

Wishing a Happy 2024

October-December 2023 Volume 6 Issue 4

Dear Colleagues and friends,

The calendar year reminds us to take a fresh look at what is ahead, to garner enthusiasm for our mission, and to renew our commitments not only to our work but to others. I believe the time away is always a good opportunity to reflect and to consider how we can do things better, derive greater pleasure from what we do, make room for the things and persons we care about, and importantly consider our wellbeing as the utmost priority in our lives. This was a joyful Holiday season for me and my family. Yet, I can't feel anything but a sense of relief to get back into the day-to-day routine, and engage with students, staff, and faculty in our work. There is a certain sense of calm and fulfilment that is challenged when the needs of so many, at an unpredictable schedule, seem to dominate our attention.

The last days before the break were full of anticipation and joy. I felt immense pleasure watching the healthy competition in building the best gingerbread house! My understanding is that Santa exaggerated the supply of Oreos to a point that may require an entire semester of continuous indulging. It was great to share the moments and see the joy in everyone's face as they shared their holiday plans. I think all in all, we had a good 2023. We capped it with Nick Harris's AHA grant!

Welcome to 2024! I wish you the best, health, grace, calm, joy, and success at whatever you put your heart to!



Sincerely,

Patricia

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Editor, Liz Simon

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Physiology News



The Year in Review

From the Editor's desk



As we reflect on 2023, the Physiology News desk summarizes the year of the physiology family.

Physiology is proud of what was accomplished in 2023. We excelled as a department, and made concerted efforts to accomplish life-work balance. We published peer reviewed manuscripts, organized, and presented at national and international conferences to showcase our research mission. We continue to excel in teaching. We serve in Committees at the Institution, Societies, and in the Department to promote the Service Mission. A special shout out to all the staff- administrative and research, who make all this possible. We organized team building events to build camaraderie, appreciation, and respect. Everyone found ways to unwind, spend time with family and friends, travel, and pursue hobbies and interests. **Let us continue our excellent work, Trust and Inspire each other, and have a great 2024.**

New faces- We welcomed Heidi Braden, Sarah Cohen, Xavier Chapa-Dubocq, Megan Donovan, Megan Mire, Nicholas Harris, Nicholas Horne, Stephanie Lee, Meryl Leiva, Janos Paloczi, and Keishla Rodriguez-Graciani.

Trainees made us proud- We had 5 successful PhD dissertation defenses, and Drs. Brianna Bourgeois, Jessi Cucinello-Ragland, Jonquil Poret, Taylor Templeton Jager, and Anna Whitehead graduated in 2023.

Dr. Marcus Weera, postdoctoral fellow, accepted a tenure-track faculty position at Tufts University.

Trainees won awards at local and national conferences for outstanding presentations.

Scholarly activities- Collectively we published over 37 peer reviewed manuscripts and chaired several symposiums at National and International Conferences. We presented at local, national, and international conferences. We engaged in teaching future health care professionals and scientists. We served as reviewers for study sections, and peer-reviewed manuscripts for journals.

Recognitions- Eden Gallegos was awarded 2023 Levitzky Outstanding Teaching Award. Flavia Souza-Smith won the 2023 Chancellor's Excellence Award.

Accomplishments- Eden Gallegos, Taylor Fitzpatrick-Schmidt and Kourtney Weaver were awarded F30 NIH/NIAAA NRSA awards. Nicholas Harris was awarded AHA Predoctoral Fellowship. Drs. Scott Edwards, Lisa Harrison Bernard, Jason Gardner, and Liz Simon were awarded NIH grants.

Outreach and community service- We served as judges of the Greater New Orleans Science Fair, and organized educational events at local schools and colleges.

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Recognition

Dr. Flavia Souza Smith won the 2023 Chancellor's Excellence Award.

Trainee corner

Taylor Fitzpatrick-Schmidt was awarded a scholarship to attend the Center for Sex Education's National Sex Ed Conference in Atlantic City, NJ, December 2023.

Taylor Fitzpatrick-Schmidt, Stephanie Lee, and Eden Gallegos presented their work at the Southeastern Medical Scientist Symposium in Atlanta, GA in November.

Grants

Nicholas Harris was awarded the American Heart Association Predoctoral Fellowship for the work on TRAF3IP2 as a Proinflammatory Mediator of Alcohol-related Cardiomyopathy.

New Faces

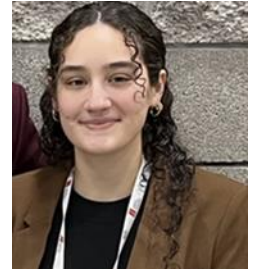
Sarah Cohen is a senior nursing student in the CARE Accelerated BSN Program. Sarah joined Dr. Janos Paloczi lab as a MUSES Honors BSN Program student. She will perform cardiovascular and alcohol use research, focusing on the impacts of binge drinking on the heart-gut axis. She looks forward to presenting her research locally and at conferences before she graduates in May.



Megan Donovan joined Dr. Janos Paloczi lab as a graduate student! Dr. Paloczi is excited to have 2 trainees and Megan's project will be on the cardiovascular and cardiometabolic aspects of chronic alcohol misuse. Megan is preparing to write NIH F31 application!



Victoria Rodriguez joined the Simon lab as a PREP scholar in December. Victoria's project will focus on alcohol and sugar mediated oxidative stress in hepatocyte spheroids.



Professional services

Dr. Lisa M. Harrison-Bernard. Began service on the following School of Graduate Studies committees: Graduate Advisory Council, Graduate Advisory Council Membership, Hunger-Free Task Force. **Dr. Harrison Bernard** is a member of the APS Center for Physiology Education Engagement of Medical & Health Physiology Education Leaders Subcommittee.

Dr. Lisa M. Harrison-Bernard served on the following grant review committees: Florida Department of Health James and Esther King Biomedical Research Program, National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) Special Emphasis Panel/Scientific Review Group 2024/05 ZAI1 PP-D (M1) of NIAID R25 Applications

Dr. Lisa M. Harrison-Bernard is an Associate Editor for the APS Advances in Physiology Education journal.

Publications

Fitzpatrick-Schmidt T, Edwards S (2023). Within and beyond the binary: Sex and gender differences in pain and alcohol use disorder. *Current Addiction Reports*. Dec 22. Doi. org/10.1007/s40429-023-00534-y

Gunaldo TP, Baudoin CD, Duffy SJ, Mazumder HOR, **Edwards S** (2023). An exploratory investigation of longitudinal interprofessional education attitudes at the team level. *Health, Interprofessional Practice & Education* 5: 3, 1–8. doi: doi.org/10.61406/hipe.272

Janos Paloczi and Youngchan Kim. Biophysics approaches to investigate multi-organ alcohol-induced damage. *Frontiers Molecular Biosciences*. doi.org/10.3389/fmolb.2023.1346518



Physiology News



Joshua M. Edavettal, Nicholas R. Harris, Sarah E. Cohen, Janos Paloczi, Bysani Chandrasekar, and Jason D. Gardner. 2023. Abstinence Restores Cardiac Function in Mice with Established Alcohol-Induced Cardiomyopathy. *Cells* doi.org/10.3390/cells12242783

Ming Jiang, Mirjam Huizenga, Jonah L Wirt, **Janos Paloczi**, Avand Amedi, Richard J B H N van den Berg, Joerg Benz, Ludovic Collin, Hui Deng, Xinyu Di, Wouter F Driever, Bogdan I Florea, Uwe Grether, Antonius P A Janssen, Thomas Hankemeier, Laura H Heitman, Tsang-Wai Lam, Florian Mohr, Anto Pavlovic, Iris Ruf, Helma van den Hurk, Anna F Stevens, Daan van der Vliet, Tom van der Wel, Matthias B Wittwer, Constant A A van Boeckel, Pal Pacher, Andrea G Hohmann, Mario van der Stelt. (2023). A monoacylglycerol lipase inhibitor showing therapeutic efficacy in mice without central side effects or dependence. *Nature Communications*. doi:10.1038/s41467-023-43606-3.

Morris T, **Cucinello-Ragland JA**, Marks TJ, Prevost K, Glenn JF, Davenport GJ, **Edwards S**, Winsauer PJ (2023). Distinct antinociceptive and conditioned behavioral effects are produced by individual cannabinoids and a cannabis-derived mixture. *Pharmacology, Biochemistry, and Behavior*. Dec 19:235:173692. doi: 10.1016/j.pbb.2023.173692

Siddiqi MT, Podder D, **Pahng AR**, Athanason AC, Nadav T, Cates-Gatto C, Contet C, Roberts AJ, **Edwards S**, Roberto M, Varodayan FP (2023). Prefrontal cortex glutamatergic adaptations in a mouse model of alcohol use disorder. *Addiction Neuroscience*. Dec 15:9:100137. doi:10.1016/j.addicn.2023.100137

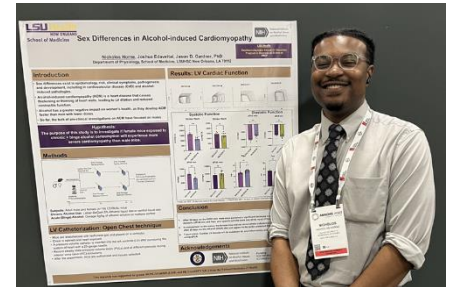
Presentations

Eden Gallegos won first place in the 3-minute talk category at the School of Graduate Studies Research Day for her talk titled *Fats, sugars, and alcohol oh my: what leads your liver down the wrong yellow brick road?*

Keishla Rodriguez Graciani presented a talk titled *Alcohol increases oxidative stress and mitochondrial*

content in myoblasts from SIV-infected female macaques at the Eighteenth Alcohol and Drug Abuse Center of Excellence Scientific Retreat and won a \$100 award, December 13, 2023.

Nicholas Horne, PREP Scholar training with Dr. Jason Gardner, presented a poster titled "*Sex differences in a preclinical model of alcohol-induced cardiomyopathy*" at the Annual Biomedical Research Conference for Minoritized Scientists (ABRCMS) in Phoenix, AZ in November.



Rajani Maiya presented at the mini symposium "Paraventricular thalamus (PVT) as a mediator of adaptations to stress and drug use". Her talk was titled "*Transcriptional signatures of social stress escalated alcohol consumption in the PVT*". At the Society for Neuroscience meeting in Washington DC, November 11-15, 2023.

Scott Edwards presented a talk on *Substance Use Disorders and Treatment Considerations for People with HIV* at the LSU Health New Orleans School of Dentistry, October 13, 2023

Scott Edwards presented a seminar titled *Analgesic Efficacy of Alcohol in the Context of Chronic Pain: Preclinical and Clinical Insights* at the LSU Health New Orleans Neuroscience Center of Excellence, October 23, 2023.

Stephanie Lee presented a talk titled *Proteomic Analysis of Central Amygdala Systems Regulated by Mifepristone in the Context of Alcohol Dependence* at the Eighteenth Alcohol and Drug Abuse Center of Excellence Scientific Retreat and won a \$100 award, December 13, 2023.

Taylor Fitzpatrick-Schmidt won second place in the oral presentation category at the School of Graduate Studies Research Day for her talk titled *Analgesic Efficacy of Alcohol in Reducing HIV-*



Physiology News



Associated Neuropathic Pain in Preclinical and Clinical Settings and won a \$500 travel award.

Dr. Lisa Harrison-Bernard and the PREP Scholars attended the Annual Biomedical Research Conference for Minoritized Scientists (ABRCMS) in November 2023 in Phoenix, AZ.



Photograph: Dwayne Crenshaw, Katelyn White, Caitlynn Diggs, Nicholas Horne, Victoria Rodriguez, Dr. Harrison-Bernard

Outreach and community service

Association of Women in Science- South Louisiana Chapter organized an Angel tree Drive for the Salvation Army. Several of the Physiology family members were involved.



Notable Events

Dr. Maria Elena Secci has been promoted to Senior Staff Scientist. Congratulations to an awesome scientist!

The Mental Hygienists Fantasy Football League wrapped up its sixth season. Our reigning 2023 School of Graduate Studies Chancellor's Awardee **Dr. Anna Whitehead** secured the first draft pick, constructed the strongest projected team, and ran away with the league this year (12-2 regular season record, two blowout playoff performances, and a \$300 prize). Our runner-up **Dr. Brianna Bourgeois** earned a strong second place for the second consecutive year along with a \$200 prize).

Taylor Fitzpatrick-Schmidt secured second place and a \$50 prize with a 25-17 record in the School of Graduate Studies SGA Bowl Pick 'Em Challenge.

Call for featured story. Please contact Liz Simon if you would like to write featured stories in the newsletters. It can be on physiological breakthroughs, Inner engineering tips, personal growth and motivational pieces, or anything not listed here!

Health