

PCD NEWSLETTER

THIS ISSUE: WELCOME | NOTABLE NEWS | CONVERSATIONS

DIRECTOR'S CORNER



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

Welcome to the fifteenth issue of our Divisional Newsletter. We are excited to welcome the newest member to our division, Chase Rushton, MS who joined the Bioinformatics team at the CPD.

In this month's letter there are two significant achievements that deserve recognition. Although an award has already been received, I want to personally commend Honore Strauser on her years of dedicated service, not only to Penn but to the myriad of patients she has helped through her work in Cytogenetics. The second achievement goes to Salvatore Priore, Jason Rosenbaum, and Jackie Roth on their collaboration that was published in the February edition of CAP Today. On a day to day basis we strive to be the best, not for national recognition, but with the hope to positively impact & improve patient care. Their work on this project has moved the field in a positive direction.

One of the best aspects of working at Penn is the community we create. Together, we have accomplished a number of diverse activities in this quarter, ranging from holiday parties to volunteering for those in need. I am continually proud of our staff's engagement with our community, and look forward to our next slate of future activities.

Our conversations piece this month features Vania Aikawa from Cytogenetics. She discusses her interests, life outside of the US, sisterhood, and Cytogenetics.

Kojo Elenitoba-Johnson, MD

WELCOME



Chase Ruston, MS

Chase is a Bioinformatics Specialist at the Center for Personalized Diagnostics.

Chase received his BS in Molecular & Cellular Microbiology and a Masters in Biology (Bioinformatics) from Auburn University.

Chase is enjoying his first northern city and all the food Philly has to offer. Chase and his dog prefer the cold to the heat of the south. So far the only big adjustment has been from college sports to pro sports. In his spare time you can either find him cooking or exploring outside. He likes to cook/travel/explore, play soccer and snowboard when the opportunity arises.

CONGRATULATIONS

The University of Pennsylvania Service Recognition Program shows appreciation for long-term Faculty or staff with 10 or more years of service.



Honore Strauser, a technologist within Cytogenetics, received an award for her 20 years of dedicated service within the Penn community!

CAP TODAY

Diagnostic pitfalls of testing rare molecular aberrations in lung adenocarcinomas

CAP TODAY and the Association for Molecular Pathology have teamed up to bring molecular case reports to CAP TODAY readers. AMP members write the reports using clinical cases from their own practices that show molecular testing's important role in diagnosis, prognosis, and treatment. The following report comes from the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania. If you would like to submit a case report, please send an email to the AMP at amp@amp.org. For more information about the AMP and all previously published case reports, visit www.amp.org.



Salvatore F. Priore, MD, PhD
Jason N. Rosenbaum, MD
Jacquelyn J. Roth, PhD

Sal Priore, Jason Rosenbaum, and Jackie Roth were featured in the February issue of CAP Today. Check out page 26 or the electronic version for more information.



NOTABLE NEWS

robyn's baby shower

On January 11th, CPD & Cytogenetics threw a surprise baby shower for Robyn Sussman. Despite the fact our suite resembled a ghost town, this appeared to be a genuine surprise because Robyn came in with a homemade meal ready to eat.

Amanda Oran & Carmela Paolillo were at the forefront of planing this event. The food was superb and the decorations lovely. Jennifer Morrissette did a wonderful job keeping Robyn busy and unsuspecting.

From all of us at the PCD we are wishing you the best. We are excited for you and the new journey you are about to embark on.



ice skating

The Blue Cross RiverRink provided a winter wonderland that truly felt disconnected from the hustle and bustle of the city. While the RiverRink has plenty of attractions, the two largest were the ice skating rink and "ski" lodge. A great way to get to know people on the ice included questions such as "How do you stop?" and "How many times did you fall/almost fall?".



path & lab med holiday party



Numerous members of the PCD enjoyed celebrating at the Path and Lab Medicine holiday party! Thank you to Dr. David Roth for hosting this annual event!

molpath holiday party

Attendees played the annual Molpa Bingo!



volunteering

On November 11th, members from the PCD, as well as Caren Gentile's family, gathered at Chosen 300 Ministries to volunteer with the morning service. They prepared & served food for those in need.



pcd happy hour



Members from the PCD gathered for a Happy Hour at Bernie's Restaurant & Bar in University City. The night was filled with great conversation and plenty of delicious appetizers.

2018 HOLIDAY FUNDRAISER EVENT
HEIFER
international

Since 1944, Heifer International has been helping impoverished villages and families by providing training in livestock handling, then giving them an appropriate animal with the understanding that the first female offspring will be given to another family and so that the bounty received can be passed on. More animals are available for donation: goats, sheep, rabbits, bees, chickens, and alpacas.

Our division raised a total of \$580. We purchased a heifer, honeybees and the gift of a healthy home.

Heifer: \$500. A village or large family group receives a heifer and the training to care for the animal and keep it healthy. The animal provides milk both for the owners and for retail. The animal also provides, shall we say, organic fertilizer. The participants take part in the Passing On The Gift agreement with Heifer International - at least the first female offspring of the heifer must be donated to someone else in need. Many groups of donated more than one animal and some use the extra money they've made to give monetary or other gifts. A big gift that keeps on giving!

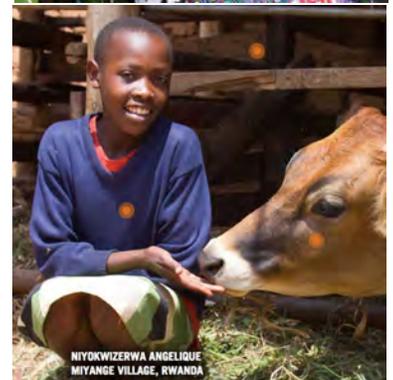
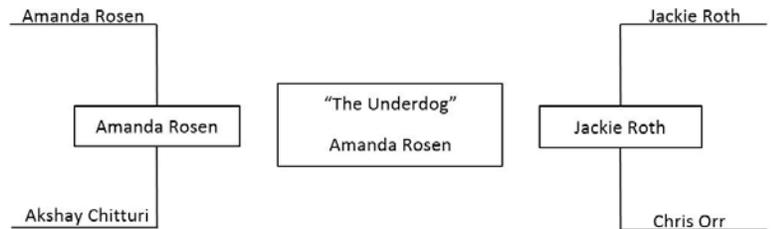
Honeybees: \$30. A family receives honeybees, a hive box and training in beekeeping techniques. They can make money from the sale of honey, wax and pollen. The pollen produced can double the fruit and vegetable production of small family farms thereby producing more food to both eat and sell. A small gift that makes a big difference!

The Gift of A Healthy Home: \$50. Provides a family with roofing material, bricks, concrete and other suitable building supplies so they can provide a home for their themselves, their children and possibly extended family members. Adequate shelter prevents exposure to the elements keeping both the people and their possessions safe, and greatly reduces the risk of exposure to disease. Another small gift that goes a long way!

Thank you Beth Anne Miniger for organizing this fundraiser and those who donated for their generosity!

FANTASY FOOTBALL

The PCD Fantasy Football League came to a close at the end of 2018. The battle was well fought, shown below are the final four contestants. In the end "The Underdog", Amanda Rosen, took home first place by 0.2 points. Congratulations Amanda, topcats often begin as underdogs!



CONVERSATIONS

with

VANIA AIKAWA

IN CYTOGENETICS



What was the best part about growing up in Brazil?

The best part for sure was to have my family and friends around me all the time. They were certainly responsible for teaching me the values I have today, which I'll always carry with me wherever I go. There are many other things that I appreciate from growing up in a developing country, such as learning to adjust to conditions that are not ideal, trying not to take what I have for granted, and being satisfied with simple things.

What was it like going to med school with your twin?

It was so nice and comforting to have her with me during that exciting and sometimes challenging phase of our lives. Being able to study together and share our experiences and anxieties, while transitioning from teenage years to young adulthood, definitely made things easier for me. It wasn't so nice when our colleagues would refer to us as a single entity, "the twins", but now I laugh about it.

When did you know you wanted to be a cytogeneticist?

On the first day of my rotation in Cytogenetics during my residency in Hematology in Brazil. It was love at first sight with chromosomes. I've always had interest in hematologic malignancies, however, the clinical practice could be extremely emotional and sometimes sad. I found in Cytogenetics a great opportunity to help these patients in a different way.

What is your favorite chromosome?

The teddy bear. This is the scientific description for the banding pattern of chromosome 18.



What is the best piece of professional advice you've ever received?

Don't think of work as a job, but as a profession.

What is a topic you wish you knew more about?

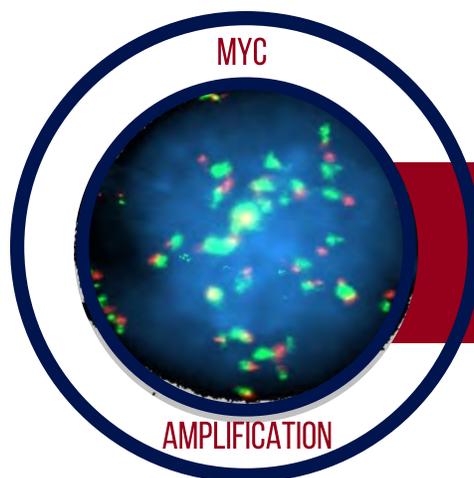
Geography. I love to travel and to get to see different places, either cities or natural environments, but I'm really bad at showing the places I've been to or that I would like to go to on the map.

What types of events or activities can get you out of the house besides work?

Hiking and exploring new places.

If you could only eat one meal for the rest of your life, what would it be?

Pasta. Yes, I'm a Brazilian Japanese with a Russian name, living in the U.S., and who loves Italian food.



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