

MSU Postdoctoral Association

Monthly Newsletter

May 7, 2018



Graduate School Strategic planning update

The Graduate School, which is funding the PDA and the Postdoctoral Office, is undergoing a strategic planning process (see previous newsletters). We've invited you for three meetings in April in order to collect feedback, concerns, wishes, etc. on/for your postdoctoral situation at MSU. Many postdocs from different departments attended and we were able to compile a list of important needs that would fundamentally improve everyone's current and future situation. The main results are

- an increase in resources for the Postdoctoral Office, in particular, a full time independent Director of Postdoctoral Affairs and a full time administrative support personnel
- an independent postdoc specific grievance policy
- the introduction of a "Career Advancement Committee" for each postdoc
- a standardized postdoc hiring process in line with the National Postdoctoral Association's recommendations including monthly onboarding orientations
- a policy that allows postdocs to spent at least 5% of their time on professional/career development

We have forwarded these strategies to the Dean of the Graduate School. The next meeting of the strategic planning committee, where these issues will be discussed in the context of the overall new direction of the Graduate School, will take place in May. We will keep you posted on any decisions made!

Postdoctoral Fellows Status

An important issue that we have been working on for a long time has finally been resolved: **Postdoctoral Fellows** (e.g., with external funding) **are now recognized as employees** as announced by Dr. Doug Gage, Assistant Vice President, OVPRGS during the Spring Luncheon & Recruitment (see below). This has positive implications in many directions including access to MSU benefits, such as health care, and on campus parking permits. More information on this policy change will be soon available through the OVPRGS.

MSU PDA Spring Luncheon & Recruitment



Sponsored by the OVPRGS and The Graduate School, this luncheon featured a recruitment event for the MSU-PDA Steering Committee 2018-2019, and a celebration of the MSU 2017-2018 Postdoctoral Excellence in Research Awards (PERA) awardees.

This year's event has been a great success with over 40 attendees and **13 new members of the MSU-PDA Steering Committee**.

You missed the event and would like to play a more active role in shaping postdoc life at MSU? No problem! Just contact us at pda@grd.msu.edu.

Postdoctoral Excellence in Research Award 2018

The MSU Postdoctoral Association and the Office of the Vice President for Research and Graduate Studies (OVPRGS) annually award the Postdoctoral Excellence in Research Award

(PERA) to two exceptional Postdoctoral Fellows or Research Associates for their contributions to MSU and the greater research community. The award includes a \$1,000 award, a plaque of recognition and a certificate to recognize their achievement.



This year's awards go to **Omayma Alshaarawy** (Epidemiology and Biostatistics) and **Caleb Trujillo** (Biochemistry and Molecular Biology). Find more information on their achievements and research [here](#).

Professional Development Event(s)

Tuesday, May 29, 12pm, Biochemistry Building room 208: "Applying for a faculty position", with Dr. Arjun Krishnan, Assistant Professor, Department of Computational Mathematics, Science and Engineering and Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology.

Join the MSU-PDA and Assistant Professor Dr. Arjun Krishnan for this workshop where he will cover several aspects of the academic job search: i) The timeline to know & keep, ii) What a good application package looks like, iii) How to apply effectively, and iv) How to navigate the interview process. In addition to research-intensive tenure-track academic faculty position, many of the aspects he'll cover are also applicable to teaching and fixed-term positions.

Light refreshments will be provided

Outreach

- **Wednesday, May 9, 7:30pm @The Loft: Astronomy on Tap**
Everything you ever wanted to know about astronomy while enjoying a fresh beverage! Are you interested in giving a short (15 min) public talk on an astronomy related topic? Contact aotlansing@gmail.com for more details or visit the [Facebook page!](#)
Takes place every month.
- **Saturday, May 19: Fascination of Plants Day**
Come discover and learn more about the fascinating world of plants and enjoy hands-on activities for all ages!
Visit the [webpage](#) and the [Facebook page](#) for more details!
- **Monday, May 21: Darwin Day Roadshow**
Program bringing scientists into middle school and high school classrooms to speak about research and becoming a scientist. To volunteer, please contact Travis Hagey (hageyt@egr.msu.edu)
- **Sunday, June 24: Bee Palooza**
Come for an afternoon of activities to understand the wonderful world of pollinators!
Visit www.beepalooza.org for more details!
To volunteer, please contact Kelsey Graham (graha252@msu.edu)
- **Tuesday, May 22: Biology on Tap**
Free monthly events featuring fun & informal presentations by local researchers and biologists. If you are interested in participating, sign up [here!](#)
Contact tracymontgomery@gmail.com for more information and visit their [Facebook page!](#)

Special Opportunities

Funding

The **CPRIT TRIUMPH Postdoctoral Fellowship** in health/life sciences, imaging physics or biomedical engineering from the MD Anderson Cancer Center is currently accepting applications through June 30, 2018.

Additional information regarding eligibility, application process, and their program is found at www.mdanderson.org/CPRITTRIUMPH, or contact Dr. Kari Brewer Savannah, Program Manager with questions at ksavannah@mdanderson.org.

Conferences

The 2018 National **Postdoc Association Regional Meeting** is set to take place on October 6th, 2018 at the University of Michigan. Registration will open in July.

Monthly Social Event(s)

- Keep up to date with social activities and more by joining the [MSU-PDA Slack community!](#)

Postdoctoral Accomplishments

- **Tina Dominguez** (Kerfeld Lab at Plant Research Laboratory) has recently been awarded with the prestigious European Postdoctoral Marie Curie Fellowship.
- **Christina Reppucci** (Department of Psychology) recently published a paper in Brain Structure and Function on Neural substrates of fear-induced hypophagia in male and female rats.

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

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

Contact us:

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

