

# Pharmacology & Toxicology

VOL. 6, ISSUE 3

FALL 2019



Boonshoft  
School of Medicine  
WRIGHT STATE UNIVERSITY

Department of Pharmacology  
and Toxicology

## IN THIS ISSUE

Chair's Corner	1
Department Updates	1-2
Kudos	3
Faculty Spotlight	3-4

## CHAIR'S CORNER



The Department of Pharmacology and Toxicology has a newsletter designed to keep our alumni and the Boonshoft School of Medicine apprised of happenings in the department. The newsletter is issued three times per year, and can be found online: <http://medicine.wright.edu/pharmacology-and-toxicology>.

Each issue contains a spotlight section that highlights a faculty, colleague or program. For this issue, we are highlighting Michael G. Kemp, Ph.D., assistant professor of pharmacology and toxicology. To join the mailing list and to receive an electronic version, or to provide suggestions for content, please contact Ms. Catherine Winslow at [Catherine.Winslow@wright.edu](mailto:Catherine.Winslow@wright.edu).

## DEPARTMENT AND FACULTY NEWS

### Large master's student class begins

We are pleased that a new group of master's students began in the department this Fall. Of the 35 students beginning their studies, 11 are in the Thesis Track and 19 are in the Leader Administration Track. 5 are in the Clinical Investigator (M.D./M.S.) Track.



### Dr. Craig Rohan joins faculty as assistant professor

We are thrilled to announce that Dr. Craig Rohan has been hired as a part-time assistant professor. A dermatologist working at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Lieutenant Colonel Rohan will be assisting in clinical trials, translational research, and the educational programs for the department. As assistant medical director of the Pharmacology Translational Unit, he brings considerable clinical experience to the department.

***Welcome aboard, Lieutenant Colonel Rohan!***

# DEPARTMENT AND FACULTY NEWS

## Pharmacology alumni board placed in department

To keep track of the many outstanding accomplishments of our alumni, we now have a special display board in the department. Please send any news or items for posting directly to Ms. Catherine Winslow at Catherine.Winslow@wright.edu.



Dr. Terry Oroszi and Ms. Catherine Winslow

## 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.



The PTU. From left to right: Director Elizabeth Cates, Amy Williams, Dr. Craig Rohan, Dr. Jeffrey Travers, Hannah Hayes, Christina Knisely, Alycia Ketter.

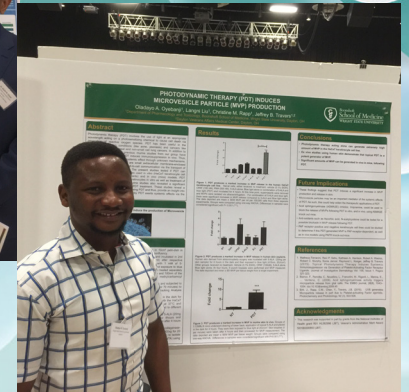
The PTU is currently conducting almost a dozen pharma-sponsored studies. These include testing a Phosphodiesterase-4 inhibitor in both adults and children with psoriasis, and two new studies testing a

## Pharmacology faculty and students busy at the recent Central Research Forum

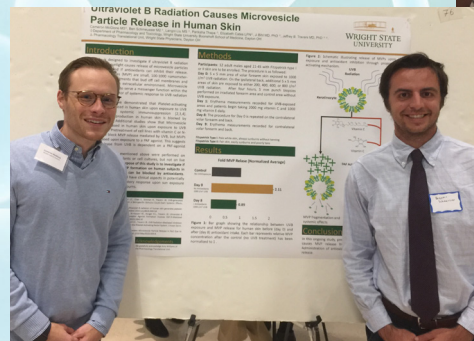
We are pleased to announce that our faculty and students submitted a total of 27 (of 132 total) abstracts at the Boonshoft School of Medicine Central Research Forum on October 17, 2019. The Central Research Forum spotlighted Assistant Professor Dr. Ji Bihl, who gave a superb lecture entitled, "Extracellular Microvesicles: New Insights for Diagnosis and Therapeutic Applications for Vascular Diseases."



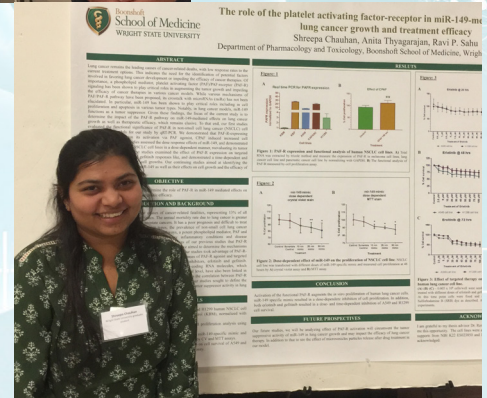
Above: Abeer Najjar, M.S. student, and Dr. Khalid Elased



Above: Simon Oyebanji, M.S. student



Above: Cameron McGlone and Benjamin Schmeusser, M.D./M.S. students



Right: Shreepa Chauhan, M.S. student

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.

To assist in subject recruitment and scheduling, we are pleased to announce the hiring of Alycia Ketter, B.S. For more details, please contact Dr. Travers or PTU Director Elizabeth Cates at 937-245-7500.



## KUDOS

**Dr. Terry Oroszi**, who just published her next two fiction thrillers, *Operation Deep Dive: A Step into the Past* and *Mr. Smith Goes to North Korea*. Our colleague has been very busy, from her considerable teaching load (five classes) to teaching at Quantico and serving the Boonshoft School of Medicine as part of the two-day executive SOAR visioning exercise.



**Our Dr. O is a cross between one of her fictional characters and the Energizer Bunny!**

**Dr. Trevor Bihl**, adjunct faculty, who was elected to the Board of Directors as Vice President of Chapters/Forums of the Institute for Operations Research and the Management Sciences (INFORMS). INFORMS is the premier professional society for applied math, probability, business, optimization, operations research, and artificial intelligence and has



Trevor Bihl, PhD and Ji Bihl, MD, PhD.

**Amazing accomplishments for this one-half of a true "Power Couple"!**

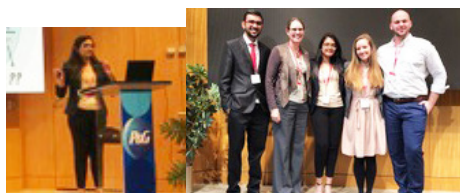
more than 12,000 members worldwide. Dr. Trevor Bihl also received the Team Award from the Kittyhawk Chapter of the Association of Old Crows as Co-PI for the Autowave Project. Finally, he published the book *Big Data Analytics in Future Power Systems* with Dr. Ahmed

Zobaa as co-author. The book discusses data mining and artificial intelligence.

**Dr. Courtney Sulentic**, oversaw a large contingent of our students presenting at the Ohio Valley Society of Toxicology (OVSOT) meeting held at Procter and Gamble in Mason, Ohio, on Friday, October 18, 2019. We had, at minimum, 13 M.S. students (at least 11 PTX thesis and non-thesis) and 5 Ph.D. students. We

also had 3 students compete in the "Tox on the Clock" activity. They were awarded \$50 each! Mili Bhakta (Sulentic lab) won the best M.S. poster award and Amjad Aljagthmi (Kadokia lab) won the 2nd place Ph.D. platform award. Each received significant cash awards!

**Our students are the greatest!**



**Dr. Yanfang Chen**, who was chosen to serve on the American Diabetes Association (ADA) Scientific Committee. As part of Dr. Chen's duties, he will be reviewing ADA grants. **Congrats to Dr. Chen!**

**Dr. Jeffrey Travers**, who was recently informed that one of his NIH R01 grants, *Platelet-activating Factor and Epidermal Cytotoxicity*, will be renewed for another five years—this grant has been continually funded since 1999!

**A quarter century does go fast!**

### 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



## FACULTY SPOTLIGHT

**For this issue, we are taking the opportunity to spotlight one of our newest faculty, Michael G. Kemp, Ph.D., assistant professor of Pharmacology and Toxicology**

Dr. Kemp was born in Englewood, New Jersey, the eldest child of Michael and Peggy Kemp. His father was a sales and marketing manager for an industrial cleaning systems company, and his mother worked in childcare and then for the U.S. Postal Service. Both have recently retired. He has two younger sisters, Miranda and Hilary. At age 10, Dr. Kemp's family moved to nearby Huber Heights, where he graduated from Wayne High School in 1995.

After high school, Dr. Kemp started college at Wright State University, where he earned a Bachelor of Science in Biology. Because of his interest in pursuing pharmacy as a career, he took an undergraduate pharmacology class taught by departmental faculty Drs. Robert Grubbs, James Lucot and Thomas Lockwood. In addition to working his way through college at McDonald's, he did undergraduate research with Dr. Grubbs and with Dr. John Paietta in the Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology.

Upon graduation in 1999, he married college sweetheart Emily and took a lab technician job screening ion channel inhibitors at Cincinnati-based Procter and Gamble Pharmaceuticals. After one year, he started pharmacy school at Ohio State University, where he decided, after 2 quarters, that his passion was for laboratory-based research rather than clinical pharmacy.

One experience which confirmed his career plans as a future scientist was his attending a Biophysical Society Meeting in 2001 in Boston. This led him to return to Wright State, where he was accepted into the Biomedical Sciences Ph.D. program. Dr. Kemp did a rotation with our own Dr. David Cool, and eventually chose Dr. Michael Leffak in

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the Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology as his supervisor. Under Dr. Leffak, Kemp studied DNA replication.

Following his doctorate in 2006, Dr. Kemp was accepted as a postdoctoral fellow in a laboratory at the Mayo Clinic, but did not go to icy Minnesota because the investigator there was planning to move to another institute. Luckily, Dr. Leffak was able to assist his former student in obtaining a postdoctoral position at the much warmer University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, to work with Dr. Aziz Sancar. Dr. Kemp explored DNA damage kinase signaling and DNA repair with Dr. Sancar from 2006-2012. He then secured a faculty position at the Florida Institute of Technology.

After one year, he returned to Chapel Hill and the Sancar laboratory as a research assistant professor. Dr. Kemp was there in 2015 when Dr. Sancar was awarded the Nobel Prize in Chemistry. We were fortunate to recruit Dr. Kemp back home to the Dayton area and his alma mater in 2016 when he worked in the department as a postdoctoral fellow for 1 year, then as

a research assistant professor and, since August 2019, as assistant professor.

Dr. Kemp has simply flourished here with multiple high-impact publications and is primary investigator on a 5 year NIH R01 grant. He is also supporting another funded proposal. He had another R01 grant that received a 13% score, which he is resubmitting.

Dr. Kemp has become a world-class expert in how aging and circadian rhythms affect DNA repair. His models span cell lines to live human subjects.

Dr. Kemp enjoys perpetually learning new



Dr Kemp and family at Emily's graduation

things, and unexpected results that change the direction of the research. He also gains much satisfaction working with students. Dr. Kemp is highly appreciative of his many mentors, from his parents and the support they provided to Dr. Leffak and his approach to science and training. He recognizes Dr. Sancar and his inspiring work ethic and intense focus on making important discoveries.

Dr. Kemp is especially appreciative of his wife, Emily, who he describes as being “far better at what she does than I ever could be at what I do.” Emily is a financial analyst and received her M.B.A. from Wright State. Dr. Kemp handed her the diploma! When not working in the lab, at the bench, or in the tissue culture hood, Dr. Kemp enjoys spending time with Emily and their three children, Andy (17), Evelyn (14), and Estelle (10), as well as extended family who live in the Dayton area.

For Dr. Michael G. Kemp, our very accomplished colleague, we are very pleased to highlight you and your efforts!