

PCD NEWSLETTER

THIS ISSUE: WELCOME | AWARDS | NOTABLE EVENTS

DIRECTOR'S CORNER

Dear members of the Division of Precision and Computational Diagnostics (PCD),



Welcome to the twelfth issue of our Divisional Newsletter. We are excited to welcome two new members to our division. Christina Moon, BS, joined the Cytogenetics team as a technologist; and Ashley Njaka, MS, joined the Cytogenetics team as a technologist. We are excited to have them join the PCD. Although they aren't new to most of us, we also wanted to welcome Priya Velu, MD, PhD and Salvatore Priore, MD, PhD, to the PCD as our fellows for the year.

In other news, hearty congratulations are extended to our very own faculty member Chris Watt, MD, PhD who was recently promoted from Assistant Professor to Associate Professor. His exuberant personality and passion for teaching makes him a pleasure to work with and an exceptional faculty member. We are grateful for his deep commitment to this university, his colleagues and our students, and we are proud of his outstanding achievements. Congratulations Chris!

Despite the interruptions imposed by the weather, members of the PCD and other divisions were able to get together for baseball featuring the Philadelphia Phillies versus San Diego Padres. We thank Jason Rosenbaum & his son, Latricia Bunch, Arlene & Sid Carlton, Emily Collins, and Steve Jacot who made time to attend this game and interact with members of our division.

Although the summer months are seen as a time to relax, this has not stopped our divisions efforts to thrive and grow. Our staff and faculty are continually proving that they are dedicated to their work and our mission to provide the highest quality of clinical care. We hope you enjoy the newsletter and savor the last bits of summer while you still can!

Kojo Elenitoba-Johnson, MD

WELCOME

Christina Moon, BS

Christina is a Cytogenetic Technologist at the Center for Personalized Diagnostics & Cytogenetics.



Christina is taking on the role of a Cytogenetics Technician. She comes to us from the Medical Laboratory Science program at Pennsylvania Hospital.

Ashley Njaka, MS

Ashley is a Cytogenetic Technologist at the Center for Personalized Diagnostics & Cytogenetics.

Ashley is taking on the role as our newest Cytogenetics Technician. Ashley previously worked as a cytogenetics lab tech at Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis and has just earned a Master of Science degree in Education at UPenn.

Salvatore Priore, MD, PhD

Sal is a Molecular Genetic Pathology fellow in the Department of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine.



Salvatore received a B.S. in Biochemistry from SUNY Geneseo before joining the University of Rochester's Medical Scientist Training Program, where he pursued a doctorate in Medicine and Chemistry and a medical degree. He completed residency training at the University of Pennsylvania in Anatomic Pathology in 2018. After completing fellowship training in Molecular Genetic Pathology he hopes to continue his training as a physician-scientist studying RNA secondary structure and RNA protein interactions in human tumors. In his spare time, he enjoys movies, reading, hiking/camping, cooking, and medical humanities.

Priya Velu, MD, PhD

Priya is a Molecular Genetic Pathology fellow in the Department of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine.



Priya received a B.A. in Biophysics from Johns Hopkins University before joining the University of California San Diego Medical Scientist Training Program, where she pursued a doctorate in neuroscience and a medical degree. She completed residency training at the University of Pennsylvania in Clinical Pathology in 2017 and spent a year as a research fellow in Precision Medicine. Her goal is to use computational methods to integrate genomic data with data from other pathology disciplines and radiology in order to develop more comprehensive disease profiles of patients. In her spare time she is an avid reader, cinephile, and art enthusiast.

PROMOTION



Congratulations Chris Watt on your recent promotion from Assistant Professor to Associate Professor! This is a significant milestone in your career. We are proud of you and we are excited to have someone of your caliber representing our division.

APPOINTMENT



Jennifer Morrisette, PhD was recently elected to represent her colleagues as a member of the Medical Faculty Senate Steering Committee.

The Medical Faculty Senate is the open forum of the Medical Faculty for discussion of all issues affecting the operation and development of the Medical Center.

RESEARCH GRANT AWARD



Dr. Faryabi received Concern Foundation's Conquer Cancer Now Award to study the mechanisms of epigenetic dysregulation in triple-negative breast cancer. Faryabi Lab will elucidate the mechanisms of chromatin folding reorganization in breast cancer cells using cutting edge chromatin conformation assays. In this project, they will investigate how Notch transcription factor binding to chromatin facilitates long range enhancer repositioning in triple-negative cells. Since the role of transcription factors in creating chromatin structure is still enigmatic, this study presents an important conceptual advancement in our understanding of both Notch and gene regulation.

NOTABLE EVENTS

THE NEW KID ON THE BLOCK!



Congratulations Amanda Oran on the safe arrival of your newest family member. From all of us at the PCD we are wishing you all the best and hope this is a wonderful time filled with lots of joy and happiness. Happy parenting and welcome to your newest role as a mother.

AWARDS



Salvatore Priore won The Leonard Berwick Resident Teaching Award. This award is given to a senior resident whose teaching has effectively fused basic scientific principles with clinical medicine.

PCD PHILLIES GAME

Due to unforeseen weather conditions the regularly scheduled Phillies vs. Padres game got canceled. The game was rescheduled to Sunday evening, making the day a double hitter. Unfortunately, only about half of the members invited were able to attend. With that said, that did not stop this group from having a good time and showing their support for our home town Phillies.



THE FUTURE OF ROAD TRIPS



Tesla drivers gathering at a Tesla Supercharger location. License plates include "KICKGAS" and "WATTS UP". Photo courtesy of Viviana Van Deerlin.

Vivianna and Peter Van Deerlin were quoted in a very interesting article in Conde Nast Traveler that discusses what the road trip will look like in 2030. "Even if we aren't planning to meet up with other Tesla drivers, it invariably happens that we spend some time chatting with other drivers when we plug in at a Supercharger on a road trip or when finding a plug at our destination. Back when we drove combustion cars, conversations like this never happened at gas stations," say Pennsylvania-based physicians Viviana and Peter Van Deerlin, who own three Teslas—a Model S, a 2010 Roadster, and a Model 3. "But when we pull up to a Supercharger, it's common that other Tesla owners get out of their car to greet us and chat; sometimes we even grab a meal together. Sometimes we stop to Supercharge even when we don't need to, just to meet other owners."

Link to full article:
<https://www.cntraveler.com/story/what-the-road-trip-looks-like-in-2030>

CONFERENCES

NGS SUMMIT, WASHINGTON, DC



Jennifer Morrisette, PhD delivered the Chairperson's remarks and gave a presentation at the Next Generation Summit on August 21st, "Mutational Profiles in AML: Correlations With Cytogenetics and Mutational Shift," that featured work from the Center for Personalized Diagnostics by Robyn Sussman, PhD and Priya Velu, MD PhD.

BIOMARKERS & IMMUNO-ONCOLOGY



Jennifer Morrisette, PhD attended the Biomarkers & Immuno-Oncology World Congress Conference in June. She was recognized as one of the distinguished speakers. She also acted as one of the chair members for the conference.

CONTRIBUTORS

ARLENE CARLTON, MS
KOJO ELENITOBA-JOHNSON, MD
CODY HARDESTY, BS
BABAK FARYABI, PHD
CHRISTINA MOON, BS
JENNIFER MORRISSETTE, PHD
ASHLEY NJAKA, MS
AMANDA ORAN, PHD

SALVATORE PRIORE, MD, PHD
JASON ROSENBAUM, MD, PHD
JACKIE ROTH, PHD
ROBYN SUSSMAN, PHD
VIVIANNA VAN DEERLIN, MD, PHD
PRIYA VELU, MD PHD
CHRIS WATT, MD, PHD