

## April Edition

April 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2021

Volume 2, Issue 8

### COVID-19

#### HUB AT HOPKINS

[JHU COVID RESOURCE CENTER](#)

[MARYLAND DEPT OF HEALTH](#)

[CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL](#)

Johns Hopkins has moved to Phase 2 of reopening efforts, resuming medium-risk activities but still relying on distancing and mask-wearing in addition to providing online alternatives to in-person activities. COVID-19 safety measures remain unchanged on-campus for vaccinated individuals; CDC guidelines do not apply to JHU facilities. Help keep the Hopkins and Physiology community safe by respecting safety regulations!

### Announcements

#### HELP WANTED FOR DEPT WEBSITE

The Physiology Department relies on the webpage to disseminate information to members of our department and the wider world. As the academic year ramps up, many updates are made to the site! If you have any skills in HTML, CSS, or any other web language, email Marsha Miller and help the department site stay up to date!

#### THE COOLEY CENTER IS REOPENING!

The Cooley Center will reopen under Phase 1 restrictions, M-F 6am-8pm. The School of Public Health gym remains closed. Fitness classes will be outside or virtual. Please visit [jhmifitness.com](http://jhmifitness.com) for more information and to sign up for time slots up to one hour.

### Upcoming Events

#### April 2: Department Seminar at Noon First Year Rotation Seminars

Jessica Hernandez  
Mackenzie Kui  
Yi (Henry) Cheng

#### April 7: Physiology Seminar at Noon

Dr. Henry Colecraft

*Deconstructing ubiquitin regulation of ion channels: from mechanisms to translation*

Host: Dr. Zhaozu Qiu

#### April 9: Department-wide Diversity Journal Club at Noon

*Research Culture: Career choices of underrepresented and female postdocs in the biomedical sciences*

#### April 16: Department Seminar at Noon

Susana Rodriguez  
Ljubica Mihaljevic

#### April 21: Physiology Seminar

Dr. Vasanthi Jayaraman  
Host: Dr. Zhaozu Qiu

#### April 23: Journal Club at Noon

#### April 30: Department Seminar at Noon

Jean-Sebastien Watzet  
Erica Avery

### Welcome!

# Physiology Newsletter

## Two Physiology trainees granted annual Young Investigator's Day Awards

Qiu lab grad student James Osei-Owusu and Pluznick lab postdoc Nathan Zaidman recognized for outstanding research contributions

Erica Avery, Claypool Lab  
5th Year Graduate Student

Two of the 23 Young Investigator's Day (YID) awards given to students and postdoctoral or clinical fellows across the School of Medicine (SOM) went to our very own. Two years in a row the Qiu lab has emerged victorious from YID, which was established in 1978. After postdoctoral fellow Junhua Yang also took home a YID award last year, James Osei-Owusu is following Yang's win with an award of his own. Osei-Owusu was awarded the Martin and Carol Macht Young Investigator Award for his work on PAC, a new proton-activated ion channel. He'll be giving an eight-minute talk during the YID symposium on April 6, along with two other speakers from the 23 awardees across SOM.

Most of the awards were established in memory of individuals with educational or research ties to Hopkins. The Martin and Carol

Macht Research Award was established in 1993 to honor Martin B. Macht, who received his MD/PhD from Johns Hopkins and was a trustee of the university. Carol Macht received her MA and PhD from Johns Hopkins in History of Art and Archeology.

Zaidman's won the Alfred Blalock Research Award from an abstract he submitted based on his research entitled "Adhesion-GPCR Gpr116 is a Regulator of Renal Acid Secretion." In 1941, Alfred Blalock was asked to work at Johns Hopkins hospital as chief of surgery, professor, and director of the department of surgery of the medical school. He was nominated for the Nobel Prize in Medicine several times. Let's hope that's a sign of good luck for things to come!

The Johns Hopkins Medical and Surgical Association Awards for Postdoctoral Investigation were established in 1981 by SOM to recognize excellence in research by clinical or research fellows.

Tune into the Zoom YID Symposium April 6<sup>th</sup> 3-5pm [here!](#)

## We wish Wenjia a warm welcome! Postdoctoral Fellow and new addition to the department Wenjia Lou tells us a little bit about himself

Wenjia Lou, Claypool Lab  
Postdoctoral Fellow

I came from the northeast part of China, where I stayed for my first 19 years. I got my B.S. at Zhejiang University in the city of Hangzhou and started my research in biological sciences. I came to the U.S. in 2010 as a Ph.D. candidate in Dr. Miriam Greenberg's lab at Wayne State University and then worked as a postdoctoral fellow at the University of Michigan. I joined Dr. Steven Claypool's lab at Hopkins recently to continue my research as a postdoc. I had been working on cardiolipin and mitochondrial functions, neurosciences, and protein engineering before and will continue my research in lipid metabolism and mitochondrial functions in the Claypool Lab.



Photos courtesy of Wenjia Lou

My wife is also a researcher in the biological sciences. We have a 9-year-old son and an 8-year-old cat. I like swimming and basketball (either playing or watching NBA games). I like traveling and I am a good driver. I hope to visit all the U.S national parks and I have already been to quite a lot. I like to chat with friends with food and drink and I am good at cooking.

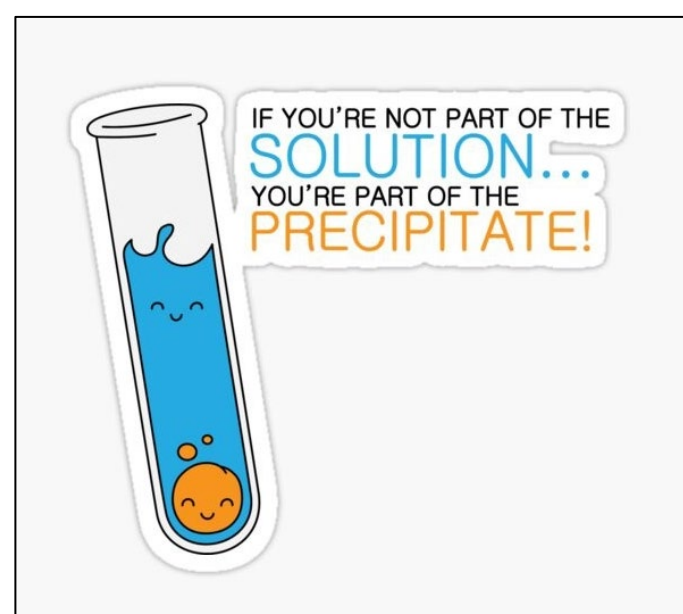
## Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Journal Club Series returns April 9

Rajini Rao, PhD  
Faculty

Despite efforts to feed the pipeline, there continues to be a dearth of women and minorities, including Black, Hispanic and Native Americans in the ranks of academic faculty. Fixing this disparity will require a thorough understanding of the factors that contribute to it. Is there a difference in academic aspirations among well-represented and underrepresented postdocs in biomedical sciences? What are the top predictors for pursuing a career in research? What are some reasons why more postdoctoral fellows who are women or underrepresented minorities choose not pursue an academic career?

Our next departmental journal club, held at noon on Friday, April 9, will dive into the topic of career choices and consider some interventions that could prevent attrition of underrepresented groups from the academic ladder. Led by Drs. Pluznick and Claypool, we will discuss an eLife paper by Lambert et al. that reports on the results of a comprehensive survey of over 1000 postdocs in the biomedical sciences.

We hope to see everyone in the department attending: remember, if you're not part of the solution, you are the precipitate!



Paper: ["Research Culture: Career choices of underrepresented and female postdocs in the biomedical sciences"](#)

[Zoom Link](#)

Meeting ID: 952 0028 4162

Passcode: 847035



Postdoctoral Fellow Wenjia Lou has joined the Claypool Lab!

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## Contact Us

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### Newsletter Team

[Kelli Johnson](#)

[Erica Avery](#)

[Dr. Rajini Rao](#)

### Physiology Department

[Physiology Website](#)

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## So Long, Farewell (cont.)

**Kelli Johnson, Donowitz Lab**

**6<sup>th</sup> Year Graduate Student**

Like Sarah, it's time for me to bow out now that Erica and Dr. Rao have gotten into the swing of things. It was an honor and a pleasure to help get the Newsletter started alongside Sarah (even though neither of us had any idea what we were doing). I like to think we did pretty well. However, our limited skills and experience may have been enough to start this ball rolling, but already seeing what the new team can do is exciting and I can't wait to see how far this little project ends up going.

Thank you everyone, your input and participation as time went on helped shape the Newsletter and will continue to do so for (hopefully) years to come.

So one last time, thank you Sarah for working with me to get this idea of the ground and flying. Thank you Steve for believing in us and giving us a chance. Thank you to the administrators who put up with us spamming them for updates to personnel and seminars. Thank you to the faculty for participating and letting us ping you monthly for publications and updates. Finally, thank you everyone who read (even one) issue of the Physiology Newsletter and doubly so to those who commented and offered feedback and input. Every "Good job" or "Well done" told us that someone was reading and made it all worth it.

Thank you all.

## Awards and Accomplishments

The "JH Needs U" initiative awarded five COVID-19 Wellbeing grants to trainees proposing projects to support safety measures on-campus. Equal Access in Science & Medicine Student Panel: "Living with a Disability During the COVID-19 Pandemic," proposed by Erica Avery of the Claypool lab and her co-applicant, Nicole Pannullo of CMM, was one such awardee. The events will be taking place [April 13 and 14, 11:30am-12:30pm](#).

Dr. Jiaojiao Xu, a postdoc in the Pluznick lab, was selected to give an oral presentation at the Mid-Atlantic Nephrology Young Investigators Research Forum.

Dr. Zhe Zhang, a postdoc in Dr. Sun's lab, received the Toffler Scholar Award for innovate thinking and research excellence. Congratulations!

Recent graduate of the Claypool lab, Dr. Michelle Acoba, left to start a post-doc in Ben Tu's lab at UTSW investigating how fundamental cellular processes are coordinated with metabolism and the metabolic state of the cell, continuing her work in the budding yeast model.

## Publications

### Manuscripts

Recent graduate of the Claypool Lab, Michelle Acoba, published her manuscript from her thesis work ["The mitochondrial carrier SFXN1 is critical for complex III integrity and cellular metabolism"](#) in *Cell Reports*.

Back-to-back papers have been published in the Claypool Lab this month with Psam's work in *iScience* finding ["Impaired phosphatidylethanolamine metabolism activates a reversible stress response that detects and resolves mutant mitochondrial precursors."](#)

Dr. Umapathi from the Anderson lab also sent out a first-author paper this month, publishing about how [Excessive O - GlcNAcylation causes heart failure and sudden death](#).

## The newsletter needs YOU!

Interested in submitting a clip to the newsletter? Have a nack for writing? Got an idea you want to share? Any news you think we should highlight? Looking to beef up your CV? Or just have an announcement you want included? We're looking for ***your*** contributions to the newsletter! Contact the newsletter team so you can be featured.