



QUILLEN  
COLLEGE *of* MEDICINE

EAST TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY

Departments of Biomedical  
Sciences and Medical Education

December 2024

# Newsletter

## Message from the Chair

Dr. Krishna Singh, Ph.D.,  
FAHA, FAPS, QDRF

*Department of Biomedical  
Sciences*

Colleagues,

As we approach the end of another remarkable year, I wish to extend my heartfelt gratitude for your hard work and commitment. Once again, this year has been marked by outstanding achievements in terms of grant funding, publication, education and service. In FY23-24 (July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024), our new and continued funding amounted to over \$6.0 million. We published 22 research articles and delivered 62 research presentations at scientific meetings. Additionally, we served on various committees within and outside ETSU.

Faculty members are recognized for their achievements in securing research funding and awards. Since our last newsletter in June 2024, Dr. Eric Beaumont received a four-year renewal of his NIH R01 grant. Dr. Aaron Polichnowski received funding as a Co-investigator for a four-year NIH R01 grant. Dr. Valentin Yakubenko received a supplement to his funded NIH R15 grant. Dr. Cuihong Jia received the ETSU Distinguished Faculty Award for Research and Dr. Eric Beaumont received the Dean's Distinguished Research Award. Jessa Aldridge, a graduate student from Dr. Chad Frasier's lab, successfully defended her dissertation and has joined Vanderbilt University for her postdoctoral training. Cristal Ahmed, a graduate student in Dr. Russ Brown's lab, was the third-place winner of the 3 Minute Thesis competition.

We actively participated in the educational mission of the college, teaching medical and graduate students. Congratulations to the faculty members who received BMS Graduate Program awards this year. Dr. Patrick Bradshaw received the First Year Curriculum Professor of the Year Award. Dr. Qian Xie received the First Year Curriculum Course Director of the Year Award. Dr. Russ Brown received the Outstanding Faculty Mentorship Award.

We welcomed Sean Ricker as our new research technician and have identified Chloe Garbe, who will join us early in the new year as a research technician. For the faculty search, the committee recommended three candidates, and we are currently finalizing the recruitment process.

**Warmest wishes for a joyous holiday season and a prosperous New year!**

*Krishna Singh*



## Highlights

- Welcomes
- Grant Awards
- Publications & Presentations
- Seminars & Awards

## Message from the Chair

Dr. Robert Schoborg  
*Department of Medical Education*



As the fall semester ends, I would first like to remind you of our collective teaching efforts over the last 6 months. The new TRAILS curriculum continues to progress well, as the inaugural class is through STEP 1 and now more than half-way through their clinical clerkships. On Monday, the M2 class just completed the last class session of their pre-clinical curriculum and are 8 weeks (or less) from taking the STEP1 exam. The M1 class, like their predecessors, has performed strongly and is only a few days away from the last exam of the first semester. In the biomedical sciences graduate program, the newest student cohort has just finished up the BMS2 core course and the second-year students are perhaps not so eagerly anticipating the final exams in their advanced courses. Meanwhile, the more senior graduate students are writing, executing experiments, and progressing rapidly toward their thesis and dissertation defenses. There has been a lot going on in education!

One of the many things I deeply appreciate about my faculty and staff colleagues is their desire to deliver the highest possible quality education for all the different populations of students whom we serve. In our fervent wish to improve, this often means identifying our own mistakes and miscalculations, so that our “next round” of teaching can be better. As author and astronomer David Brin states – “criticism is the only antidote for error”. Generally, I agree with this sentiment and encourage everyone to engage in healthy self-reflection. However, I am concerned that we sometimes focus so much on the continuous improvement process that we forget to reflect upon our individual and collective successes. The end of the fall semester is the perfect time for the staff and faculty to take a breath and reflect on what went well in the classroom and research laboratory over the last year. As a start, let’s celebrate each other! When you see folks in the hall, give them a hug, a pat on the back, or a thumbs up (whichever is most appropriate for their sense of personal space) and congratulate them on a job well done. In particular, please make a special effort to acknowledge department and laboratory staff – who often labor out of the “limelight” but without whom quality teaching and research could never occur. Also consider spreading the appreciation to those in other QCOM departments and divisions. Their hard work also ensures that we can accomplish OUR mission.

As you all know, I am planning to retire on June 30, 2024, and the search for a new DME chair is underway. The decision to retire from a community that I have been a part of for over 30 years has been an emotional one for me. In one respect, it has led to feelings of excitement for “what comes after”. Visiting relatives, friends and former students; long backcountry trips; outdoor instruction with the Nolichucky Outdoor Learning Institute; and being a part-time kayak camping guide are a few of the things I am looking forward to. There is some sadness too – primarily about the prospect of no longer being a significant part of the QCOM academic community. Mostly though, I feel gratitude.

Gratitude to those, particularly my father (Dr. Ray Schoborg), my undergraduate research mentor (Dr. Richard Ortez), my PhD advisor (Dr. David Pintel), and post-doctoral mentor (Dr. Janice Clements), who supported my personal maturation, education, and career development before I came to QCOM.

Gratitude to the members of the QCOM Department of Microbiology who selected me to be their faculty colleague way back in the Pleistocene (i.e. 1994).

Gratitude to the hundreds of people - my family (Michelle, Chris, Sarah, Kim, Julie, Jessica, Josh, Bailey, Lira, Jeff, Denise, Finn, Sid, Ben, and Connie), friends, and colleagues - who encouraged me, believed in me, kicked my butt back in line when I went astray, and - yes - put up with my nonsense for what (to them) probably seems like forever.

Gratitude to East Tennessee State University, which provided me a stable place to develop my career and gave me the financial resources to take care of my family and friends.

Gratitude to the thousands of undergraduate, graduate, and medical students at ETSU, QCOM, University of South Dakota COM, and University of Zurich who taught me how to teach, gave me purpose, made me laugh, and improved my life with their patience, kindness, and moral support.

Gratitude to the QCOM administrators, faculty, and staff who mentored me, encouraged me, gave me new opportunities, trusted me to get the job done, and either celebrated with me or consoled me during the best – and worst – times in my life.

Gratitude to Dr. Block, Dr. Fox, my DBMS faculty colleagues, and my former chair, Dr. Priscilla Wyrick, who had the confidence that I was up to the challenge – in particular that of founding and leading the Department of Medical Education through the transition to the TRAILS curriculum.

Finally, to the staff and faculty of the DME and DBMS. If I have any luck in life, it has been in the quality of the people around me. I would not have been able to accomplish ANYTHING in my career without YOU, who have worked beside me, and indeed ahead of me, every step of the way. Your accomplishments in founding the Department of Medical Education and the TRAILS curriculum have truly been above and beyond. I hope you understand that I have given my best effort to be an effective leader - and that you please forgive my shortcomings and mistakes. You are the best colleagues and friends I could ever wish to have. Thank you, so much, for everything you do for me, the department, the college, and most importantly – for the students who have chosen to entrust US with a critical part of their education.

Thank you all. I hope you have a restful holiday full of love and laughter – but absent stress.

*Rob*

# Welcomes

## **Emily Collins, Director of Pathway Programs and Medical Education**



My name is Emily Collins and I have worked in higher education for over 5 years now. I am excited to begin my journey with the College of Medicine as the Director of Pathway Programs and Medical Education Outcomes. I am passionate about working with these students to enhance the next generation of healthcare professionals. I am originally from Morristown, TN and I currently live in Jonesborough, TN with my husband and dog, Leia. I received a Bachelors degree in Social Work at ETSU and a Master's degree in Higher Education Leadership at ETSU. Before coming to the College of Medicine, I worked with the TRIO Educational Opportunity Center program assisting students through determining their educational goals, academic assistance, completion of college admissions and assisting them through the financial aid process.

When I am not working, I love spending time with my husband and dog. We enjoy visiting community theatres and watching Broadway on tour. I also enjoy reading and baking.

## **Sean Ricker, Department of Biomedical Sciences, Research Assistant II**



Hello, my name is Sean Ricker. I was hired for the role of Research Assistant II this September. I graduated from ETSU in 2022 with a degree in biology and a minor in psychology, while also receiving the honor of Magna Cum Laude distinction. My undergraduate research included observing the role various vitamins play in the process of apoptosis in tumor cell lines. Currently, my role at the Biomedical Science Department is to contribute immunological research in various forms to investigate the relationship between immune cell adherence properties, general inflammation, and atherosclerotic plaque. My hobbies include fitness, outdoor activities, and continual learning outside of my research position.

## Grant Funding



**Principal Investigator:** Dr. Eric Beaumont

**Agency:** NIH R01 grant from the NHLBI institute

**Amount:** \$2.7 Million

**Title:** Afferent mechanisms of vagal neuromodulation therapy

**Funding Period:** July 2024-July 2028

**Project Narrative:** Vagal nerve stimulation therapy has been approved for three central nervous system disorders, but large patient trials for heart failure have failed despite promising preclinical evidence of success. We propose that appropriate consideration of vagal afferent central transmission is key to designing optimally effective therapeutic protocols for vagal nerve stimulation.



**Principal Investigator:** Dr. Valentin Yakubenko

**Agency:** NIH, NHLBI (3R15HL157836-01A1S1 Research Supplement to R15)

**Amount:** \$45,000

**Title:** "The role of a neuro-immune synapse in macrophage migration".

**Funding Period:** 02/01/22-01/31/25 2024-2025

**Principal Investigator:** Dr. Valentin Yakubenko

**Agency:** College of Medicine Research Enhancement Award

**Amount:** \$25,000

**Title:** The development of experimental approaches to study the mechanism of macrophage retention at atherosclerotic lesions.

**Funding Period:** 08/01/24-07/30/25



**Principal Investigator:** Dr. Paul O'Connor (Augusta University)

**Co-Investigator:** Dr. Aaron Polichnowski

**Agency:** HIH NIDDK

**Amount:** \$571,166

**Title:** Red Blood cell trapping mediates toxic kidney injury following ischemia

**Funding Period:** 09/06/24-06/30/28

## Grant Funding (cont.)



**Principal Investigator:** Dr. Brooke Schmeichel

**Agency:** College of Medicine Research Enhancement Award

**Amount:** \$25,000

**Title:** A novel approach for a preclinical model of methamphetamine dependence using electronic-vapor technology: a translational tool for addiction research

**Funding Period:** 08/01/24-07/30/25



**Co-PI:** Dr. Rob Schoborg

**Agency:** Swiss National Science Foundation International

**Amount:** €12,500/\$15,000

**Title:** International Short Visit Award

**Funding Period:** 1/02/25-7/01/25

## Grant Funding in the News



### Dr. Xiaohui Wang

Quillen College of Medicine researchers are conducting incredible research to better understand sepsis infection – BucWire (September 24, 2024)



### Dr. Eric Beaumont

Dr. Eric Beaumont earned a \$2.7 million grant to study a potential treatment for heart failure - BucWire (October 29, 2024)

## International Research Collaboration



Institute of Veterinary Pathology at University of Zürich (above) and St. Peter church reflected in the Limmat River (right).

From February 22 to April 5, 2025, Dr. Rob Schoborg will participate in an International Short Visit at the Institute of Veterinary Pathology, University of Zurich. This visit will be funded by Swiss National Sciences Foundation (SNSF) grant #232479, which was approved on Dec. 5, 2024. Dr. Schoborg will work with Dr. Nicole Borel and Dr. Enrique Rayo to establish a new collaborative research project entitled: “Beyond HIV: effect of Pre-exposure Prophylaxis antiretrovirals on the growth and infectivity of *Chlamydia trachomatis*.” During the visit, Drs. Borel, Dayo, and Schoborg will also submit a renewal proposal to the SNSF to continue funding for an established collaborative project studying the pathophysiology of *Neisseria gonorrhoeae*/*C. trachomatis* coinfections. The abstract for the international short visit project follows.

Sexually transmitted infections (STIs) have major health and economic burdens globally, with WHO estimating that there are over 1 million new STIs per day worldwide. Two important STIs are Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) and *Chlamydia trachomatis*. As of 2022, there were ~1.1 million HIV-infected individuals in the US, ~590,000 HIV-infected individuals in the European Union (EU), and 18,000 in Switzerland. HIV infection is treated with anti-retroviral therapy (ART), which uses combinations of different anti-retroviral drugs to suppress viral replication and prevent HIV disease progression. HIV infection can be also prevented by pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) using different several antiretroviral drugs. Previous studies indicate that at least 5% of HIV-infected individuals in the US are also chlamydia infected at any given time. In Switzerland, there is an incidence of >20% for *C. trachomatis* in populations at high risk for HIV infection. Preliminary data from our laboratories indicate that several drugs from one class of anti-retroviral drugs (the HIV integrase inhibitors) can inhibit *C. trachomatis* replication in culture. Thus, we hypothesize that exposure to one or more anti-retroviral drugs used in PrEP and/or ART regimens will inhibit *C. trachomatis* development in culture. It is our expectation that these studies will help refine recommendations for use of specific ART and PrEP regimens that contain at least 1 drug with anti-chlamydial activity to better protect either HIV-infected or HIV at-risk individuals from *C. trachomatis* genital infections. Ultimately, we hope to influence development of more refined public health strategies to combat these infections.

## Publications

Jamerson LE, **Bradshaw PC**. Antioxidants (Basel); The Roles of White Adipose Tissue and Liver NADPH in Dietary Restriction-Induced Longevity. 2024 Jul 8;13(7):820.

**Bradshaw PC**, Aldridge JL, Jamerson LE, McNeal C, Pearson AC, **Frasier CR.**; The Role of Cardiolipin in Brain Bioenergetics, Neuroinflammation, and Neurodegeneration. Mol Neurobiol. 2024 Nov 19.

Strickland E, Pan D, Godfrey C, Kim JS, **Hopke A**, Ji W, Degrange M, Villavicencio B, Mansour MK, Zerbe CS, Irimia D, Amir A, Weiner OD. Self extinguishing relay waves enable homeostatic control of human neutrophil swarming. Developmental Cell, Vol. 59, Issue 19, 2024. Pages 2659-2671. e4, ISSN 1534-5807.

Vargas-Blanco DA, Hepworth OW, Basham KJ, Simaku P, Crossen AJ, Timmer KD, **Hopke A**, Harding HB, Vandal SR, Jensen KN, Floyd D, Reedy JL, Reardon C, Mansour MK, Ward RA, Irimia D, Abramson JS, Vyas JM. BTK inhibitor-induced defects in human neutrophil effector activity against *Aspergillus fumigatus* are restored by TNF- $\alpha$ . JCI Insight. 2024;9(12):e176162.

Claria J, Aguilar F, Lozano J-J, Jimenez-Garcia L, Nieto JC, Romero-Grimaldo B, Marcos-Fa X, Giarracco E, Weiss E, Trebicka J, Hernandez I, Fernandez J, Casulleras M, Lopez-Vicario C, Muldur S, **Hopke A**, Vlasea A, Aransay AM, Marchese D, Bernardi M, Jalan R, Angeli P, Magri G, Cerutti A, Irimia D, Heyn H, Arroyo V, Moreau R. Albumin reprograms the B cell transcriptional landscape and improves neutrophil antimicrobial function in patients with decompensated cirrhosis. JHEP Reports, Volume 6, Issue 11, 2024,101184, ISSN 2589-5559.

**Hopke A**, Viens AL, J Alexander NJ, Mun SJ, Mansour MK, Irimia D. "Spleen tyrosine kinase inhibitors disrupt human neutrophil swarming and antifungal functions." Microbiology Spectrum: e02549-21.

Agrawal A, Pathak A, Ngwa DN, Thirumalai A, Armstrong PB and **Singh SK**. An evolutionarily conserved function of C-reactive protein is to prevent the formation of amyloid fibrils. Front. Immunol. 15:1466865, 2024.

Zhevlakova I, Liu H, Dudiki T, Gao D, **Yakubenko V**, Tkachenko S, Cherepanova O, Podrez EA, Byzova TV. Mechanisms and consequences of myeloid adhesion dysfunction in atherogenesis. Cardiovasc Res . 2024 Oct 12 PMID: 39393814.

North S., Kanzawa-Lee G, Edwards H, Valentino A, Barnett S, **Karpa K**. Advancing the Learning Continuum Toward Practice. NEXUS Summit (Sept 24, 2024).

Nickol D, **Karpa K**. American Interprofessional Health Collaborative Social Hour. NEXUS Summit (September 26, 2024).

Gross, T., Wright, G., de Jesus, S., **Karpa, K**. (in press). Interprofessional Education in Neurology Intensive Care Unit: Learning Activity for Students Completing Clerkships and Field Experiences. *MedEd Portal*.

Netere, A., Hughes, T., Babey, A.-M., Hawes, M., Mifsud, J., Kelly, J., Liang, W., Hernandez, M., **Karpa, K.**, Al-Sallami, H., Fernandes, L., Aronsson, P., Restini, C., Crowley, F., Djouma, E., Hinton, T., Liu, J., Mraiche, F., White, P. (in press). Evaluating Quality of Multiple-Choice Question Pilot Database: Global Educator-Created Tools for Concept-Based Pharmacology Learning. *Medical Education*.



## Publications (cont.)

Rice, M. E., Ferguson, D., Cecil, A., Baugh, G., Breitenbach, E., King, A., **Karpa, K.** (in press). Who's Missing from the Table? A Commentary on Incorporating External and Worldview Diversity In Interprofessional Education. *Journal of Interprofessional Education and Practice*.

## Presentations

**Gass J**, Wills L. Unveiling the Cellular Underpinnings of Impaired Extinction Memory in Comorbid PTSD/AUD: A TRAP Approach.

Bailey A, **Gass, J.** The Divergent Effects of Cannabinoids on Cognition, Addiction, and Behavior.

**Gass J**, Schwartz B. Sex Dependent Fear Behavior in a Comorbid Model of Posttraumatic Stress Disorder and Alcohol Use Disorder.

Bullen J, Cox D, Taylor-Cox K, Hagg T, **Jia C.** 2024. Astrocyte FAK inhibition female-specifically alleviates EAE, possibly through vitronectin-FAK-IL6 signaling. Society for Neuroscience, Chicago, IL. (Oral Presentation)

Derek C, Brian W, Pyburn J, Rodriguez-Gil D, Hagg T, **Jia C,** 2024. Pharmacological inhibition of FAK following acute inflammation improves neuroregeneration and smell function through CNTF in the olfactory epithelium. Society for Neuroscience, Chicago, IL

Taylor-Cox K, Cox D, Bullen J, Hagg T, Gass J, **Jia C,** 2024. A novel role of astrocyte FAK in promoting fear extinction, possibly by inhibiting CNTF. Society for Neuroscience, Chicago, IL

**Hopke, A.** Caging Giants: Characterizing the Mechanisms by which Neutrophil Swarming Restricts Fungal Hyphae. Neutrophil International Symposium 2024 in Munich, Germany (Poster)

**Hopke A.** How Neutrophils know when to Swarm? Neutrophil Swarming: How Neutrophil Communicate. Act, and Resolve Infections through Collective Action. Society for Leukocyte Biology 2024 Conference (Oral Presentation)

**Karpa, K.,** Theobald, R;. Prescription Writing & Medical Reconciliation Workshop; AT Stills University, Kirksville, MO. (August 15, 2024). (Invited talk)

**Karpa K.** Pathway Programs. Community Engaged Learning Mixer. ETSU. (October 16, 2024). (Invited talk)

White P (Moderator), Gorman L (Panelist), **Karpa K** (Panelist) Guilding C (Panelist), Crowley FC (Panelist), **Hernandez M** (Panelist), Restini C (Organizer). American Society for Pharmacology and Experimental Therapeutics (ASPET), "ASPET Focus on Pharmacology: Applying the Core concepts of Pharmacology in a Range of Professions - How Deeply do Graduates Need to be Able to Go?," IUPHAR-Ed Core Concepts of Pharmacology, Zoom Webinar. (August 6, 2024).

Restini C, Crowley F, Guilding C, Gorman AL, **Hernandez M, Karpa K,** White P; Focus On Pharmacology Virtual Series, "Applying the Core Concepts of Pharmacology in a Range of Professions - How Deeply Do Graduates Need to be Able to Go?," ASPET, Webinar. (August 6, 2024).

## Presentations (cont.)

Johnson A, **Abercrombie C**, Williams A, Cross B. *Planning Facilitation that Engages Students in Collaborative Learning*. Workshop. October 2024. ETSU Center of Teaching Excellence & Department of Psychology Faculty Development.

**Abercrombie C**, Williams A, Johnson A. *Interprofessional Engagement to Improve Collaborative Practice through a Continuing Professional Development Series*. Virtual lightning talk. September 2024. Nexus Summit 2024: Navigating Complexity to Advance Outcomes.

Johnson A, Williams A, **Abercrombie C**, Cross B. *Planning Facilitation that Engages Interprofessional Students in Collaborative Learning*. Virtual workshop. September 2024. Nexus Summit 2024: Navigating Complexity to Advance Outcomes.

Johnson A, Williams A, **Abercrombie C**, Paulus T. *Qualitative Analysis of Student Reflections to Assess Leadership Development in an Interprofessional Curriculum*. Lightning Talk. September 2024. Nexus Summit 2024: Navigating Complexity to Advance Outcomes.

Williams A, Fair T, Weierbach F, **Abercrombie C**. *Introducing Diversity and Cultural Awareness to Interprofessional Student Groups Using a Social Identity Wheel*. Presentation. July 2024. TIPEC Annual Conference.

**Yakubenko V**. The interplay between  $\alpha 7$  nicotinic acetylcholine receptor and integrin  $\alpha M\beta 2$  regulates leukocyte migration during cholinergic anti-inflammatory pathway. The 48th Annual Congress of the Brazilian Society of Immunology / NEUROIMMUNOLOGY 2024 in Fortaleza, Brazil. September 25 -September 29, 2024.

**Polichnowski A**. Sex Differences in Kidney Hemodynamics, Autoregulation, and Podocyte Density. American Society of Nephrology annual meeting in San Diego, CA in October. Dr Polichnowski presented in a session titled, "Sex and Gender Differences in the Pathogenesis and Complications of CKD".

## Training & Certifications

**Dr. Leon Dumas** completed the Advanced Surgical Skills for Trauma (ASSET) certification for the American College of Surgeons (ACS) in Chattanooga in September 2024.

## Internal Seminars

**Dr. Rob Schoborg**, Department of Medical Education, ETSU: Too Much Time Spent at the Wrong End of a Mouse - and Other Laboratory Tails, October 8, 2024.

**Dr. Qian Xie**, Department of Biomedical Sciences, ETSU: Educating T-cells for Cancer Therapy, October 22, 2024.

**Dr. Madison Schank**, Postdoc Department of Internal Medicine, ETSU: Mitochondrial Functions and T-cell Homeostasis are Compromised in CD4 T-cells from ART-Controlled PLHIV. November 5, 2024.

## Internal Seminars (cont.)

**Dr. Cuihong Jia**, Department of Biomedical Sciences, ETSU: A Novel and Differential Role of Astrocyte FAK in Multiple Sclerosis and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, November 12, 2024.

**Dr. Anoop Arunagiri**, Department of Biological Sciences, ETSU: Proinsulin Misfolding in Diabetes: A Cause or Consequence. November 19, 2024.

## External Seminars

**Dr. Tatiana Viena**, Postdoctoral Fellow, Department of Psychology, Florida International University – Title: The Cognitive Thalamus: A Key Driver of Network-Wide Memory Status, 7/25/2024

**Dr. Dev Karan**, Associate Professor, Department of Pathology, Medical College of Wisconsin – Title: Immunological Manipulations in Targeting Prostate Cancer, 7/30/2024

**Dr. Bryan Mackowiak**, Postdoctoral Fellow, Laboratory of Liver Diseases, National Institute of Alcohol and Alcoholism of Maryland – Title: Peripheral Ethanol Metabolism in Alcohol Use Disorder (AUD) and Alcohol-Associated Liver Disease (ALD), 8/1/2024

**Dr. Jiaojiao Xu**, Research Associate, Department of Physiology, John Hopkins School of Medicine – Title: Unexpected Roles of Sensory Receptors and Gut Microbiota in Renal Physiology, 8/8/2024

**Dr. Wenhai Shao**, Associate Professor, Department of Internal Medicine, University of Cincinnati – Title: Differential Roles of TAM Receptor Tyrosine Kinases in Lupus and Lupus Nephritis, 8/13/2024

**Dr. Kevin Murnane**, Associate Professor, Department of Pharmacology, Toxicology, Neuroscience, Psychiatry & Behavioral Medicine, Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center – Title: New Approach to Treating Neuropsychiatric Illness, 8/19/2024

**Dr. Xiaoqun Dong**, Assistant Professor, Department of Medicine, Warren Alpert Medical School of Brown University – Title: A Game Changer for Cancer Diagnosis and Therapy, 8/22/2024

**Dr. Radhal Gopal**, Assistant Professor, Department of Pediatrics, University of Pittsburgh – Title: Immune Mechanisms of Influenza-Induced Exacerbation of Atherosclerosis, 8/27/2024

**Dr. Kui Cui**, Research Associate, Harvard Medical School/Boston Children's Hospital: Nanotherapy and Lymphatic Reprogramming: Title: New Frontiers in Cardiometabolic Health, 10/28/2024

**Dr. Robert Renden**, Associate Professor, Department of Physiology & Cell Biology, University of Nevada School of Medicine – Title: Energy Homeostasis in Neurons: Fuel Switching and Synaptic Function, 10/17/2024

## Awards

Dr. Cuihong Jia, an associate professor in the ETSU Quillen College of Medicine's Department of Biomedical Sciences, earned the Distinguished Faculty Award in Research.

Jia, who joined ETSU in 2014, has nearly three dozen publications under her belt and has quickly established herself as one of the university's premier researchers – translating \$50,000 in internal college grants to more than \$2.5 million in federal funding, including \$662,499 from the National Institutes of Health and the U.S. Department of Defense in 2024. Much of Jia's research is on neurological issues, including the sense of smell, post-traumatic stress disorder and multiple sclerosis. Since joining the college, Jia has trained more than two dozen students in her lab and is a sought-after educator for research students. In her nomination packet, previous students complimented Jia, crediting her with their successful applications to graduate and medical schools.

"Not only is Dr. Jia an exceptional scientist, she is a genuine person fully invested in furthering scientific knowledge, as well as encouraging others to do the same," wrote one student.



The Distinguished Faculty Award in Teaching was presented to Dr. Tom Kwasigroch, who has guided medical students through the intricacies of medical gross anatomy at Quillen College of Medicine for 45 years. As technology has evolved from chalkboards to 3D imaging, Kwasigroch's teaching philosophy has remained consistent. "Hands-on learning is critical," said Kwasigroch, professor in the Department of Medical Education.

Kwasigroch has received numerous teaching accolades throughout his academic career, including two national awards, the Alpha Omega Alpha Robert J. Glaser Distinguished Teacher Award and the McCann National Award in Teaching and Mentoring. He was also honored with the Quillen Dean's Distinguished Award, is a 15-time recipient of the Quillen Course of the Year award, a 16-time recipient of the Quillen Professor of the Year award and a faculty hoodler at commencement for 15 graduating classes. Kwasigroch's nomination packet for the Distinguished Faculty Award emphasizes his innovation in teaching coupled with his dedication to students. "What makes the secret sauce in his teaching efforts? It starts with his care and respect of students," his nominators wrote. "His teaching excellence continues with his mastery of anatomy content."

## Awards (cont.)



**Dr. Eric Beaumont**  
Dean's Distinguished Research Award



**Dr. Caroline Ambercrombie**  
Dean's Distinguished Teaching Award



**Angela See**  
Distinguished Staff Award

## Awards (cont.)



**Dr. Patrick Bradshaw**

First Year Curriculum Professor of the Year Award



**Dr. Qian Xie**

First Year Curriculum Course Director of the Year Award



**Dr. Regenia Campbell**

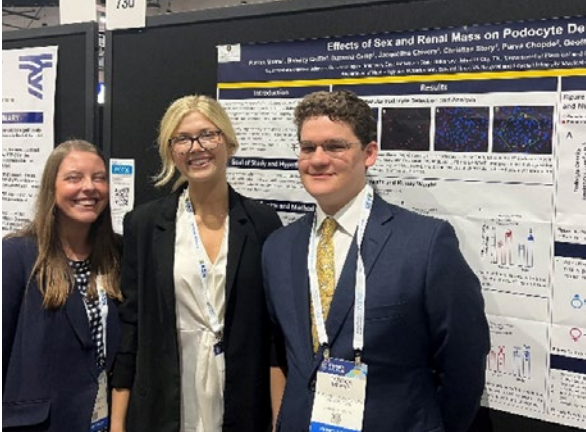
Outstanding Teaching Award (Advanced Course)



**Dr. Russ Brown**

Outstanding Faculty Mentorship Award

## Student News



### Medical Student Presentation and Awards

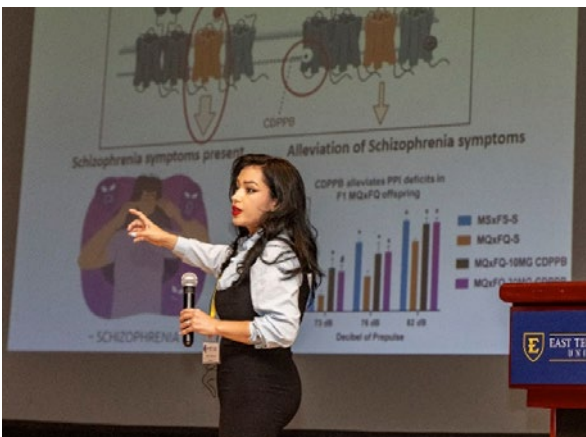
Patrick Means (M3), Blakeley Griffin (M4), and Suzanna Camp (M3), presented research they conducted in Dr. Polichnowki's lab at the American Society of Nephrology annual meeting, "Effects of Sex and Renal Mass on Podocyte Density in Rats". Each student received a travel award through the ASN Kidney STARS program.

### Congratulations to the winners of the 23rd Annual Medical Student Research Symposium: Biomedical Sciences / Basic Sciences Division

**1st place** – Shawn Janairo (mentors: Dr. David Williams and Dr. Zuchao Ma, Department of Surgery)

**2nd place** – Gabrielle Rueff (mentor: Dr. Mark Hernandez, Department of Medical Education)

**3rd place** – Rupert Congmon (mentors: Dr. Qian Xie and Dr. Phillip Musich, Department of Biomedical Sciences; Dr. Joseph Lee, Department of Surgery)



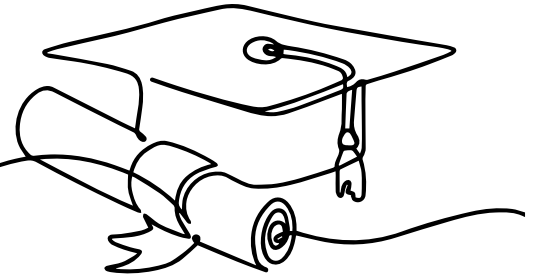
### Graduate Student Award

Cristal Ahmed, a graduate student in Dr. Brown's lab, placed 3<sup>rd</sup> in the 3MT competition 2024 - Examining MGLuR5 Positive Allosteric Modulation of Prepulse Inhibition Deficits in a Heritable Model of Psychosis.

## Student Graduation



Congratulations to BMS Graduate  
**Jessa Aldridge**



## Recognition

### Celebration of Service: Tom Kwasigroch

Dr. Tom Kwasigroch, better known as Dr. Kwas, came to teach at Quillen College of Medicine when it was a brand new medical school. From the moment he stepped through our doors, Dr. Kwas knew he had found his true home. Even after all these years, that sense of belonging remains as strong as ever. In recognition of his dedication and exceptional contributions, Dr. Kwas was recently honored with the prestigious Quillen Dean's Distinguished Award in Teaching. For an inspiring 45 years, he has masterfully navigated and continues to teach medical students through medical gross anatomy at the College of Medicine. Congratulations, Dr. Kwas!





**Congratulations to Dr. Michelle Duffourc  
from the Department of Biomedical Sciences on your Retirement**



## Participations



The Department of Medical Education participated in the BUCS STUFF THE BUS event. The supplies received will go to the local schools in our communities that were affected by the floods. Unfortunately, many students probably lost their back packs along with their other belongings. With this event, ETSU can help supply students with school necessities once they return back to the schools. I took a picture of the items we received.

## Participations (cont.)



**Dr. Tyrone Genade** participated in the Pack 37 Scout Science Spooktacular. He manned the pH station showing them how cabbage juice can be used to tell acid from base.



The Department of Biomedical Sciences participated in the ETSU Pride decorating contest and came in 2<sup>nd</sup> place.



The Department of Medical Education participated in the ETSU Pride decorating contest and came in 3<sup>rd</sup> place.

# Celebrations

