

## April Edition

April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021

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### COVID-19

[HUB AT HOPKINS](#)  
[JHU COVID RESOURCE CENTER](#)  
[MARYLAND DEPT OF HEALTH](#)  
[CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL](#)

Johns Hopkins has issued a statement that the COVID-19 pandemic is in fact, not over, and warned against going to wild parties in Florida for spring break. After the completely predictable immediate outbreak at the undergraduate Homewood campus occurred when undergrads finally returned to campus for the spring semester, Hopkins realized it has to state the obvious now.

### Announcements

#### HELP WANTED FOR DEPT WEBSITE

The Physiology Department relies on the webpage to disseminate information. Please help our website not be lame. We're desperate. If you have any skills in HTML, CSS, AARP, YMCA, or any other web language, let us know. We would like to stop needing to send smoke signals and carrier pigeons. Please help the department stay up to date with technology that is definitely thanks to Al Gore!

#### THE COOLEY CENTER IS REOPENING!

The Cooley Center will reopen under Phase 1 restrictions, M-F 6am-8pm. Now that reopening has begun nationally and much of the Hopkins medical campus is vaccinated, we all know we need to hit the gym after over a year of being sedentary and binge-watching Netflix's "Tiger King" and Disney +s "The Mandalorian." In case you've forgotten what moving your body feels like, fitness classes will be available outside.

### Upcoming Events

# Fizzy-all-oh-gee Newsletter

## Physiology graduate student, James Osei-Owusu, wins award for PAC discoveries

**K. Art Blonch**  
**Knows all, tells only some**

Emeritus PhD student, James Osei-Owusu, has been awarded The Martin and Carol Macht Research Award for his dissertation research on PAC. Though wildly popular in the '80s, PAC has been passed over in recent years for more modern approaches like COD and GTA.

"For many years, researchers have been searching for the molecules that regulate targeted degradation and compartmental environments," says James. "My work has helped to highlight the role PAC plays in reducing waste. PAC also plays a prominent role in digestion of fruits. Like, whole fruits."

James does add that there is still much to be solved regarding PAC, like what constitutes the boundary layers and how PAC sometimes displays enigmatic, almost quantum like behavior. Adds James, "Sometimes we see it and then it just disappears off our screens."

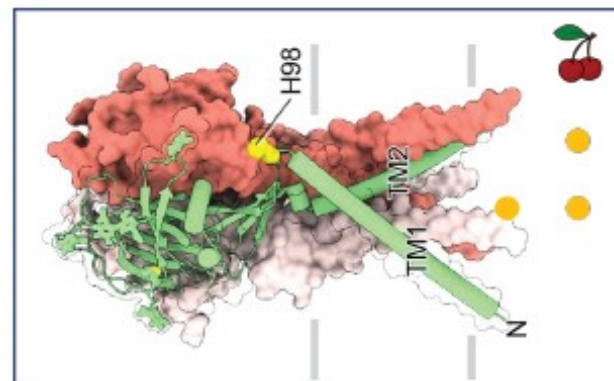
The curious part is that another PAC, or maybe the same PAC, we're not sure yet, suddenly ap-

pears at another site." Zhaozhu Qiu, James's mentor and the principal investigator on the PAC project praised James's effort on the project.

"James would stay very late in the lab working on these problems. Even when he was running low on tokens and he had finished his Pepsi, James would be trying to solve some of the more difficult PAC environments. Most people don't understand how quick you need to be to excel with PAC."

Looking at James, he added, "James had to overcome some pretty old equipment in the lab. For example, a few years ago we had a problem where James could only maneuver PAC to the left. Nonetheless, James has done very well to vanquish most of the lingering ghosts on this project."

When asked what comes next, Dr. Qiu said James's work ties perfectly into the NIH's goal of studying sex as a variable. "What James has accomplished with PAC is incredible. We are starting to really understand the relationship between PAC and phagocytosis, the process of retrieving material from the extracellular space. The next goal is to understand why MsPAC seems to be a superior molecule. But I don't think James is interested in another PhD."



Tune into the Zoom award ceremony April 31<sup>st</sup> 3-5pm [Here!](#)

## Local PhD students forced to reintegrate into a post-Zoom society before they are ready

**Mackenzie Kui**  
**Very serious investigative reporter**

BALTIMORE, MD-- With vaccination rates on the rise, Johns Hopkins University recently decided to allow a return to in-person classes. Reporters at the Physiology Newsletter caught up with Professor Gwen Brunswick to get her thoughts on the transition.

"You know at first, I was excited about returning to the classroom, but I've started noticing that a lot of the students have had trouble letting go of their Zoom habits," said Dr. Brunswick.

She recalled on several occasions having to reprimand a student whose mid-lecture primal screams were, in fact, not subdued by an imaginary mute button, as he had once thought.

Dr. Brunswick later said off-the-record, "I really never thought that there would come a day when I would have to explain to a student, who insisted that her camera was off, that I could see her smoking salvia."

Our reporters followed up with several of these students on-campus but were told that the WiFi wasn't stable enough to have a conversation and that even if it was, they would only talk for free for 40 minutes.

April "Whenever-Dr. Claypool-Sends-a-Reminder-Email": Department Seminar

April 7: Physiology Seminar at Noon  
Professor Reginald Wells, Floor-ology  
"Make sure you be careful— I just mopped this hallway!"

## Dear Editor

Dear Editor,  
I'm a third-year grad student in the department (THIRD-YEARs STAND UP!). I'm an avid emailer but I'm having trouble sending out messages lately because my signature is larger than the 20Mb limit for email. Help! Currently, my signature includes the location and date that I purchased a Powerball ticketed with three matching numbers (including the Powerball!) as well as my membership in Royal Farms Rewards Program and my inclusion on my dentist's list of Consecutively Cavity Free Canines (it also lists top 94% for incisors! And I floss!) What should I drop from my signature and will I still amount to anything??

Sincerely,  
Hard 2be Humble

Dear Hard,  
I understand. As a third-year student it is very important for your emails to reflect your stately position. I recommend sending a second email so you don't cut your signature (and your career!) short. This editor is unaware of any student advancing without at least 30Mb of signature. So keep adding (never subtract!), and be sure to include freebies like "Potty Trained" and "Local".  
~ Ed A. Tour

## Contact Us

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**Physiology Department**  
[Physiology Website](#)

# Cat People take over Physiology, their cats research COVID-19 cure so owners will leave them alone

Erica Avery  
Crazy cat lady and proud of it

The lab always has one, if not more— a crazy cat person. The real pandemic we need to watch out for is the obsession with fluffy toe beans, purrs, booping noses, and making biscuits. For the Claypool lab, it started with Liz Calzada, then me, and now our new postdoc Wenjia is a cat person too. We're quickly taking over. For the Reeves lab, it's Anna Moyer with her Instagram famous cats, Matilda and Pierogi™, who've amassed an enormous following, and rightfully so. For the Lutsenko lab, not only is the PI herself a kitty lover, but grad student Cat McCann goes by the name Cat definitely just because of their love of cats. "Can you blame me?" McCann said. "What of it?"

One day soon, we'll just be a department full of cat people and there's nothing anyone can do to stop us. Personally, I know my cats protect me from COVID-19 because if it was ever present on any of the surfaces in my home, like my counters, my cat would just knock it off for fun.

As lack of social interactions and loneliness of trainees gets even worse than it already is due to the pandemic, it seems, people look to cats for cuddles and love. I'd sell a kidney for my cat if I had to (sorry Pluznick lab). Researchers hypothesized cats cannot spread COVID-19 but would if given the option. However, it was discovered that the cats in question actually banded together and have begun researching a COVID-19 cure to find a way to get their owners to leave the house again instead of staying home all the time and interrupting their naps. So far, they have been unsuccessful.



In the recently published Nature paper, researchers determined that graduate students need something to come home to after many years of long days of failed experiments that will love them and make them feel like their contributions are valuable—even if it's just to their food bowls and need for chin scratchies. In the study 100% of graduate students demonstrated significantly elevated levels of serotonin, lower levels of cortisol, increased mitochondrial oxidative capacity, lower levels of ROS production, and just all-around increased levels of awesomeness post-cat adoption.

The study even discovered a new GPCR (get-petting-cats receptor) nicknamed PAC (protein activated by cats), associates with Psd1 (purr-stimulated decarboxylase-1) and via activation by CTRP11 (cat tummy-rub proliferator-11), cures every disease ever. If this data doesn't win the Nobel Prize, I don't know what will.

Meanwhile, we all know the cats are passive aggressively insinuating that they're being smothered by their owners because of the pandemic. When asked about the findings, the cats just meowed for food.

## Awards and Fellowships

PSam of the Claypool Lab has won the "fast, but safe" driver award for his fast, but safe, driving.

The Wong lab has won an award for "Studying the Weirdest and Most Extreme Biology" after avidly studying the mind-boggling capabilities of hummingbird metabolism. Rumor has it they next intend to study shrew hibernation and figure out what platypuses even are.

Anna Moyer of the Reeves Lab wins all the awards for coming up with the best name for a cat that exists for her new kitten, Pierogi™.

A transcript provided by a second-year graduate student officially joining a Fellowship of Thesis Writing™ last year has been leaked:

*PI:* I will help you plan your thesis

*Lab Manager:* You have my culture room

*Postdoc 1:* And you have my protocols

*Postdoc 2:* And my microscopes

*Senior Graduate Student:* CMP will see it done

*Rajini Rao's dog Samwise:* Woof!

*Undergraduate Student:* You need people with intelligence on this sort of project. Experiment. Thing. What are we studying?

## Publications

### Manuscripts

The Claypool lab has settled the very controversial debate that the mitochondria is in fact more than just "The Powerhouse of the Cell" in a publication they published in *Cell*. Groundbreaking.

The Pluznick lab has recently published their review paper, "Sniffing out new roles for GPCR's" in the journal of *Astroparticle Physics*.

The Kralli lab has decided to throw their hands in the air and "just run with it" when asked for the fiftieth time what Perm1 actually stands for in their most recent opinion piece in *Endurance*.

In their newest study, the Lutsenko lab has indeed confirmed that eating pennies does not help combat copper deficiency. Especially pennies manufactured after 1982. Since they are made of zinc. Please stop eating pennies.

