



THE MICRO-SCOOP

Newsletter of the UMB Department of Microbiology & Immunology

FEATURE STORY: HARRY MOBLEY



Members of the Mobley lab

Dr. Harry Mobley, the Graduate Program Director of the Department of Microbiology and Immunology, will soon end his tenure at the University of Maryland, Baltimore, and begin a new chapter in his life—as the Chairman of the Department of Microbiology and Immunology at the University of Michigan. Dr. Mobley has had a major impact on our department in his years here and has touched the lives of every student in the department, including through recruitment, mentorship, or simply by being a friend. Dr. Mobley leaves behind a school where he has spent his entire professional career, and a department he has helped mold into the success that it is today.

Dr. Mobley earned his Bachelor's Degree at Emory University, which he attended from 1971 to 1975. He then matriculated at the University of Louisville for his doctoral work. After receiving his Ph.D. in 1981, Dr. Mobley came to the University of Maryland, Baltimore. He started in the Department of Biochemistry, working as a postdoctoral fellow for Dr. Barry Rosen. Next, he moved to the Department of Infectious Diseases, where he served as a professor from 1984 to 1997. In 1997, Dr. Mobley came to the Department of Microbiology and

Immunology and began his role as the Program Director.

Dr. Mobley has trained many students—seventeen in all, including four currently working in his lab. He has also hosted sixteen postdoctoral fellows and five Infectious Diseases fellows. Dr. Mobley has also served on fifty dissertation committees—sixteen of which he was the chair. Dr. Mobley's most recent graduates from the lab include Susan Heimer and Carrie Poore, who graduated in 2002, and Angela Jansen, who graduated in 2003. Drs. Heimer and Poore are now postdoctoral fellows in the lab, and Dr. Jansen will be leaving this summer to begin a postdoctoral fellowship at the University of Bath in the United Kingdom.

During his time as Program Director, Dr. Mobley has made several changes to the department. He successfully applied for a training grant and toughened admissions standards. At the same time, he instituted a more “personal touch” to the admissions process, by personally calling prospective students and ensuring that all registration and tuition remission paperwork is completed before the students arrive for classes. In addition, Dr. Mobley has modified the curriculum to include more journal articles and has encouraged camaraderie in the department by promoting graduate student meetings and by having an “open door policy” for students to come and talk to him about any issues.

Dr. Mobley has several fond memories of his time here. These include all the student research presentations he has witnessed, he says, as it is “wonderful to see so many accomplishments presented in just two days.” He also fondly

remembers every dissertation defense and doctoral robbing. Dr. Mobley especially enjoys the “family” atmosphere of his laboratory—everyone is very close and has a wonderful rapport.

As the first Frederick Novy Chair of the Department of Microbiology and Immunology at the University of Michigan, Dr. Mobley will run the day-to-day activities of the department. By developing a Center for Microbial Pathogenesis, he hopes to enhance the department's reputation in that area. Dr. Mobley also hopes to continue to improve the University's graduate program, while continuing to actively research uropathogenic *E. coli*, *Proteus mirabilis*, and *Helicobacter pylori* in his own laboratory. Chelsea Lane, Nathalie Maroncle, Stephanie Himpl, and Gregg Davis will accompany Dr. Mobley to Michigan and continue to work in his lab.

Dr. Mobley is not only a wonderful program director, but also a successful researcher and a great friend to all the students and faculty of our department. He will be greatly missed.

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SPOTLIGHT ON STUDENTS

MEET OUR 5TH YEAR STUDENTS



Kristen Kanack (Kaper) is from Milwaukee, Wisconsin. She received her BS in natural sciences with majors in Bacteriology and Medical Microbiology/Immunology from the University of

Wisconsin-Madison. Her Senior Honors Thesis was under the direction of Dennis G. Maki, M.D., investigating the restriction fragment length polymorphisms and antibiograms of recurrent *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* isolates from nosocomial infections of hospital inpatients. Kristen also worked for Dr. Maki as an associate research specialist in the University of Wisconsin Medical School Infectious Disease Research Unit, where she performed clinical microbiological identification and scanning electron microscopy for several clinical trials of antibiotic-coated and silver-ion-coated urinary catheters. Additionally, she helped perform hospital surveillance studies of the bacteria present on attending physicians' stethoscopes and on surfaces in intensive care unit rooms. Kristen also received her MS in Bacteriology at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, where, under the direction of Susan E.H. West, Ph.D., she performed her thesis research on identifying new targets of the *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* transcription factor Vfr and studied how *vfr* expression was influenced by the Rhl and Las quorum sensing systems.

Kristen is interested in the relationships between bacterial pathogens and their hosts. Her current research is focused on the interactions of enteropathogenic and enterohemorrhagic *Escherichia coli* with the human intestinal epithelium. In particular, Kristen is using high density microarrays to look at the transcriptional response of the intestinal epithelium to products of the LEE pathogenicity island that are translocated into the host by the Type III secretion system. She is also investigating the role of one specific LEE product, SepZ, that the lab has recently determined to be translocated into host cells. Kristen says, "I think the field of host-pathogen interactions is interesting and important because it allows us to begin to fit staggering amounts of data from reductionist studies of

single bacterial virulence factors and host defense factors into a model of the dynamic living system of bacterial disease pathogenesis."

In her free time, Kristen loves to hike, camp, and read. She also enjoys movies, operas and the symphony. She urges students to take advantage of the low priced student rush tickets for productions by the Baltimore Opera Company and the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra.



John Vu (DeVico) grew up in Reading, PA, and Damascus, MD. He then attended the University of Maryland, College Park. His longest employment before graduate school was at the NIH in the

Laboratory of Tumor Cell Biology (LTCB). At the LTCB, John had a small role in the development of a possible *Vaccinia*-based vaccine for HTLV. John's research interest at the moment is the study of the coreceptor use of HIV-1—in particular, its altered change in preference from CCR5 to CXCR4 in the course of infection. John has developed an Fc fusion protein that consists of HIV-1 gp120, soluble CD4, and the hinge to CH3 regions of human IgG1. The fusion protein has been characterized and shown to bind specifically to CCR5. He is currently using it as a selection agent in virus passaging experiments *in vitro* and *in vivo* to see whether or not it plays a role in the altered coreceptor usage seen in natural infection. John says, "I am very interested in virology because the current field is a prime example of an amalgamation of all interesting aspects of biology—immunology, molecular and cell biology, and biochemistry to name a few. I'm interested in virology research not only because of its firm foundation in basic sciences, but I like the fact that the developmental path to clinically relevant applications can be short for fields such as vaccinology and gene therapy."

In his free time, you can find John relaxing and playing with his 14-month old son, Connor, or catching up on all the "geek news" online. John also loves to watch movies and every now and then he'll read a book that catches his eye. "In fact I just finished reading Dan Brown's "The Da Vinci Code"—what a riveting read!"



Susan Harrington (Nataro) was born and raised in Pittsburgh (Go Steelers!) and moved to Baltimore after completing her Bachelor's degree in Medical Technology. She worked in the clinical microbiology lab at Johns Hopkins University Hospital for a number of years, where she specialized in molecular epidemiology. Through this experience, Susan grew interested in bacterial pathogens, particularly resistant organisms and nosocomial infections.

Susan chose to pursue her Ph.D. to learn more about bacterial pathogenesis and to study host-pathogen interactions. In the future, Susan hopes to direct a clinical lab and focus her research on identifying virulence elements or resistance markers, studying their epidemiology and developing rapid diagnostic methods for those genes. When she's not busy in the lab, Susan enjoys gardening, home improvement projects, and just being with her friends.

DEPARTURES & ARRIVALS

DEPARTING STAFF

We regret to announce that **Karen Clifford**, Accountant in the Department's Business Office, will be leaving us. She has accepted a position at the University of Maryland College Park in the Department of Mathematics as Financial Coordinator. Her last day on the job here will be March 16, 2004. Karen is a longtime employee of the department and has been a critical member of our administrative and financial team. We will miss her but are happy for her and the advancement of her career. Good luck Karen!

Malarvizhi Durai, who worked as a postdoctoral fellow in Dr. Kamal Moudgil's lab from March 2000 to December 2003, has recently joined Dr. Jonathan Schneck's Lab at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, Department of Pathology, for a second postdoc. Dr. Durai studied autoimmune arthritis in the Moudgil lab and is now working on the use of artificial antigen presenting cells for induction of immunity against melanoma.

NEW POST-DOCTORAL FELLOWS

Nathalie Maroncle has recently joined Harry Mobley's lab. Dr. Maroncle is from Clermont-Ferrand, France. She received her D.E.A. degree from Université Blaise Pascal, and her Ph.D. from Université D'Auvergne in Clermont-Ferrand. Her Ph.D. research focused on the intestinal colonization by *Klebsiella pneumoniae* and identification of the bacterial factors involved through signature-tagged mutagenesis. Her work in the Mobley lab will examine the mechanism of action and role in virulence of the Sat cytotoxin secreted by uropathogenic *E. coli*. In her spare time, Dr. Maroncle enjoys scuba diving, photography, movies, billiards, and traveling.

Li Tong has recently joined Dr. Kamal Moudgil's lab as a postdoctoral fellow. Dr. Tong is from the First Military Medical University of China, a prestigious academic institution in Guangzhou. Dr. Tong's research interests include autoimmunity and neurophysiology. She has been awarded a prestigious NIH international postdoctoral fellowship to study immunological aspects of arthritis.

The Salem Spotlighters, located in Upper Falls, is now selling tickets for their latest production, "Bull in a China Shop." The play is a funny look at six old maids who live across the the street from a homicide detective and what they do to meet him. **June Green** (Program Coordinator) plays the part of Lucy, one of the old spinsters desperate to meet Mr. O'Finn, the detective. Performances are the last weekend in April and the first weekend in May. Tickets are still available by calling Sandy or Rometta Mitchell at 410-679-0329

DON'T FORGET!!

The annual Department of Microbiology and Immunology Student Seminars will be held this year on Wednesday, June 2nd and Thursday, June 3rd in BRB 13-007.

*Abstracts must be submitted to June Green no later than **Monday, May 3 at 5pm!***

MEETINGS, TRAVEL & AWARDS

Dr. Martin Flajnik was invited to give seminars at the University of Toronto (December), Johns Hopkins University (January), and the Santa Fe Institute of Theoretical Studies (February).

Dr. James Nataro was awarded a U19 Program Project from the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (total award \$8.3 million) to develop live attenuated bacterial vaccines against anthrax, plague and botulism. The program will also include basic immunology studies of heterologous prime-boost regimens.

ASM Conference on Integrating Metabolism and Genomics (IMAGE) April 30 - May 3, 2004, Montreal, Quebec, Canada

The impact of genomics on metabolic studies has been great; once the province of microbial biochemists, the field is now occupied by a diverse set of theoreticians, informaticians, mathematicians and engineers, as well as by the more traditional genetics, molecular biology and biochemistry communities. The purpose of IMAGE is to foster an ongoing dialogue among these communities.

<http://www.asm.org/Meetings/index.asp?bid=18526>

10th Annual Symposium: Basic Aspects of Vaccines

April 28-30, 2004, Walter Reed Army Inst. of Research, Bethesda, Maryland

Annual symposium organized as a group of minisymposia covering topics on cutting edge research on vaccine development and mechanisms of immunity.

<http://wrair-www.army.mil/News&Events/9symposia/dmbsym.htm>

ASM Conference on Cell-Cell Communication in Bacteria

July 24-27, 2004, Banff, Alberta, Canada
Because of the recent explosion in research in the area of cell-cell communication in bacteria and its newly discovered role in eliciting human disease, the ASM hosted a conference devoted to cell-cell signaling during the summer of 2001. This meeting was so well received by its participants that the ASM became committed to providing an ongoing venue for this topic and will host this second conference.

<http://www.asm.org/Meetings/index.asp?bid=22678>

ASM Conference on the New Phage Biology

August 1 – 5, 2004, Key Biscayne, Florida
This meeting is for everyone with an interest in any aspect of phage biology, including, but not limited to, classical phage genetics, molecular biology and biochemistry of phage development, nanostructure and nanofunction of phage particles, phage-mediated pathogenesis, phage biotechnology, and phage-based therapeutics and diagnostics. The goal is to establish for the Phage Diaspora a new level of networking commensurate with the explosive revival of interest in this ancient discipline.

<http://www.asm.org/Meetings/index.asp?bid=18491>

2004 International Meeting of the Institute of Human Virology

October 31 – November 4, 2004, Baltimore, Maryland

The goal of this meeting is to provide researchers in the field of HIV/AIDS with the opportunity to present their most recent data in an environment that encourages the exchange of ideas and information and explores the potential opportunities for new collaborations.

<http://www.ihv.org/meeting/index.html>

2004 Graduate Research Conference

April 23, 2004, University of Maryland, Baltimore County

The 26th Annual Graduate Research Conference allows students of different programs and disciplines from the UMB and UMBC campuses to interact and share research ideas. For more information, contact the UMB Graduate Student Association by email at gsa@umaryland.edu or visit <http://www.umbc.edu/gsa/grc/>.

SCIENCE IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST

INNATE IMMUNITY: OUR EARLIEST DEFENSE AGAINST INFECTION

Stefanie N. Vogel, Ph.D.
Professor, Dept. of Microbiology and
Immunology

Our immune responses to infection can be divided into two phases: our earliest response to infection, the “innate immune response,” occurs when we first are exposed to infectious agents, while our “adaptive immune response,” which occurs days later, is what we typically associate with the production of protective antibodies. The innate immune response is largely mediated by white blood cells that are the “front line” of defense when we are first infected. White blood cells called neutrophils and macrophages have receptors on their surfaces that “sense” the presence of bacterial or viral molecules in our bodies. These cells respond very rapidly to infection by ingesting the organisms and destroying them or by making proteins that augment our ability to resist infection by eliciting a protective inflammatory response.

Recent work from our laboratory has demonstrated the remarkable protective effects of having a strong innate immune response. For example, we have extensively studied the chemical signaling that occurs when bacteria first interact with sensing receptors on neutrophils or macrophages to produce and release protective molecules called cytokines. In mouse models, we have been able to show that mice with mutations in the receptors that sense the organisms cannot respond appropriately to make cytokines and become infected and often die. Quite recently, we identified a genetic defect in the signaling pathway of a young patient who was seen at the NIH, a child who suffered terrible bouts of recurrent bacterial infections such as meningitis. Her failure to respond to microbes and to

produce the necessary cytokines was found to be due to an inherited defect in a gene that is necessary for the chemical signaling required for cytokine production. This illustrates the importance of innate immune responses to infection. We are working closely with the Clinical Director of the NIH, Dr. John Gallin, and his clinical colleagues to identify other patients with similar defects so that we can help provide therapies that will compensate and enable such patients to resist infection. This type of exciting work is exemplary of the “bench to bedside” approach that we strive to achieve in my laboratory.

Lastly, my laboratory is very interested in being able to control inflammation as is seen in arthritis. Although inflammation is necessary to clear microbial infections, as illustrated by our patient, chronic inflammation can destroy tissue and bone, as is seen in arthritis. By understanding the chemistry of the signaling pathways that initiate the inflammatory response to infection, we may also be able to be able to design drugs that inhibit an over-exuberant inflammatory response and provide intervention to those who suffer from inflammatory illnesses such as arthritis, inflammatory bowel disease, and others.

It is my goal to establish an “Innate Immunity Program,” with the mission of training graduate students, post-doctoral fellows, and faculty to pursue the study of this exciting area. We are starting this program from the ground up and are seeking support for training stipends and for well-defined projects that will address the mechanisms by which the innate immune system can be modulated to increase resistance to infection or to mitigate inflammatory diseases such as arthritis. Support at any level would help to establish an internationally recognized center for the study of innate immunity.

SPOTLIGHT ON: DR. FENTON



Dr. Matthew Fenton was born and raised in Connecticut and received his undergraduate degree in Microbiology from the University of Connecticut. He earned his PhD in

Biochemistry at the University of Boston, where he spent lots of time in the cold room working on cell type-specific development in the rat brain. Dr. Fenton worked as a post-doctoral fellow at MIT in the lab of Dr. Alex Rich, where he tried to identify binding proteins specific for z-DNA. He did a second post-doc in Dr. Phillip Auron's lab, where he studied the regulation of LPS-inducible genes in macrophages and monocytes. In 1988, he accepted an assistant professor position at Boston University Medical School, where he continued his work on LPS-inducible genes. In 2003, Dr. Fenton was recruited to the University of Maryland, where he is a part of the Mucosal Biology Research Institute and works on identifying protective versus damaging immune responses in response to respiratory infections. He currently has several grants, including funding for research on TLRs in innate and adaptive immune responses as well as signal transduction. He is currently arranging a meeting on cytokines in cancer immunity, which will be held this October in San Juan, Puerto Rico, and he has been chosen to become the new president of the International Cytokine Society this fall. He is also a former section editor for the Journal of Immunology. Dr. Fenton enjoys playing blues music and played in a band for a long time. While in Boston, he also did a lot of sailing. He and his wife Gillian have two greyhounds that they adopted after the dogs were retired from racing.

PUBLICATIONS

Publications having department students as authors/co-authors are designated with a ♦. Bold-faced is used to identify department members.

♦ **Abdelwahab SF**, Cocchi F, Bagley KC, **Kamin-Lewis R**, **Gallo RC**, **DeVico A**, **Lewis GK**. HIV-1-suppressive factors are secreted by CD4+ T cells during primary immune responses. Proc Natl Acad Sci U S A. 2003 Dec 9;100(25):15006-10. Epub 2003 Dec 01.

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Bartl S, Miracle AL, Rumpf LL, Kepler TB, Mochon E, Litman GW, **Flajnik MF**. 2004. Terminal deoxynucleotidyl transferases from elasmobranchs reveal structural conservation within vertebrates. Immunogenetics, 55:594-604.

♦ **Burall LS**, Harro JM, Li X, Lockett CV, **Himpl SD**, Hebel JR, Johnson DE, **Mobley HLT**. *Proteus mirabilis* genes that contribute to the pathogenesis of urinary tract infection: Identification of 25 signature-tagged mutants attenuated at least 100-fold. Infect.Immun. 2004 (In press).

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Litman GW, **Flajnik MF**, Warr GW. 2004. Diverse forms of immunoglobulin genes in lower vertebrates. In: "Molecular Biology of B cells" eds. T Honjo, FW Alt, and MS Neuberger, pp 417-432, Elsevier Ltd., London.

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Poore CA, Mobley HLT. Differential regulation of the *Proteus mirabilis* urease gene cluster by UreR and H-NS. *Microbiology.* 2003 Dec;149(Pt 12):3383-94.

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ALUMNI - WHERE ARE THEY NOW?



David Stec was born in Baltimore and grew up in Essex, Maryland. His graduate research was on the antigenic structure of Sindbis virus and the mechanisms and patterns of antigenic diversity. His

advisors were Drs. Gerry Cole and Alan Schmaljohn. He also spent a summer in Connie Schmaljohn's lab at USAMRIID. He was one of the first students in our department involved with the GSA and was part of the group that started the annual crab feast. Dr. Stec graduated in 1988 and accepted a post-doctoral position at the Laboratory of Infectious Diseases at NIH where he worked with Dr. Peter Collins on the molecular biology of respiratory syncytial virus. Dr. Stec later worked in the biotech industry, at Hybridon in Worcester, MA, and at Aviron (now MedImmune) in Mountain View, CA, where he worked on FluMist, the nasal influenza virus vaccine. At Aviron he was responsible for annually updating the cold-adapted vaccine strain, in-licensed from the University of Michigan, for Phase III clinical trials. He also developed and performed the genetic testing of vaccine seeds and manufactured lots. David left the biotech industry in 1997 and got a job as a Technology Advisory with the Rae-Venter Law Group P.C. in Palo Alto, CA, where he assisted attorneys doing patent prosecution. In 1998, he moved to Flehr Hohbach Test Albritton & Herbert LLP in San Francisco, where he did the same type of work. In 2000, he entered the University of California, Hastings College of Law from which he graduated in May 2003. Dr. Stec passed the California Bar exam in July 2003. He is currently working at Dorsey & Whitney LLP in San Francisco in the Patent Group. In 2004, he will be taking the Patent Bar to become a bona fide Patent Attorney. Dr. Stec currently lives in San Francisco. His hobbies are piano, racketball, tennis, bicycling, traveling, and reading.

CONGRATULATIONS!!!



Carol Kozimor's (Administrative Assistant) sixth grandchild, Kensey Nicole Kozimor, was born on February 9, 2004.

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Sheila Dreher (first-year student) got engaged to Sky Compton Lesnick in November of 2003. They will have a small civil wedding in Los Angeles on August 14, 2004, with only family attending, and a church wedding on April 3, 2005, in Manila, Phillippines.

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Zach Roberts (Vogel) will marry Tawney Bains on May 8, 2004.

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Maura Strauman (first year student) earned her black belt in Ryu Kyu Kempo Karate this past January.

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Dr. Ashley Haines (Flajnik lab) and her husband, Jimmy, had their first child, Dylan Edward Haines on March 16. He weighed 8lbs 14oz and measured 22in.

A few people in the Microbiology and Immunology are currently taking the Rape Aggression Defense (RAD) class for women offered by the University Police. The next class will begin May 3. A class for children is usually held in the summer and a class for men is offered once a year. For more information, call the University Police at 410-706-3908 or 410-706-1408 or visit

<http://www.umaryland.edu/athleticcenter/rad.html>



From the left: Deanna (non-UMB), **June Green** (Program Coordinator), Kevin Rutherford (RAD instructor), **Charlotte Andreasen** (Carbonnetti), **Dr. Zoë Worthington** (Carbonnetti)

DEPARTMENT INFORMATION

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We welcome your comments and suggestions.

Charlotte Andreasen

Becca Gerth

Andrew Hebbeler

Kristen Kanack

Vaishali Mane

Modesta Ndjambi

Roger Plaut

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

MICROBIOLOGY AND IMMUNOLOGY DEPARTMENT SEMINAR SERIES THURSDAYS AT 4PM , HSFII

Apr. 8, 2004	Lisa Spain, Ph.D. American Red Cross	<i>Regulation of T cell activation and development by TCR beta and MS4a4B</i>
Apr. 12, 2004	Goidl Lecture Dr. Rolf M. Zinkernagel University Hospital Zurich	<i>On Anti-viral Immunity and Vaccines</i>
Apr. 15, 2004	Barry J. Beaty, Ph.D. Colorado State University	<i>Viruses, Vectors, and Virus Vectors</i>
Apr. 22, 2004	Anthony T. Maurelli, Ph.D. Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences	<i>Genes for peptidoglycan synthesis in Chlamydia trachomatis: why are they still there?</i>
Apr. 29, 2004	Martha A. Alexander-Miller Wake Forest University	
May 6, 2004	<i>To be announced</i>	
May 13, 2004	Eileen Barry, Ph.D. University of Maryland, Baltimore	
May 20, 2004	Dr. J. Wayne Streilein Harvard Medical School	

To be added to the Seminar Notification Email List please contact ckozi001@umaryland.edu

Journal/data Clubs

Immunology	Tuesdays, 12pm (BRB 13-009)	mflajnik@som.umaryland.edu
Bagels & Data	Alt. Fridays, 10am (HSF418)	chengru_zhu@yahoo.com
IHV	Bi-monthly (IHV-Lightwell)	rkaminle@umarvland.edu

Bagels And Data (BAD) Club

Everyone interested in pathogenesis-related research is invited to attend and participate in BAD Club, held every other Friday in 418 HSF at 10 am. Presenters talk about their own research projects in an informal manner, and everyone eats free bagels!!

The scheduled BAD Club speakers are:

April 9	Ed Dudley (Nataro)
April 16	Stacey Wooden (Nataro)
April 30	Jorge Velarde (Nataro)
May 7	Jalaluddin Sheikn (Nataro)
May 14	Licheng Zhao
June 4	<i>To be announced</i>
June 18	Wenshang Luo
July 2	Sandra Medina Moreno
July 16	Rogeria Keller

IHV Journal Club

Journal clubs focus on HIV-related research and all are welcome to attend. Presentations are held every other Wednesday in the Lightwell at the IHV (725 W. Lombard Street).

The scheduled IHV speakers are:

April 14	Brian Erickson
April 28	Mahmoud Djavani
May 12	Andrew Hebbeler
May 26	<i>To be announced</i>