

Pharmacology & Toxicology

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Boonshoft
School of Medicine
WRIGHT STATE UNIVERSITY

Department of Pharmacology
and Toxicology

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CHAIR'S CORNER



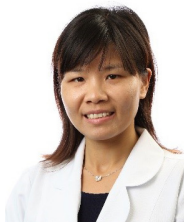
The Department of Pharmacology and Toxicology has a newsletter designed to keep our alumni and the Boonshoft School of Medicine and Wright State University apprised of the happenings in the department.

Each issue contains a "Spotlight" section that highlights a faculty colleague or a program. For this issue, we will be highlighting Yanfang Chen, M.D., Ph.D., professor of pharmacology and toxicology. To join the departmental mailing list to receive an electronic version, or to provide suggestions for content, please contact Ms. Catherine Winslow at Catherine.Winslow@wright.edu.

DEPARTMENT UPDATES

Coronavirus Pandemic Impacts Department

The pandemic caused by the novel coronavirus (COVID-19), which originated in Wuhan, China, has resulted in considerable impact to the department. Not only were laboratories closed, but all instruction went to virtual and computer-based. We are proud to report that the entire department rose to the occasion. Several of our M.S. students presented their thesis defenses online, which were well-received. An advantage of this was that family and friends from countries as diverse as India, Nigeria and Scotland were able to view the defenses. All of us have learned many lessons from this pandemic, including that we all share the same world with each other. The good news is that now laboratories are opening and we in Ohio thankfully have not experienced similar numbers of infected as have other places.



Dr. JinJu Wang Joins Faculty as Research Assistant Professor

We are thrilled to announce that **Dr. JinJu Wang** has been hired as a Research Assistant Professor. Dr. Wang finished her postdoctoral fellowship with Dr. Ji Bihl, Dr. Yanfang Chen served as a secondary mentor. Dr. Wang has garnered a research grant from the American Heart Association for her novel murine studies defining how exercise can decrease hypertension.

Welcome aboard, Dr. JinJu Wang!

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DEPARTMENT UPDATES (con't.)

New Clinical Trials Coordination Concentration for Masters Students

A new master's degree concentration that offers a foundation in clinical research focusing on improving global health and protecting the welfare of research participants will be offered at Wright State University in fall semester. The Clinical Trials Coordination (CTC) is a one-year, non-thesis master's concentration, with students working alongside physicians at the Wright State Physicians Health Center on campus. Students will have the opportunity to assist in clinical research trials.

With this hands-on educational training, students will gain real-world experience applying the principles of Good Clinical Practice (GCP) to active industry and federally funded trials. The CTC concentration is designed to provide a solid foundation in clinical research focusing on the protection of research participants' welfare, improving global health and coordinating academic, government, and industry research.

The coursework provides an excellent foundation for students who wish to sit for national certification through the Society of Clinical Research Associates (SoCRA) or Association of Clinical Research Professionals (ACRP). Applications for the CTC concentration are now being accepted for the Fall 2020 semester.

New Graduate Coordinator Joins Department

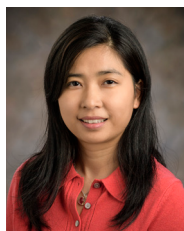


It is with great pleasure that we announce the addition of **Ms. Corinne Thaxton** as a part-time graduate program coordinator. Ms.

Thaxton has considerable administrative experience and will be a tremendous asset to the

educational mission of the department. Her duties include working with the M.S. students and helping to grow our online presence.

Dr. Ji Bihl is Awarded WSU President's Award



We are pleased to announce that Assistant Professor **Dr. Ji Bihl** was awarded the 2019 President's Award for Excellence: Early Career Achievement Award.

This coveted award acknowledges Dr. Bihl's outstanding research

accomplishments.

Pharmacology Alumni Board Placed in Department

To keep track of the many outstanding

accomplishments of our alumni, we have placed a special display board in the department. We are also spotlighting alumni on our Facebook page—we now have over 4,000 followers! Please send any news/items for posting directly to Ms. Catherine Winslow at Catherine.Winslow@wright.edu.

New Studies Begin in the Pharmacology Translational Unit

One of the goals of the department is to foster translational studies to facilitate the process through which discoveries at the laboratory bench can be brought to the clinic. Moreover, the Pharmacology Translational Unit (PTU) located in the Wright State Physicians Health Center next to our campus is set up to conduct both translational research studies as well as pharmaceutical clinical trials. Regarding the latter, the PTU is currently conducting almost a dozen pharma-sponsored studies. These include testing a Phosphodiesterase-4 inhibitor in both adults and children with psoriasis; two new studies testing a topical novel retinoid in adults and children; and a histamine receptor-4 inhibitor in adults with atopic dermatitis. New studies involving the challenging skin diseases prurigo nodularis and hidradenitis suppurativa have started. We also have a novel study testing if high doses of oral Vitamin D can treat psoriasis. If you have questions or want more details, please contact Dr. Travers or PTU Director Elizabeth Cates at 937-245-7500.

KUDOS

Dr. Terry Oroszi, has been elected to the Faculty Senate representing the Boonshoft School of Medicine.

Amazing that our colleague can write multiple books, publish multiple manuscripts, carry an impressive teaching load and still have time to be our senator!

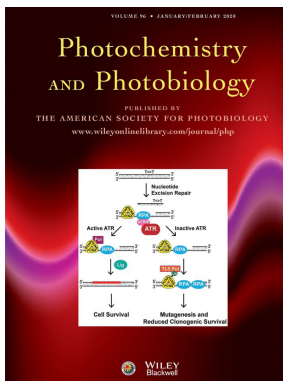


Dr. Sol Bobst, Adjunct Assistant Professor. Dr. Bobst's article on genotoxic impurities in pharmaceuticals, made the cover of the prestigious journal *European Pharmaceutical Review*.

Congrats to Dr. Bobst!

Dr. Michael Kemp, published a manuscript which was featured on the cover of the journal *Photochemistry and Photobiology* January-February 2020 issue.

His diagrams are photogenic!



Dr. Jeffrey Travers, was recently named the Wright State University Brage Golding Distinguished Professor for Research. Thanks to Drs. David Cool and Julian Trevino for nominating him for this special award. Dr. Travers was also informed that his renewal of a long-running (since 2010) Veterans Administration Merit Award "Oxidized lipids and UV immunosuppression" was renewed at senior status, which means that it will run for eight years instead of the usual four (until 2028).

More indications of the advanced age of the Chair!

Dr. Courtney Sulentic, was elected to the Boonshoft School of Medicine Faculty Promotions and Advancement Committee

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Each issue of the departmental newsletter will “spotlight” an individual faculty or program in the department. For this issue, we are taking the opportunity to spotlight one of our newest faculty members, Yanfang Chen, M.D., Ph.D., professor of pharmacology and toxicology.



Dr. Yanfang Chen was born in Hunan, China. His father was an engineer who worked in a factory and his mother was an elementary school teacher. He was interested in sports, especially basketball and ping-pong, and liked fishing and hiking. He was inspired by his mother to enter a career in medicine and went to the Nanhua University Medical School in China. After graduating with an M.D. degree, he underwent clinical residency at the university hospital for three years. During that time, he met his future wife, Dr. Wenfeng Zhang, and the two married in 1990. Then, Dr. Chen was able to obtain a coveted position in the cardiology graduate program in the Third Hospital of Beijing Medical University through his previous performance as well as a superb score on the National Entrance Competition

Examination. After five years’ training with his two mentors -- Dr. Minzhe Chen, an Interventional Cardiologist, and Dr. Qide Han, a Pharmacologist in Vascular Medicine -- he obtained his Ph.D. degree in 1995, followed by a primary investigator faculty position in the Institute of Cardiovascular Disease at Guangdong General Hospital.

It was at this time that Dr. Chen decided to pursue a career as a biomedical scientist in the USA, by pursuing a postdoctoral fellowship in the hypertension field to learn new techniques and work with leaders in the field. Luckily for us here in the department, with the introduction from a former Ph.D. student, he was able to work in the laboratory of professor and chair Dr. Mariana Morris in 1999. Dr. Chen was highly

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Fall 2019 Graduates

Mohammed Ali M. Alasmari
 Bushra Faisal A. Alharbi
 Noha Mohammadaltai A Alsharif

Dalal Fahad I. Bin Dayel
 Hussein Ismail
 Yash Pravin Jain

Spring 2020 Graduates

Mansour Ibrahim A. Alghusn
 Abdulrahman Mohammed M. Alkawar
 Abdullah Khamsan A. Althaiban
 Shreepa Jayesh Chauhan
 Vishwanath Reddy Gampala
 Lavanya Kandur
 Jude Z. Khatib
 Mariyyah Ahmed O. Madkhali
 Robert Marshalek

Abeer Hamzah M. Najjar
 Jaree R. Naqvi
 Oladayo Ayobami Oyebanji
 Qassem Yahya H. Ozran
 Sai Lahari Paryathaneni
 Janapriya Raju Shalimala Murali
 Ambika P. Shoemaker
 Benita Wu
 Hima Priya Yenuga

KUDOS (con't.)

and **Dr. Jeffrey Travers** was elected to the Research Committee.

The department will be well-represented!

New addition Evan Hayes to the department family. Kudos to PTU nurse Hannah Hayes and her husband Dr. Kameron Hayes on the birth of their son, Evan on May 14.

Cute baby alert!





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productive with involvement in multiple important publications in the field of renin-angiotensin system and hypertension. Under the mentorship of Dr. Morris, Dr. Chen established novel preclinical techniques in cardiovascular research, such as long-term monitoring and analysis of mouse blood pressure and heart rate, and highly sensitive in-situ hybridization methods for brain receptors. Dr. Chen became a Research Assistant Professor in 2003 and Assistant Professor in 2006. Then, he extended his research into stroke, diabetes, stem cells and extracellular microvesicles (EVs). Dr. Chen set up a novel mouse stroke model and state-of-the-art approaches for detecting and analysis of microvesicles and exosomes. His research was continuously funded by the American Heart Association, American Diabetes

Association, and National Institutes of Health. He was promoted to associate professor in 2010 and full professor in 2015. He serves as a member of various internal and external research grant review committees and a peer-reviewer for scientific journals. More importantly, he has served as a consummate mentor, especially for faculty Drs. Ji Bihl and JinJu Wang.

Drs. Chen and Zhang have two children. Son Jay was born in 1997 and daughter Lily was born in 2004. Jay is a senior at Miami University majoring in chemistry and computer science, and expects to graduate next year. Jay spent a summer working in the department and co-authored a manuscript published in the *Journal of Immunology* that included many of the departmental faculty (Drs. Chen,

Bihl, Cool, and Travers). His daughter is currently studying at Beavercreek High School and is interested in writing and art.

Dr. Chen has collaborations inside the university as well as with peers in China, mainly focusing on his research interests in stroke and neuroscience. His research has also extended to UVB-induced skin injury by collaborating with Drs. Ji Bihl and Jeffrey Travers. Dr. Chen enjoys both research and teaching, and especially mentoring, at which he has been quite successful. He enjoys reading, Chinese cuisine, and spending time with his family.

Dr. Yanfang Chen, our very accomplished colleague, we are pleased to highlight you and your efforts!