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Upcoming PDA Events:

**August 26, 2015**
AAAS Fellowship Info Session from 12-1pm in the Molecular Biology Research Building Auditorium to learn about a Science and Technology Policy Fellowship.

**September 22, 2015**
In honor of National Postdoc Appreciation week, the PDA will be hosting an ice cream social and free professional head shots. This event will take place from 4-6pm in the Moss auditorium lobby in the College of Medicine Research Building.

**October 29, 2015**
Future of Research (FOR) event will be held on October 29, 2015. Please see futureofresearch.org/chicago/ for more details and read the article in this issue to learn more about the event.

**October PDA event Social Networking Talk**
In October the PDA will host an event on how to best utilize social networking to your benefit during your postdoc and when job hunting.

**RESCHEDULED:**
College Teaching Fundamentals (9am-2pm): This teaching bootcamp is geared towards postdocs interested in learning effective teaching methods. This event, originally scheduled for August 20, will now be held on **Friday, November 20**. Registration is required:
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1wWgWg0rJnaUnKLIzRihYSKnVIT2odcBmioas/viewform?usp=send_form

Grant opportunities

Below you will find a table of grant opportunities with deadlines in the next few months. Opportunities highlighted in green are open to international postdocs. Future newsletters will include updated lists of grant opportunities so stay tuned.

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If you know of any grant opportunities you would like to share, please email us at uic.pda@gmail.com
**UPCOMING EVENT: Future of Research (FOR) Chicago**

**By Dr. Harinder S. Grewal**

The Future of Research (FOR) is a postdoc-organized symposium focused on creating a new framework for the future of scientific enterprise. In October 2014, postdocs in Boston held the first FOR Symposium to identify the major concerns facing the scientific enterprise today and what can be done to maximize the potential for wide-ranging and fundamental scientific discovery; and to minimize the loss of talented young researchers who can contribute greatly to science. This event sparked a nationwide debate and persuaded many more young PhDs to make their voices heard.

Across the country, more and more postdocs are engaging in building a better future for science in America.

Graduate students and post-docs are made to believe that there is guaranteed success in academia if they stick to it and keep applying to positions, yet many are not aware that the landscape has changed dramatically in last decade or so. Early-career scientists have started to realize the bottle-neck in academia. There are too many graduate students and many of them end up taking post-doctoral positions, but there are very few academic faculty positions available. Young scientists are realizing how difficult it is to obtain an academic post. This, along with declining research budgets and oversupply of trained people for academic jobs, have created an atmosphere of anxiety within the scientific community that is obstructing scientific progress and keeping talented people away from science careers. Therefore a new framework for science is needed to ensure that scientific research remains a viable and valuable part of our economy and our society. The concept of the FOR symposium was born to initiate a dialogue about these issues.

FOR is taking place in Chicago this year on **October 29th, 2015**. The organizers are comprised of diverse group of early career researchers from institutions of Greater Chicago area including University of Chicago, University of Illinois at Chicago, Northwestern University and Rush University. FOR Chicago is a one-day series that includes plenary talks by Dr. Gregory Petsko (Cornell University) and Dr. Keith Yamamoto (Vice Chancellor of Research, UCSF), a panel discussion featuring distinguished science thought leaders, Caralynn Nowinski (UI LABS, Chicago), Krisztina Eleki (Chicago Council on Science and Technology), Gary McDowell (Tufts University) and participant-led workshops with the aim to a) illuminate the fundamental challenges in training and employing scientists in today’s research climate, b) propose solutions to equip the STEM postdoctorates as leaders in diverse career paths, and c) initiate a dialogue with key stakeholders in the greater Chicago area about embracing the rich community of PhD -trained talent as drivers of innovation.

So far more than 50 postdocs, graduate students, staff and faculty across 6 states have pre-registered and a total number of 250 participants are expected. The registration link for attending the symposium can be found at [www.futureofresearch.org/chicago](http://www.futureofresearch.org/chicago). All postdocs are encouraged to attend.

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**New UIC PDA President and Elections:**

Join us in congratulating our past PDA president Dr. Matthew McMurray on his new position at the University of Miami in Ohio!

Dr. Shyama Majumdar will take over as interim UIC PDA President.

We will be holding new elections in September so stay tuned!
ARTICLE: Individual development plans for postdoctoral researchers
By Dr. Harinder S. Grewal

What is an Individual Development Plan (IDP)?
An Individual Development Plan (IDP) is a tailored document written by a postdoctoral researcher, which could be reviewed by his/her mentor, any other faculty member, or a friend at higher scientific level capable of advising on academic or alternative careers. The IDP defines a postdoc’s short- and long-term career goals, as well as outlining the steps to achieve them. It should be emphasized that the career development goals should cover a broad range of activities and training, not just research even if the postdoc plans a career in academia. Other potential career paths should also be considered, including but not limited to careers in consulting, teaching, patent law, science writing, science policy, and industry. Even though these career paths differ greatly, each of them requires skills in writing, presenting and communicating, to name a few. With this objective in mind, the IDP will help define the necessary steps a postdoc needs to take in order to achieve effective professional development.

Creating an IDP will help postdocs to:
- Determine the knowledge, skills, and competencies needed to be successful in his/her current position and future career
- Learn to translate their knowledge, skills, and competencies to other careers
- Determine career objectives (academic and beyond)
- Set priorities for short- and long-term career goals
- Establish a constructive dialogue with mentors regarding career development

When to create an IDP?
The PDA recommends that every newly hired postdoc should create an IDP within six months of employment. If a postdoc does not have an IDP, they can create one concurrently with the annual review/re-appointment. Postdocs, who have a mentor other than or in addition to their employer, can create an IDP at any time as part of a mentoring program. The IDP should be revised annually concurrently with an annual review process.

Why create an IDP?
1. An IDP makes you more successful in your current position because you will
   - Identify skills required for your current job
   - Improve your performance in your current position
   The report shows that postdocs with a written plan submitted papers to peer-reviewed journals at a 23% higher rate, published first-authored papers at a 30% higher rate, and submitted grant proposals at a 25% higher rate, than those without a written plan.

2. An IDP will help your professional development by placing an emphasis on career objectives and professional development both within and outside your research current position identifying the necessary resources to achieve career objectives

3. An IDP will improve your work satisfaction by improving communication with your employer creating mutual responsibilities/expectations between you and your employer, and increasing self-confidence by mediating your mentor’s support and encouragement.

How to create an IDP? (http://myidp.sciencecareers.org)
The postdoc and their mentor(s) should collaboratively identify the job requirements and the appropriate training associated with the postdoc’s current job. In addition, the postdoc and the mentor may identify future directions of professional development within the research field or beyond it if necessary.
Interested in Science Policy?

This year a UIC chapter of the National Science Policy Group (NSPG) will be starting on campus. This group of graduate students, postdocs and young researchers interested in policy will meet monthly to discuss science policy current events, issues and career paths. The group will also organize policy related events to provide opportunities to participate and gain experience in science policy. For more information about the NSPG, see [http://natscipoigroup.org](http://natscipoigroup.org).

If you are interested in helping with the startup or joining our group, please contact Alyssa Sprouse at asprouse@uic.edu.

Considering a career in Consulting?

A group of postdocs and graduate students are reviving the UIC CONSULTING CLUB (UICCC) to assist graduate and postdocs pursuing a career in consulting. This will provide a highly valuable leadership experience and an exclusive opportunity to network with consultants. The mission of UICCC includes: Inform: exposure to consulting world through presentations and panel discussions. Support: providing students with tools to excel in the interview process through workshops and the creation of a platform for preparing case studies. Connect and create opportunities: facilitating networking between consulting firms and UIC students in relationship-building events.

UICCC is also looking for volunteers to serve on its executive board. If you would like to be part of this initiative, contributing to its organization, or being a member, please e-mail us at uicconsultingclub@gmail.com and tell us briefly about yourself, and your motivations to join us.

Selected Grants, Awards, and First Author Publications by UIC Postdocs

Awards, Grants, and Mentions:
Michael Calik placed first in the Postdoctoral Poster Competition at the annual Society for Neuroscience Chicago Chapter meeting. Jose Cordoba-Chacon was awarded the Eugenia Rosemberg Abstract Award at the Endocrine Society meeting. Carolyn Hollands, along with Dr. Seungpyo Hong’s company at Capio Biosciences were featured in OVPR’s publication ELEVATE. Tiara Perez was awarded a spot on the T32 Research Training in Natural Product Complementary and Alternative Medicine Training Grant.

Publications:

Jobs:
Michael Calik obtained a position as Assistant Professor in the Department of Biobehaviour Health Science at UIC. Matthew McMurray, our previous PDA President, is now an Assistant Professor in the Department of Psychology at Miami University. Ashmeet Oberoi obtained a faculty position at University of Miami’s Department of Educational and Psychological Studies.

Congratulations to all!!