A message from our director, Dr. Christine Dunham:

Welcome to the incoming class of BCDB first year graduate students! We are excited to have you join our BCDB community and we look forward to your time in our program.

This year’s incoming class brings fourteen PhD and two MD/PhD students from all over the US and around the world. We are proud that this group is one of the most diverse classes we have ever recruited to our community. These students additionally have a rich diversity in their research experiences, and participation in outreach and teaching. We are excited to have them in the BCDB program and we look forward to the amazing things they will accomplish at Emory.

I want to thank Jennifer Kwong and the Admissions Committee Members for their leadership in identifying the best and brightest graduate students for our program. Thanks to everyone involved for convincing these students that the BCDB program is the best place for them to grow as scientists. I wholeheartedly encourage all faculty to be involved in the Admissions process in the future as it is not only one of the most important missions of our graduate program, it is also an incredibly fulfilling opportunity to recruit such outstanding graduate students to BCDB.

As most of you know, I have been involved with BCDB in a variety of different roles since joining Emory. I became the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) in 2020 during a difficult time for all of us. We have always had a strong community in BCDB and the COVID pandemic threaten to disrupt this. While it now looks like we are past the worst of the disruption caused by the pandemic, I look forward to coming together more often as a community as we previously did under the excellent leadership of many before me. I took over the Directorship of BCDB in 2021 from Mike Koval who did a great job in leading our program over the past 8 years. I know that both BCDB faculty and students are excited to come together again as a community starting with several social events organized by the BCDB Social Committee leaders Yasmin Ibrahim, Lexie Snyder, Heidi Ultrisch and Paul Zakutansky, the BCDB Retreat (August 27th-28th), and the BCDB Meet and Greet on August 31st. As always, we respect and are mindful of the different needs of our community in keeping safe from COVID, especially our faculty and students with young children or immunocompromised family members.

Our mission in the BCDB program is to be an inclusive community that trains the next generation of scientists to perform impactful research. Our research is centered on understanding the molecular basis of life, from fundamental biomolecular research to translational studies in an interdisciplinary environment. We acknowledge that this diversity and excellence in research is not mutually exclusive and, in fact, enriches our program. We excel at individualized advising and holistic mentoring that not only benefits the scientific community but also benefits society. We value scientific outreach and service to other communities and recognize the importance of teaching. I am proud to lead a program that values these attributes and I truly look forward to the 2022-2023 BCDB academic year.

Faculty Spotlight

**Gary Bassell, Ph.D.** joined the Emory faculty in 2005 and has been chair of the Department of Cell Biology since 2015. Gary serves as the Scientific Director of the Emory Stem Cell Core and member of the Integrated Cellular Imaging Core’s executive committee. Dr. Bassell’s laboratory has major interests to elucidate cellular and molecular mechanisms of mRNA transport and local translation in neurons, and how these mechanisms go awry in neurological diseases. A particular area of expertise is live cell imaging of mRNA and kinesin motor dynamics. More recently, his lab has been active in the development of therapeutic strategies and to model genetic neurological disease using human patient iPSC derived neurons. Dr. Bassell has a strong commitment to mentorship, having trained and mentored numerous undergraduates, graduate students and postdoctoral fellows. Nine of his former postdoctoral fellows and/or graduate students are current faculty members in academia.

**Hyojung Choo, Ph.D.** joined the Emory faculty in 2017 as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Cell Biology. Choo’s research focuses on the role of skeletal muscle stem cells that are required for normal function and maintenance. She uses neuromuscular animal models to study the role of stem cells for oral muscle pathophysiology, such as dysphagia and obstructive sleep apnea. Choo is an active member of BCDB where she has served as the Director of Diversity, Inclusion and Equity (DEI) of the BCDB Executive Committee since 2019 and as the co-Director of the Ethics Course. In both cases, Choo has made substantial contributions to DEI topics that have enriched our program.

**Chris Neufeldt, Ph.D.** joined Emory in 2021 as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Microbiology & Immunology. His research focuses on understanding how virus infection manipulates host cells to enable virus replication and limit immune responses using integrated imaging techniques including electron microscopy and super-resolution light microscopy in combination with a range of molecular virology and cell biology tools. For positive-strand RNA viruses such as flaviviruses and coronaviruses, this involves reorganization of cellular membranes to create virus-induced organelles that compartmentalize virus genome replication and new virus particle formation. His research program is aimed at providing insights into how viruses engage and manipulate ER membranes, as well as uncovering novel cellular functions of the ER membrane net.

**Congratulations** to Dr. Anita Corbett on starting her new position as Senior Associate Dean for Research Emory College of Arts and Sciences (ECAS). Thank you for your service as BCDB’s DGS!
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Hometown</th>
<th>Undergraduate institution</th>
<th>Fun Fact</th>
<th>Research Interests</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GiGi Arias</td>
<td>Atlanta, GA</td>
<td>Jacksonville University</td>
<td></td>
<td>Study the Gut Microbiome, Metabolomics, and chronic GI diseases.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brandon Anthony</td>
<td>El Dorado Hills, CA</td>
<td>Texas A&amp;M University</td>
<td></td>
<td>What is your favorite thing about Atlanta? Love being able to find new things to do in my free time!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dory Fawwal</td>
<td>Austin, TX</td>
<td>Auburn University</td>
<td></td>
<td>Study the Gut Microbiome, Metabolomics, and chronic GI diseases.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Megan Hinrichsen</td>
<td>Crowley, LA</td>
<td>University of Michigan</td>
<td></td>
<td>Study the Gut Microbiome, Metabolomics, and chronic GI diseases.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yessica Lopez Valdez</td>
<td>Austin, TX</td>
<td>University of Massachusetts Amherst</td>
<td></td>
<td>Study the Gut Microbiome, Metabolomics, and chronic GI diseases.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ian Pyne</td>
<td>Bloomington, IN</td>
<td>Indiana University - Bloomington</td>
<td></td>
<td>Study the Gut Microbiome, Metabolomics, and chronic GI diseases.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sudipta Biswas</td>
<td>Atlanta, GA</td>
<td>Duke University</td>
<td></td>
<td>Study the Gut Microbiome, Metabolomics, and chronic GI diseases.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enoch Ayamga</td>
<td>Austin, TX</td>
<td>University of Texas</td>
<td></td>
<td>Study the Gut Microbiome, Metabolomics, and chronic GI diseases.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yessica Lopez Valdez</td>
<td>Austin, TX</td>
<td>University of Massachusetts Amherst</td>
<td></td>
<td>Study the Gut Microbiome, Metabolomics, and chronic GI diseases.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don Eaford</td>
<td>Austin, TX</td>
<td>University of Pennsylvania</td>
<td></td>
<td>Study the Gut Microbiome, Metabolomics, and chronic GI diseases.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nasab Ghazal</td>
<td>Austin, TX</td>
<td>University of New Mexico</td>
<td></td>
<td>Study the Gut Microbiome, Metabolomics, and chronic GI diseases.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brandon Wehmiller</td>
<td>Austin, TX</td>
<td>Texas A&amp;M University</td>
<td></td>
<td>Study the Gut Microbiome, Metabolomics, and chronic GI diseases.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anna Williams</td>
<td>Austin, TX</td>
<td>University of Pennsylvania</td>
<td></td>
<td>Study the Gut Microbiome, Metabolomics, and chronic GI diseases.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chieme Ohanele</td>
<td>El Dorado Hills, CA</td>
<td>Pennsylvania University of Pennsylvania</td>
<td></td>
<td>Study the Gut Microbiome, Metabolomics, and chronic GI diseases.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Research Interests:**
- Broadly, I'm interested in biochemical and structural in nature.
- I am interested in antibiotic resistance bacteria research, as well as, molecular mechanisms of diseases like Alzheimer's or other pathogens.
- I am interested in the structural biology of studying disease mechanisms and developing drug targets.
Recent BCDB Publications


**Scientific Conferences: Tips for selecting and preparing to attend**

Selecting the right conference

Many labs have established a common line-up of conferences to attend. It is always a good idea to ask your PI and lab members for suggestions of conferences they have enjoyed in the past.

To find conferences try these helpful links:

- Federation of American Societies for Experiment Biology (FASEB)
- Gordon Research Conferences

Sharing our research with our local research community is important! Emory offers some great local conferences including:

- DSAC Student Research Symposium
- UGA-Winship Summit

Funding your trip

Conferences can be costly due to registration fees, travel, and housing costs. To ameliorate these costs several resources are available for trainees:

- Many conferences provide financial support for trainee lodging and travel – applications for these funds are often due several months in advance.
- If you are on a T32 – plan FAR IN ADVANCE which conference you will attend. Attendance must occur while on the T32 for your trip to be covered by T32 professional development support funds (PDS).
- LGS guarantees students $2500 of PDS and additional competitive PDS funds.

Poster printing

- Emory Document Services
  - Takes 48-72hrs if the document is received by 2pm
- FedEx Office Print & Ship Center
  - Next day or same day if order is placed before noon

**Recent Fellowship Awardees**

- Congrats to First Year Student Dory Fawwal who was awarded a Woodruff Fellowship!
- Congrats to First Year Students Gigi Arias, Don Eaford, Shursteen Joubert, and Yessica Lopez Valdez who were awarded Centennial Scholars Fellowships!
- Congrats to First Year Students Mohamed Bamada and Megan Hinrichsen were awarded Laney Graduate Student Fellowships!
- Congrats to Carly Lancaster (Corbett and Moberg Labs) who was awarded a NIH NRSA F31 Fellowship!
- Congrats to Hannah Hmrcri (Gracz Lab) who was awarded a NIH NRSA F31 Fellowship!
- Congrats to Lexi Snyder (Sarafianos Labs) who was awarded a NIH NRSA F31 Fellowship!
- Congrats to Dariana Torres Rivera (Melikian Lab) who was awarded an Achievement Rewards for College Scientists (ARCS) Fellowship!
- Congrats to Will McFadden (Sarafianos Lab) who was awarded an Achievement Rewards for College Scientists (ARCS) Fellowship!

**Acknowledgements:** This newsletter was written and compiled by Dr. Bo Liang, Paul Zakutansky, and Hannah Hmrcri.