

MONTHLY UPDATE

DEPARTMENT OF BIOCHEMISTRY

February 2018



Happy New Year and welcome to 2018. Hope you all had a good summer break and have been enjoying the warm weather. Speaking of which, take care to hydrate and aerate (or evacuate!) if your office is turning into a sauna in this heat. And before I get to this year, a big thank

you goes to Julian, Shar, Neka, Robyn and Alan for organising such an awesome Christmas party enjoyed by all and full of fun and games! Since several people have asked how I managed to win the egg and spoon race, one tip is to always choose the boiled egg, the rest I will save for next year!

We kick off the year with three new academic staff in place (Peter, Paul and Sarah). All three have been extremely patient while they wait for the end of renovations and lab moves to be fully in place in their new homes. We look forward to having them aboard. A warm welcome also to a number of new staff joining our labs to help with the research effort as well as to members of the new Genomics Aotearoa team.

A spate of oral exams in the last two months should see a number of PhD completions coming through in the next wee while and a few Masters theses seem to be appearing as well.

The department has been the usual hive of research activity over summer with over 20 summer students beavering away at various projects. Hopefully we will see some of them stay on to join research teams for the year. Many of our international students were also here over Christmas carrying on their research.

Thanks to Shar and her helpers (Ted, Pauline and Kate) who put on the “Hands on at Otago” experience for us in January, exposing high school students from all over NZ to the wonders of Biochemistry and giving them

some practical experience and information about what we do. Hopefully we will see some of them in our classrooms in years to come.

Thanks to those academic staff who have submitted their PBRF portfolios to the HOD area for evaluation. Iain informs me just over 50% of you have done so which suggests I should give a gentle reminder to those of you still working on it. If you are a PBRF newbie and are unsure about anything please ask your PI, or me, or Iain for help.

February and course approvals are upon us and Biochemistry numbers are coming along nicely according to Kaye, who is keeping a weekly watch. Soon it will be time to dust off the lecture notes (showing my age now.....)

Sally

New arrivals

New lecturers



Dr Paul Gardner started on the 8th January.



Dr Sarah Diermeier who has commenced on the 15th January.

Other staff and students

Nick Tenci is now working as an ARF in the Krause and McCormick Labs.

Sarah Trevelyan is working as an ARF in the Mace Lab.

Rinky Parakra is working for Liz Ledgerwood



Kay Ramsay, Postdoc in the Lamont lab.



Beth Jose (rhymes with "dose") is a PhD student with Paul Gardner.



Angela Hendry has been seconded as Business Support Coordinator for Genomics Aotearoa.



Rowan Herridge is a Postdoc working with Richard Macknight and Lynette Brownfield.



Cassidy Moeke, a Postdoctoral Fellow working in the Merriman Lab



Stephanie McGimpsey is an MSc student with Paul Gardner

Naumi Nautiyal is a new MSc student starting with Stephanie Hughes.



Dr Lisa Early is the Operations Manager for Genomics Aotearoa.

Building & Equipment

The Seahorse Extracellular Flux Bioanalyzer is being installed mid-February. Details of information and training sessions will be available shortly so please come along if you think you might be interested in using the equipment.

The LightCyclers have moved. The 96-block machine is now in the Poulter lab on the 3rd floor. The 384-block machine is in the Merriman lab. The plate spinner is going to be housed in the 22 degree room on the 3rd floor for now.

Purchasing

John Morris have pipette starter kits with up to 25% off.

In Vitro Technologies has a large range of Plasticware & Glassware consumables that are selling at heavily reduced prices due to short expiry dates.

PhD Completion

Congratulations to **Hannah Best**, who has completed her PhD and is now working for Steph Hughes.