates

NatSci **DEIC** (Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee)

The PDA has a representative, Dr. Sandra Hammer, on the DEIC committee for NatSci. If you are in NatSci and have any needs/things you'd like voiced at this committee, please let Sandra know: shammer@msu.edu.

MSU-PDA PERA Award

Applications for the Postdoctoral Excellence in Research Award (PERA) will be accepted starting on January 24th, 2020, and are due February 21st. Winners will be announced in late spring. For more information about the award and application information please visit: <https://grad.msu.edu/pda/PERAaward>.

MSU-PDA January Social Event

What: MSU Men's Ice Hockey Game v. Penn State

When: January 25th, 6pm

Where: Munn Ice Arena

Details: Join your fellow postdocs to cheer on the MSU men's hockey team as they take on Penn State. MSU FCU members get two free tickets (please contact the credit union). For all others, tickets are available starting at \$10. Please purchase a ticket for the bench so that we can all sit together. Look for additional details in the weekly newsletter emails.

► Contact Us!

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY POSTDOCTORAL
ASSOCIATION (MSU-PDA)

pda@grd.msu.edu

<https://grad.msu.edu/pda>



@MSUPDA





Office of Postdoctoral Affairs
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

This fall, we excitedly welcomed a Director to the [newly formed Office of Postdoctoral Affairs](#) (MSU-OPA)!

This newsletter, we're learning a little bit more about Dr. Reifler.

▶ MSU-OPA Corner

Long, long ago, in a galaxy far, far away...

...I was once a Postdoc, performing whole-cell patch-clamp electrophysiology in flat-mount rodent retinas for many hours a day in a very dark room, recording light responses of amacrine cells that connected via gap junctions with intrinsically photosensitive retinal ganglion cells that were being bathed in a cocktail of synaptic neurotransmitter agonists and antagonists. Those moments were transient, but the feelings from those days are sustained in my memory. Neural networks are mysterious and beautiful things, often far too complex to comprehend even in isolated connections between types of cells, much less in a fully functioning and dynamic gestalt. Networks of people are the same. We sometimes lose track of how interconnected we are, particularly when we are plugged into a singular and overwhelmingly powerful relationship, as are most Postdocs in the framework of a research project. It is important to take a step backwards at times to appreciate the beauty and mystery of a larger social network, and identify factors beyond the scope of a controlled and defined set of parameters. As some mathematical research will support, a bit of noise can sometimes (counterintuitively?) improve the accuracy of a predictive model. I hope, if nothing else, to contribute to our capacity at Michigan State University to appreciate and welcome a bit of noise in our mentoring networks, and improve the quality of Postdoctoral training outcomes...

Aaron Reifler, Ph.D., M.Ed.
Director, Office of Postdoctoral Affairs
[Book an Appointment with Aaron](#)



As one of his first initiatives, Dr. Reifler is hoping to bring people together to develop the foundations of a postdoc orientation curriculum. Please follow [this link](#) to sign up for a focus group to help with the project!

▶ Upcoming MSU-PDA Professional Development Opportunities

Coming this Spring: Preparing for the job market workshop series!

We're in the midst of organizing a highly requested series of workshops aimed to help you prepare your documents and get ready for your interviews. Keep a close eye on your Weekly Update emails for more details in the coming months!

Volunteers Needed!

Michigan Regional Postdoc Symposium-- Organization Committee

MSU will be hosting the 2020 Michigan Regional Postdoc Symposium, and we need YOUR help! Starting in January, the MSU-PDA will be forming an organization committee to plan and execute this event. If you are interested in helping out in any capacity, please email pda@grd.msu.edu.



► Work-Life Balance

Upcoming postdoc work-life sessions:

All educational sessions listed below will occur at 113 Linton Hall, 479 W Circle Dr from noon-1pm

February 2020 –

Feb 7: First time home buyers

Feb 14: Insurance 101: Auto, Home and Life

Feb 21: Local charitable giving and volunteer opportunities

Feb 28: Local Arts: getting to know the scene

International support –

Jan 30: International info panel: Q&A for international postdocs

Feb 27: International meet and greet: get to know postdocs and faculty

Mar 26: Mentor program kick-off: meet and match to a new mentor

Apr 23: Take your child to work day: introduce your child(ren) to MSU!

[SIGN UP FOR A SESSION AND/OR REQUEST A CONSULTATION](#)

The WorkLife Office is here for you! We'd like to get to know you better and speak with you in a safe, confidential, one-on-one setting to learn how we can support you!

The sessions listed above occurring January – March 2020 are available by Zoom. For more info, visit: <http://worklife.msu.edu/zoom>

To register for any session listed above or to schedule a consultation, visit: <http://bit.ly/contact-worklife>

► Postdoc Accomplishments

- **Dr. Philip Fanning**, postdoc in Dr. Rufus Isaacs' lab in the Dept. of Entomology will be starting his faculty position, Asst. Prof. of Agricultural Entomology, at the University of Maine, School of Biology and Ecology, in January 2020.
- **Dr. Christopher Adams**, postdoc in Dr. Larry Gut's lab in the Dept. of Entomology has just started his faculty position, Asst. Prof. of Tree Fruit Entomology, at Oregon State University – Hood River.
- **Dr. Christina J. Reppucci**, postdoc in Dr. Alexa Veenema's [Neurobiology of Social Behavior Lab](#), received an [IBRO \(International Brain Research Organization\) World Congress Travel Award](#) from the the [Society for Neuroscience](#). This award provided Dr. Reppucci the opportunity to attend the [10th IBRO World Congress](#) in Daegu, South Korea from September 21-25, where she presented a poster titled "Involvement of the ventral tegmental area in socially rewarding behavior in juvenile rats".
- **Dr. Anne-Sophie Bohrer**, postdoc in Hideki Takahashi's lab in the Dept. of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, was recently profiled on the [GLBRC website](#).
- **Dr. Sandra Hammer**, postdoc in Dr. Julia Busik's lab in the Dept. of Physiology, was the Gibco cell culture hero for this month and gave a webinar on her work. Anyone who is interested can listen on demand [here](#). More information on the cell culture hero can be found [here](#).

We want to hear from you!

Give us updates about your work or suggestions for what you'd like to hear about!

1. News (press releases, big announcements)
2. Publications
3. Conferences, Jobs, Outreach Opportunities, etc
4. Topics of interest/ anything to be addressed in future newsletters
5. Comments or concerns

[CONTACT US!](#)



Have news to share?

Let us know:
pda@grd.msu.edu



Postdoc Academy

► 2020 Postdoc Academy Training Program

MSU, along with Boston University, Northwestern University and the University of Madison-Wisconsin, has been granted \$1.8M to develop a [training program](#) for career and professional development of postdocs specifically, in collaboration with a variety of partner organizations (e.g., National Postdoctoral Association, National Research Mentor Network). This program, named the [Postdoc Academy](#), will be officially launching in January 2020!

Starting January 13th 2020, the Postdoc Academy will release its **first FREE MOOC** (Massive Open Online Course): **"Succeeding as a postdoc"**. This 5-week MOOC will discuss career planning, resilience and work in an intercultural environment, among other things. You can find more details and **register now via EdX** [here!](#)

Note that once the content is available online, it will remain available! If you don't have time to commit to the Postdoc Academy MOOC when it launches in January, you will always have the opportunity to take the MOOCs later on!

Additionally, the Postdoc Academy is developing **in-person learning sessions** (PALS), to allow in-depth learning of the online content and group discussions of each topic. The first PALS at MSU, **open to postdocs from all disciplines**, will meet every Wednesday, from 12-1.30pm, starting January 15 through February 26 (7 weeks).

Anne-Sophie Bohrer, postdoc in the BMB department working for the GLBRC at MSU, will facilitate this first PALS. We hope with subsequent MOOC offerings that the number of PALS at MSU will expand to further allow targeted discussions among postdocs, and with faculty and administrators supporting postdocs! This would also be a great opportunity to become a facilitator of a PALS if you are interested in this role!

If you are interested, motivated, and committed to joining the first PALS at MSU or would like to become a facilitator for a PALS in the future, please register [here](#) by **Friday, December 27!** Note: space will be **limited to 20 participants**, to promote group discussion and participation during the PALS!

You can contact Anne-Sophie by email (bohreras@msu.edu) if you have questions or need more details before committing to joining the PALS!

We hope you will take the time to participate in the Postdoc Academy MOOCs and/or PALS, whether you decide to start in January or later on. This is a great opportunity to complement your postdoctoral training and the online access makes it easy for you to complete the course without impacting your work!

► Outreach Opportunities

- The Kiwanis Club of Lansing is looking for volunteers! Club members perform a variety of service work in the community. Visit lansingkiwanis.org/ to learn more.
- Talk to students for 30-60 minutes about science via the Skype a Scientist program. Learn more at www.skypeascientist.com/
- "Biology on Tap" and "Astronomy on Tap" are looking for speakers to give 15-minute talks to a public audience. Contact the [BoT](#) organizer or the [AoT](#) organizer for more information.



► THINGS TO DO IN THE COMMUNITY

The MSU PDA does not affiliate with or sponsor these events. We simply look for events in the area that might be of interest to postdocs.

ELI AND EDYTHE BROAD ART MUSEUM

WINTER 2020 COMMUNITY OPEN CALL

BEAUTIEFUL PROJECT – JANUARY 10

The beauTIEful Project builds on community-created designs, transforming them into scarves and ties to be sold in support of a local charity.

THE SOUND AROUND – JANUARY 12

Collaborate in sound creation, exploration, and documentation with local Michigan noisemaker Corey Kellicut!

WATCH + MAKE: MEL CHIN – JANUARY 15

Join us as we watch and discuss an episode of *Art:21 - Art in the 21st Century*. Stick around for some responsive, hands-on artmaking of your own!

SCHRODINGER'S CAT IS IN TOWN II – JANUARY 25 (2-4pm)

Makers, physicists, and the community are invited to come together to explore physics phenomena through art.

Learn more at broadmuseum.msu.edu/artlab

This initiative is supported by the Michigan Council for Arts and Cultural Affairs.

► Scholarly Events in January

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The Stewardship Network Conference 2020, Kellogg Hotel and Conference Center. Each year, hundreds of professionals, students, and volunteers from an array of environmental fields gather to share their setbacks and successes; technological advancements and analytical techniques; and diverse perspectives as we collectively find the best ways to care for our land and water. **January 17-18.** [Register.](#)

Science on a Sphere at the MSU Museum - Climate Cues. Find clues about climate! Discover the Earth's human and climate systems, how they interact, and how MSU researchers are developing new technologies to combat climate change. **January 18th.** [Register.](#)

Beers with Engineers: Building a Robust Security Posture, Grand Rapids Brewing Company. Join an esteemed panel, as well as your local technology community as we talk about identifying, protecting, detecting, responding and recovering from malicious threats to our business. **January 16, 3-6pm.** [Register.](#)



Murielle Ålund is now an Associate Editor for the [POSTDOCKET](#), the National Postdoc Association Newsletter.

If you have ideas for stories/articles relevant to postdocs nationwide, contact Murielle!
(murielle.alund@gmail.com)

