



# THE GSCHRONICLES

*The Official Newsletter of the NIH Graduate Student Community*

## January/February 2016



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### Upcoming Events

#### February

- 14 Valentine's Day
- 15 President's Day

#### March

- 13 Daylight Savings Time Starts  
(Turn your clocks 1 hour forward!)



### Announcements

#### Planning for Career Satisfaction and Success

Building 50, Room 1227

Feb 11, 2016 10:00 am - 12:00 pm

Understand how your personal interests, skills, and values contribute to your future career success. Topics to be covered include the importance of career decision making, learning styles, self-assessment, transferrable skills, defining success, personal needs, work/life balance, and articulating short-term and long-term goals.  
(Ctrl + Click for more info)

#### The Academic Job Search: Evaluating Positions and Negotiating Offers

Building 50, Room 1227

Feb 12, 2016 2:00 pm - 4:00 pm

So you've got the job offer! Now what do you do? In this workshop, learn what you should consider when beginning negotiations. Also, learn what you can and cannot negotiate and hear strategies for clearly articulating your wants and needs.  
(Ctrl + Click for more info)

#### Felcom Event: Careers in Science and the Media

Building 49, Room 1A51/59

Feb 16, 2016 3:00 pm - 5:00 pm

In order to have an impact on society, even the most interesting and innovative scientific breakthroughs must be properly communicated to individuals outside of a laboratory setting. If you enjoy learning about a broad range of scientific fields and communicating scientific concepts to non-researchers, then join us to learn more about careers in Science and the Media.  
(Ctrl + Click for more info)

#### Speaking Up: How to Ask for What You Need in the Lab and in Life

Natcher, Building 45 Room F1/F2

Feb 23, 2016 10:00 am - 12:00 pm

This session will help you to explore strategies for communicating your needs in a variety of situations. Learn how to be more assertive, to speak up for yourself, and how to decide when to speak up and when not to.  
(Ctrl + Click for more info)

#### Improving Mentorship Relationships

Natcher, Building 45 Room G1/G2

Mar 09, 2016 2:00 pm - 4:00 pm

Your success as an NIH trainee depends on having a collaborative learning relationship with your primary research supervisor(s) and cultivating strong mentor relationships, inside and outside of the research group. This workshop will explore the relationship between trainees and research mentors/supervisors with the goal of providing strategies for improving communication and interpersonal interactions. The workshop will help participants clarify what they need from their supervisors and mentors and how to ensure that they get what they need.  
(Ctrl + Click for more info)

Industry: Negotiating Offers and Making the Transition

Building 50, Room 1227

Mar 23, 2016 10:00 am - 12:00 pm

This session will cover the basics of what to look for in a job offer and how to negotiate the offer (if you even should negotiate). We will also cover how to make the transition to your new job easier by planning ahead. Topics will include: salary ranges, what to look at in the benefits package, and surviving your first 90 days. This session is appropriate for trainees moving into industry, non-profits, or other similar positions.

(Ctrl + Click for more info)

[GSChronicles@od.nih.gov](mailto:GSChronicles@od.nih.gov)

Please **send your publications, awards and graduation, and birthday announcements** to [GSChronicles@od.nih.gov](mailto:GSChronicles@od.nih.gov) for recognition.

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**On Having Power and Kicking out Imposter Phenomenon.**

Recap of the 12<sup>th</sup> Annual NIH Graduate Student Research Symposium

By Rahilla A. Tarfa  
Brown-NIH GPP.

The annual NIH Graduate Student Research Symposium stands as a reminder of the small, yet strong, presence of the graduate student community on campus. It serves to celebrate the curiosity, hard work and creativity of the graduate body at the NIH. This year marked the twelfth annual event. It kicked off with opening remarks by the Director of the OITE, Dr. Sharon Milgram, Ph.D. Her words of encouragement set the tone for the rest of the day - vibrant and energetic. She reminded us of truths that are not so often told to graduate students – we have power. More specifically, we have power in three unique and immutable ways: the power to change science, the power to change ourselves and the power to change the world around us. She stressed that the curiosity and drive from graduate students has the power to change the direction of focus in research labs, and as a result, have significant impact on the field of science. Despite being budding young scientists, our tenacity and drive are fertile grounds for impacting change in the field of biomedical science. Our second power comes from the power of choice to change the environment in which we find ourselves. We must constantly assess the factors affecting our current niche in science and realize that we have the power to change those influencing factors to suit our needs. Hence, if the choice of a research lab environment isn't what we hoped for, we can change it. Lastly, we have the power to impact the world. Many current graduate students have taken the opportunity to have a positive

impact whether volunteering to be a summer mentor to high school students or helping at the Children's Inn. It was refreshing to be reminded that we do have power, which quite often goes unharnessed.

Riding off the high of Dr. Milgram's talks were four powerful talks from our very own graduate students: Sharhriar Sheikbahaie from UCL and NINDS, Helen T. Michael from UM – College Park and NCI, Desmond C. Taylor-Douglass from Howard Univ. and NICHD and Jessica B. Hostetler from Univ. of Cambridge and NIAID. The talks ranged from neuroscience to immunology, with insights into the role of astrocytes on respiratory circuits, the sequencing of a specific malaria-causing plasmodium, the effect of UV on the development of melanocytic lesions and an obesity-causing gene that presents a distinct effect on the immune system. These talks were particularly engaging and aroused an interactive atmosphere as demonstrated by the number of questions that followed each talk. Indeed, they demonstrated the fine quality of work being done by the graduate students in the NIH community.

The talks were followed by two poster sessions with a hundred and two students slated to present their work to the rest of the NIH community. While the graduate students were presenting their work to enlighten the community, they were also competing for the NIH Graduate Student Research Award (NGSRA) which is given to the ten best posters across five categories, with one award reserved for posters in the 'New Research Category'. This year's winners can be found on the OITE website. Following the poster sessions was the awards ceremony that recognizes the forty-one newly minted Ph.D. graduates who

completed their dissertation work at the NIH. Lastly, each year, graduate students are invited to nominate NIH scientists that have been great mentors in the course of their time at the NIH. This year, two scientists were recognized for their mentoring styles and the impacts they've had in the lives of their trainees: Dr. Karen Faith Berman, M.D. (NIMH) and Dr. Kareem A. Zaghoul, M.D., Ph.D. (NINDS).

The day ended with a powerful and introspective talk from the keynote speaker of the day: Dr. Pauline Rose Clance, a board certified psychologist and author of the book "Imposter Phenomenon". She is the first one to have coined the term. In her life, she noticed that she constantly attached her self-concept with failure rather than her clearly visible accomplishments. She continued to take note of her feelings and thought process and, upon graduation, noticed that during her work with students, many would report the same feelings of failure despite their outward success. She began a carefully constructed study and developed the Clance Imposter Phenomenon Scale (CIPS) – a series of questions with answers that have attached rankings. The sum of the ranked answers falls into categories that classify the presence or absence of an imposter mentality. She emphasized that unlike depression or anxiety, the imposter phenomenon is not akin to a syndrome with physical manifestations. Instead it is a thought process that permeates one's sense of self-concept, revealing itself in thinking patterns expressed as fear of failure, discounting praise and competence, and the fear of success. Interestingly, she noted that there is a strong link between perfectionism, distress and imposter phenomenon, although thankfully, imposter phenomenon is dynamic and does shift over time. As graduate students who are not only successful but work in a field that demands work well done, it was not surprising that large numbers in the audience identified with having imposter syndrome. Dr. Clance stressed the importance dealing with the

imposter phenomenon as it not only keeps one from enjoying success and taking risks, but it can also result in burnout and development of symptoms seen in depression and anxiety. Finally, Dr. Clance emphasized the importance of admitting if we have feelings of imposter phenomenon, as it not shameful to do so. Even more than

admittance is the need to seek therapy from either professionals or find support with a peer group.

The day ended with a jolly networking hour with fellow graduate students at Rock Bottom Restaurant in Bethesda. Hope to see more of you at next year's symposium.



### **2015 Year-End Report of the GSC – the NIH Graduate Student Council**

This year marks a number of significant changes to Graduate Student Council (GSC) operations and influence at the NIH. For the first time, the Graduate Student Lounge was opened for full use to the student community, thanks to hard work from Phil Ryan, Philip Wang, and OITE and FAES staff. This was kicked off by a grand opening event attended by FAES dignitaries, and the lounge now sees a weekly crowd for partnership program meetings, social lunches, meditation sessions, GSC meetings, and study groups. Also for the first time, this year the GSC incorporated the Graduate Student Seminar Series (GS3) into its monthly council meeting with the help of GS3 committee members David Bulger and Thien Nguyen. This boosted attendance to both the GS3 and to the GSC meetings, and it has given us a more relaxed atmosphere to share research with our peers. Our Social Committee, David Bulger and Heysol Bermudez, continued to provide social and networking opportunities through an organized ski trip, summer brunch, and happy hours, and our Public Relations Officer, Jessica Schneller, provided communication, via different avenues, to inform students of ongoing events. The Community Outreach and Mentorship Committee, Mike Askenase, recruited students to participate in outreach events such as a high school science fair,

postbac poster day judging, and take your child to work day. The Community Service Committee, Amy Yang and Sarah Inwood, led the popular NIH Blood Drive and Mana Food Bank events and hosted a new volunteer opportunity in trail building for the Montgomery Park Service. Our Felcom Liasons, Hanbo Wang and Jessica Schneller, have maintained active involvement with the NIH postdoctoral fellow council, and we recently established a new FAES Liason, Keval Patel, to expand our voice in the larger NIH community. Lastly, the Graduate Student Retreat and Research Symposium were once again successful annual events, continuing to involve many students across campus. As we end a successful 2015, we look forward to providing more opportunities for graduate students to be involved with the community in the coming year.

**Alec Nickolls and Kara Fulton**  
**2015 GSC Co-Chairs**

### **Congratulations to the new GSC Co-Chairs for the 2016 Year! More on them below:**

#### **Kara Fulton**

As a student in the Brown-NIH Graduate Partnership Program, my involvement with the Graduate Student Council (GSC) and interactions with the larger NIH community have not only supported my research experience, they have also allowed me to find a place to thrive. It is largely because of the work done in OITE and the GSC that it has been possible to build my network and to form these relationships. It is my hope to

extend these same opportunities to other graduate students in serving on the GSC. Upon Trey Gieseck's graduation in the fall, I rose to the challenge of fulfilling the duties of co-chair in his place for the remaining two months of 2015, while simultaneously serving as secretary. As a result of that experience, I have a better understanding of what students need from the GSC, and I have fresh ideas that I am eager to implement. For example, as many students are pursuing policy jobs and science writing careers, I am eager to revitalize the Graduate Student Chronicles and connect students to other science writing opportunities on campus. In addition, I am very passionate about forming informal "women in science" mentorship groups within my institute, and it would be exciting to help other groups form, especially with the lounge as a potential meeting space. It would be an honor to continue working with the council to provide ongoing opportunities for students to be involved with community service, social events, mentoring, and to provide spaces to communicate science in both formal and informal atmospheres. I look forward to continuing to serve the graduate community.

## **Kim Faldetta**

I am an MD/PhD student in the NIH-OxCam Program in the midst of my PhD. I have spent time in Bangkok and Oxford, and am now firmly planted at the NIH for at least the next year of my PhD. In the past, I have served as the National Global Health Chair for the American Medical Women's Association, the National Student Co-Chair for the American Women's Hospital Service,

and Women's Varsity Field Hockey Captain at McGill University. I hope to bring my experience from these leadership roles to better serve you, the graduate students of NIH.

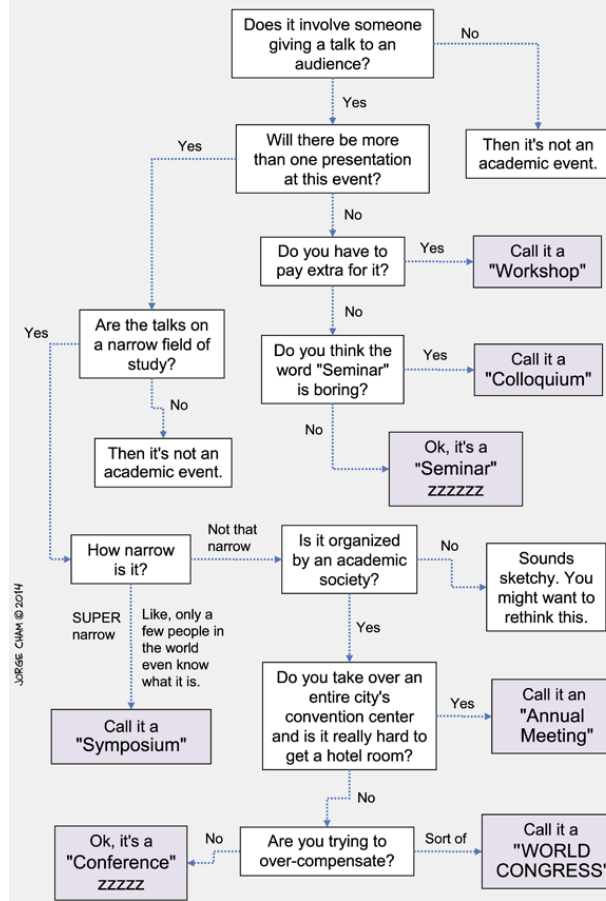
The Graduate Student Council (GSC) provides the opportunity for graduate students throughout the NIH to take a break from our pipettes, computers, and patients to come together to form a community. I am running for Co-Chair to help the GSC best represent NIH's diverse population of grad students and support the formation of a community. The GSC made a huge leap this year with the opening of the Grad Student Lounge. As Co-Chair, I would encourage the committee to make full use of our new space with career building activities and social hours. Let's think beyond happy hours at Rock Bottom to encourage participation from more graduate students. Let's support each other by setting up a mentorship system to pair new grad students with those who are further along and have successfully navigated the NIH's shutdowns, badge deactivations, and runaway wildlife. Let's take advantage of the amazing opportunities we have been granted in doing our graduate work at the NIH by providing a circle of friends and colleagues.

## Comics



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## What to call your Academic Event:



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Piled Higher and Deeper  
by Jorge Cham



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Alec Nickolls and Kara Fulton: 2015 GSC Recap

Kara Fulton and Kim Faldetta: GSC Co-Chairs 2016 Statements (Curated by Heysol Bermudez)



Editors:

Rahilla Tarfa, Jaimy Joy, Mary Weston, Heysol Bermudez, Sharon Milgram, Phil Wang

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