

MONTHLY UPDATE

DEPARTMENT OF BIOCHEMISTRY

December 2022

Our Xmas party was last week, signaling that it must be the end of the year - a year that seems to have gone faster than ever. COVID has been up close and personnel this year with many being in isolation at some point. However, this has been on a more bearable backdrop of us getting back to face to face teaching, research staff and students managing travel to international conferences and a few more social events at Departmental and School level.

The Department still celebrated much success in 2022 including many substantial grants, major promotions for Stephanie (Professor), Louise and Lynette (Associate Professors), Augustine (Senior Research Fellow) and Lyvianne (Research Fellow) as well as significant awards to Peter Mace (the University's Carl Smith Medal), Shar (BMS Distinguished Professional Practice Fellow) and Ruth (BMS Research Support Outstanding Contribution). In addition, there were many other newsworthy stories of success coming from the Department (see otago.ac.nz/biochemistry/news/).

Huge congratulations to our 15 PhDs and 7 MScs that completed this year, many of whom walked across the stage last week. PhDs and MScs all done throughout a pandemic which presented major challenges that none of their predecessors have had to face. The Department wishes them all the best in their future endeavours.

I just want to say a big thank you to everyone for your efforts in keeping the show on the road again this year. I look forward to a slightly slower pace next year and wish Peter all the best in his new role as HOD.

When recently asked if I would be running for the hills I suggested a slow-paced walk away from the mountain might be more appropriate.



Meri kirihimete

Sally

S.P.A. M. Connors



Staff changes

New

Gene Zhu is back after having returned to China to be with his mother while our borders were closed, and is an ARF with Adam Middleton now.

Tom Nicholson, whom we remember from his PhD with Chris Brown, is now a Scientific Officer in the Krause Lab.



Marc Bailie is a post-doc with Nathan Kenny



Tristan Dennis is a post-doc in the Dearden Lab



Sergio Sclovich is a post-doc with Richard Macknight and Lynette Brownfield. He is also married to Sol.

Moved on

Deanna Shea

Golnoush Madani

John Crowley

Ngoni Faya

Mandy Phipps-Green

Malcolm Rutledge

Alice Parnell

Romana Bittner

Hollie Wicky

Jody Hazlett

Mazhar Hussain

Debina Sarkar

Astra Heywood

Drew Oliphant

Marilyn Merriman

New babies (as far as Teena knows):

Nic Bougen-Zhukov (RF with Parry Guilford)

Sarah and Rowan

Romana Bittner (ex prep room)

Nuzla Ismail (PDF with Mik Black)

Postgrad completions & destinations:

PhD

John Skelly - bioinformatics for Humblebee Ltd

Bharat Majhi - unknown

Katie Peppercorn - ARF with Warren

Tom Nicholson - Scientific officer with Kurt

George Poulter - Research Fellow at the University of Melbourne since before Covid.

Sarah Inwood - Post-doc with Peter Dearden

Jawaria Munir - working in the CPR with Abishek and Torsten.

Jaye Moors - working at Variant Bio

Meg Taylor - Teaching Fellow, off to Melbourne for a post-doc

Alex Caulton - working for AgResearch

Brandon Wright - working for Deloitte in Wellington

Gemma McLaughlin - considering options

Aswin Thachorodi - is in India writing papers and looking for a Postdoc

Meg O'Malley - working for Amaroq at the moment, off to the Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre in Melbourne in January.

Kathleen Lucere - working for Amaroq and Matū (venture capital) part time at the moment.

MSc

Madeline McIntyre Wilson

Hannah Neville

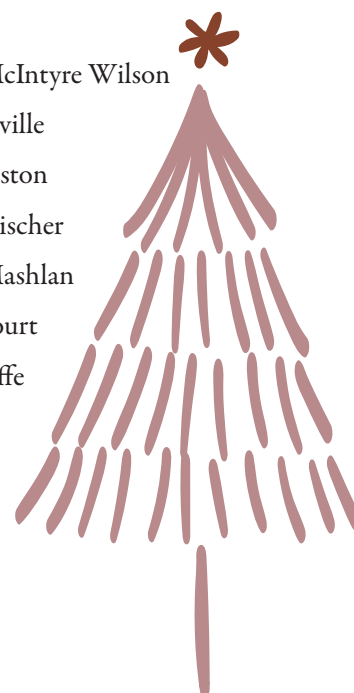
Jeremy Ralston

Cornelius Fischer

Georgina Mashlan

Tyler McCourt

Padraig Taaffe



Health and Safety

Meri Kirihimete!

Enjoy your well-deserved break – relax, put your feet up and feel the sun on your (sun screened) face ... and remember to keep safe on the BBQ!!

Look forward to seeing you all in the New Year.

Noho ora mai – stay well,

Jackie

Te Tari Matū Koiora Rōpū Te Reo

Kia ora! You may have heard the sound of waiata around the department on Friday mornings, or alternatively you might have been bombarded by my emails about hui – either way, we'd love you to come join our growing rōpū. These aim to provide a supportive environment to learn te reo, waiata, karakia and similar skills, and a break from the normal scientific routine.

The sessions take place every Friday at 11am in Room 231. Content varies according to a rotating schedule, ensuring that everything from basic reo, more advanced grammatical points, and “academic” discussions of history and culture are covered over the course of a 3 weekly rotating schedule (and you can see what is coming up in the shared “Biochemistry Reception” calendar too).

We have had a range of speakers this year, including a memorable session led by Karyn Paringatai where we were challenged to break through our shyness to try out Māori concepts in our work and everyday life. As the whakatauki says - “Tūwhitia te hopo, mairangatia te angitū” – feel the fear, and do it anyway!

The group is facilitated by a revolving cast of helpers, including myself (Nathan Kenny), Jordon Lima and Catie Wylie, but we are delighted to welcome others to share their whakaaro. If you have any insights and would like to help, please get in touch, and we are already planning a range of activities for 2023. And if you are curious and what to try it out, come along any day that suits - ahakoa ko tēnei tō wā tuatahi, tō wā maha rānei, nau mai, haere mai (whether this would be your first time or if you've come heaps before, you'd be most welcome!)

Nathan

Party photos





see tinyurl.com/BiochemGradPhotos for the stunning graduation function photographs taken by Miriam