

MONTHLY UPDATE

DEPARTMENT OF BIOCHEMISTRY

April 2017

It has been a busy start to semester and it is already April! Along with the many undergraduates we have welcomed close to 30 new 400-level students to the Department, this makes for busy research labs and I know that with the ongoing renovations many areas are full to capacity. Although a little congested, I hope this means there are lots of people to discuss ideas with and later in the year we will get to hear about your research successes!

I would also like to extend a warm welcome to the visitors who have joined us in the Department. Professors Wolfgang Schneider and Jack Tanner are William Evans Fellows visiting Sally and Kurt respectively; they bring with them a great deal of expertise to share with us. This Friday, Wolfgang and Jack are joining Professor Maria Selmar, who has been visiting Wayne since January, in an International Forum to be held in the Colloquium timeslot. I do hope the early career researchers will join our postgraduate students at this event. We also had Anders Liljas visiting Warren recently, as well as his research seminar we enjoyed hearing about the workings of the Nobel Prize Committee. This stream of visitors has made for an excellent seminar programme.



Last night we celebrated Tony Merriman's IPL – it was good to see so many from the department there to celebrate his research success. Well done Tony! I am sure the success of his group will continue with postdoctoral fellowships recently awarded to Tanya Major (née Flynn) and Megan Leask. Tanya will continue in Tony's lab supported by a Health Sciences Division post-doctoral fellowship, while Megan Leask was awarded a Lotteries post-doctoral fellowship and will join the Merriman lab later in the year.

While on the topic of research I want to congratulate Peter Dearden for putting together a consortium that has been successful in its bid to apply for funding from MBIE for the Advanced Genomics Platform. The consortium consists of Otago, Auckland, and Massey Universities, ESR, Landcare, and Plant & Food Research. The next few months will be a busy time as they work through the next phase.

As always at this time of the year we have a plague of coughs and colds, and I know many staff and students have been ill. Remember the flu vaccine is available, but if you do get sick, stay home, keep warm, and keep your germs to yourselves!

Catherine

PhD/MSc completions:

Congratulations to the following students who have recently completed their MSc degrees.

Mathew Powell (Ledgerwood Lab). Mathew has just started working for Liz on a project associated with the Dunedin Multidisciplinary Health & Development Study.

Kirsten McDonald (Ledgerwood Lab), Kirsten intends to further her science career overseas.

John Skelly (Dearden Lab). John has just started a PhD with Peter.

Malcolm Rutledge (Wilbanks Lab). Malcolm is continuing to work for Sigurd, but he is now being paid to do so.

Health & Safety

The MPI and IBSC audits both went very well, with no remedial actions for the second consecutive time! Well done all, but continue to be vigilant, using common sense as well as the "rule book" while using our facilities.

The April IBSC meeting is on the 26th April, submissions must be in by noon Monday the 10th April.

There are flu vaccination clinics for staff (including students employed by the university) at the following times/places:

Friday 7th April: 8:30am – 4:30pm & **Tuesday 11th April:** 8:30am - 4:30pm, The Link, Mezzanine Floor (Between ISB and the Union)

Friday 21st April: 8:30am - 4:30pm, Hunter Centre

Conferences

Recent attendance

Stephanie Hughes, 5 – 10 March, Gordon conference on lysosomal diseases, Lucca, Italy.

Marjorie McCallum Travel

Awards

Pavel Filipcik from Peter Mace's lab: EMBO Practical Course (Image processing for cryo-electron microscopy), London, United Kingdom, 5 – 15 September 2017

Chun Shen Lim from Chris Brown's lab: Laboratory visit at the Victorian Infectious Diseases Reference Laboratory (VIDRL), Melbourne, Australia, 1- 31 July 2017

Anubrita Das from Catherine Day's lab: Awarded funding for an EMBO course.

Purchasing

The store has been sent by mistake an RNA molecular marker Life Tech 11526529910, expiry July 2017. If you could use it see Tim, no charge.

Building & Equipment

The new HPLC has arrived and will shortly be installed and training offered for users.

A new inverted fluorescence microscope has been ordered and will be installed by the end of April.

The Centre for Protein Research has moved into its new bright, shiny and clean space. Torsten and the CPR computers can be found over the corridor in Rm 1.13.

Monica and Maria Selmar, along with members of the Patrick and Gerth labs, are temporarily using the old CPR at the east end of the first floor as office space.

New arrivals

Caillan Crowe-McAuliffe is working with with Warren Tate until the end of July.

Michael Algie has returned to do a project in the CPR until the end of the year.



Professor Jack Tanner is a William Evans Fellow visiting Kurt Krause.



Cedric Viry is a visiting student working with Julian Eaton-Rye until mid July.



Professor Wolfgang Schneider is a William Evans Fellow visiting Sally McCormick, and based in Zoology.

Next Update

Our next update will be a "special" highlighting the facilities and equipment in the Department. If you have any ideas about what should be included please get in touch with Bronwyn.



Centre for Protein Research new laboratory space.