

Postdocs listening intently during the inspiring keynote address by Professor Todd P. Coleman at the Postdoc Appreciation Luncheon.



Photo by Erik Jepsen/UC San Diego Publications

## “Bookends of 2013:” Postdoctoral Association (PDA) Christmas and New Year’s parties wow the crowd

By: Davide Povero, Co-Vice Chair of Social Programs, PDA  
 Milos Lazic, Co-Vice Chair of Social Programs, PDA

UC San Diego postdocs could not have wished 2013 goodbye and welcomed 2014 any better. The UC San Diego Postdoctoral Association (PDA) celebrated these occasions at our annual Christmas and New Year’s parties. Here’s a recap of these two very special events, highly praised by the postdoc community.

On December 12, 2013 over 150 postdocs attended the 3rd Annual PDA Christmas Party, well outnumbering previous years. As a tradition, Roundtable Pizza (Price Center location) and its manager and owner Donna Capuozzo Buhl generously hosted. Postdocs mingled over pizza, pasta, and salad. To end

the night, postdocs took home raffle prizes and enjoyed seconds and thirds of the Roundtable delightful fare.

Riding on the success of the Christmas party, the PDA celebrated on January 16<sup>th</sup> at the 2014 New Year’s Party at Karl Strauss Brewery (East Pacific Beach location). The event was organized in partnership with postdocs associations from The Scripps Research Institute, La Jolla Institute for Allergy and Immunology, Salk Research Institute, and Sanford-Burnham Medical Research Institute. Over 350 postdocs and guests attended, reaching the venue’s maximum

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capacity! Attendees enjoyed specialty beers by the brewery and delicious Mexican food provided by our caterers, the Taco Lady. This year, in addition to academic postdocs, guests from the local biotech industry also attended, including Caltech alumni (San Diego Chapter). To continue this new year energy, the PDA hosts monthly happy hour at Porter’s Pub (UC San Diego campus, Eucalyptus Grove Lane) from 5 to 7 pm every third Thursday of the month. Join us! We are friendlier than any reviewer!



The UC San Diego Postdoctoral Association (PDA) is comprised of volunteer postdocs who enhance the postdoc experience by organizing professional development workshops, social programs, and networking opportunities. Please note that there is no cost to join the PDA, and we are not affiliated with the International Union, United Automobile, Aerospace and Agricultural Implement Workers of America (UAW) that represents all University of California postdocs. [Connect](#) with us!

Second place winner of the Postdoctoral Association Oral Presentation award, Janilyn Arsenio (left), accepts her cash prize and certificate from PDA Chair, Astrid Stoker (right).



Photo by Erik Jepsen/UC San Diego Publications

## First Campus-Wide Research Symposium Features over 150 Postdocs

By: *Bernice Aguilar, Active Member, PDA*

The inaugural Postdoctoral Research Symposium was held on Friday, September 13, 2013 in the Price Center, Ballrooms A&B. With this campus-wide symposium, the Postdoctoral Association (PDA) aspired to bring postdocs from all disciplines at UC San Diego together and to provide a platform for postdocs to present their research to peers and faculty from diverse disciplines at UC San Diego. Awards were given to best oral presentation and posters.

Following the Research Symposium, the Office of Postdoctoral and Visiting Scholar Affairs hosted the

annual Postdoc Appreciation luncheon. This year they honored three mentors and four postdocs who exemplified what it means to be the best. Awardees are committed to scholarly excellence and excelled in fostering collaborations, training others, served as role models, developed strong written and verbal communication skills, and contribute to a supportive lab and work environment.



Photo by Erik Jepsen/UC San Diego Publications

## Symposium & Luncheon Awardees

The 2013 Chancellor's Awards for Excellence in Postdoctoral Scholar Mentoring and the Postdoctoral Scholar Award were given to three mentors and four postdoctoral scholars.

### The 2013 Chancellor's Awardees for Excellence in Postdoctoral Scholar Mentoring Recipients

Professor Pamela Mellon, Reproductive Medicine  
 Nominated by: Hanne Hoffmann, Ph.D.

Professor Victor Nizet, Pediatrics & Skaggs School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences  
 Nominated by: Andrew Hollands, Ph.D.

Professor Michael Sailor, Chemistry & Biochemistry  
 Nominated by: Alejandra Nieto, Ph.D.

### The 2013 Chancellor's Postdoctoral Scholar Awardees Recipients

Che-Ming Jack Hu, Ph.D., Nanoengineering  
 Nominated by: Professor Liangfang Zhang

Ping Piu Kuo, Ph.D., Electrical & Computer Engineering  
 Nominated by: Professor Stojan Radic

Carl Melis, Ph.D., Physics  
 Nominated by: Professor Adam Burgasser

Kristen Tolson, Ph.D., Reproductive Medicine  
 Nominated by: Professor Alexander Kauffman

### Postdoctoral Association Oral Presentation Award Recipients

1st	Jill Wykosky
2nd	Janilyn Arsenio
3rd	Mark Kostuk
Honorary	Baohu Ji, Tufan Gokirmak, Antra Priyadarshi

### Postdoctoral Association Poster Award Recipients

Rou-Jia Sung      Terri Stoner      Edmund Hollis II

### GeneTex Poster Award Recipients

Michael Dores      Dasa Dolezalova

## Alumni Spotlight: A New Initiative to Learn from Past Successes

By: Anjana Chandrasekhar, Editor, UCSD Signaling Gateway

Postdoctoral training, as the name suggests follows PhD or MD training. However, this position is usually not a goal in itself but rather a step toward a career position. Unlike for its students, UC San Diego does not have an established alumni database of postdocs to network and meet those that have transitioned onto successful careers after their postdoc training. Thus, the PDA has initiated a new program, 'Alumni Spotlight,' to highlight successful career transitions of our postdocs with the aim to help current postdocs reach their dream careers. We enlisted the help of recent postdoc alumni who have found their desired positions in either academia or industry. The alumni were requested to answer a common questionnaire. Their responses (soon to be displayed on the new PDA website) reflect a common thread of perseverance, reality checks and dynamism. They also elaborate on the differences and similarities between their postdoc and current profiles, and the diverse skill sets which they have acquired to acclimatize to their new position.

## After Hours at the Society of Neuroscience Conference

By: Aarti Ruparelia, Co Vice-Chair of Finance, PDA

Society for Neuroscience may be the single biggest annual Neuroscience event in the country. This year, the Postdoctoral Association (PDA) harnessed the knowledge and energy of the conference to create an exclusive networking and social event for postdocs and conference attendees. On November 14, 2013, the Postdoc Association (PDA) rented Hennessey's Speakeasy in downtown San Diego for an evening of Prohibition-era inspired drinks, candlelight, and live jazz. Free-flowing hors d'oeuvres were provided to all attendees. It was a successful evening, brimming with enthusiastic postdocs who brought friends and collaborators from all around the world.

## Clinical research: A short primer

By: Amrutha Baskaran MD, Masters of Science in Clinical Research (MSCR)

The phrase "biomedical research" may evoke images of scientists in safety glasses holding test tubes with exotic liquids. However, some biomedical research like clinical and translational studies often depart from this traditional picture. Surprisingly, the first clinical trial was recorded in the Bible's Book of Daniel; King Nebuchadnezzar compared the health benefits of meat to legume diets in Babylon. However, the first therapeutic, randomized research trial tested the efficacy of the anti-bacterial streptomycin in 1946, long after the King Nebuchadnezzar findings were "published" (1). What is Clinical Research exactly? Once basic scientists discover basic, novel cellular interactions and molecular mechanisms, clinical researchers assess these pathways as promising drug targets in human subjects.

Testing occurs in phases, culminating in trials conducted on human volunteers. Clinical Research encompasses any study that determines the safety and effectiveness of chemical therapies, diagnostic products, or therapeutic devices. These studies represent one of the most complicated, time-consuming and expensive stages of drug development. Knowledge about clinical research is crucial for anyone but especially to those who are interested to work in pharmaceutical industry. UCSD conducts clinical studies both locally and globally. In my 16-month experience as a UC San Diego postdoc, I have been involved in several investigator-initiated clinical studies in Rheumatology, and I serve as an IRB board member. What is IRB? My next article will talk about it! For more general information on this fascinating topic, visit: [UCSD Clinical and Translational Research Institute](#) and "[NIH clinical trials and you](#)"

(1) Bhatt A. Evolution of Clinical Research: A History Before and Beyond James Lind. *Perspect Clin Res.* 2010; 1(1): 6-10.

## Ask A Lawyer

By: Josh Wollam,  
Active Member, PDA

The United States legal system is complicated and sometimes challenging to understand. In this column, experienced attorneys answer questions from our readers regarding various aspects of the law. This inaugural edition of the UC San Diego Postdoc Newsletter features immigration law due to its broad importance to the postdoc community. Below, Jing Amy Feng, an immigration attorney at FYZ Law Group, LLP., answers our top two questions regarding visa issues. Please note that this article is intended as a general overview and may not apply to everyone.

*What are the differences between the J-1 and H-1 visas? What other visa types are available to postdocs who wish to stay in the U.S. for more than 5 years?*

J-1 visas provide foreign nationals with exchange opportunities in research as well as access to cultural and general educational programs. H-1B visas are designed for foreigners with specialty occupations that require advanced education and involve application of specialized knowledge, including positions in science and engineering.

J-1 visas do not have yearly quotas. In other words, you may apply anytime. In contrast, the number of H-1Bs issued per year is restricted, so first-time applications should be submitted by the first week

of April. The maximum stay for postdoctoral training on a J-1 visa is 3 years, whereas H-1B visas allot 6 years for specialty work. Please be aware that some J-1 visas are subject to a two-year home residency requirement, which is an obstacle for transferring from J-1 to other visas or green card applications.

For postdocs, working visas other than J and H are the O-1 and TN visas, which do not have limited quotas or limited working periods. The TN visa is only available to citizens of Canada and Mexico. However, as long as you have certain achievements, such as publications, citations and paper review experience, the O-1 is a wonderful working visa for researchers and scientists.

*I am on a five-year J-1 visa. I am about to return to my home country after two years to take up a faculty position. If I want to return to the U.S. at some point in the future, can I use the remainder of my J-1 visa (three years)? Or would I need to apply for a new J-1? If neither of these is possible, are there other U.S. visas for academics that also allow spouses to work?*

Once you leave the U.S., you will no longer have a visa. At the moment you return, you may need to apply for a new visa. Your new visa application could be based on your previous J-1, but only if the same position is still available for you. The J-1 program will determine the period of your new J-1. I would suggest that you discuss this issue with your J-1 program before you depart the U.S. For foreign researchers, the J-1 visa is the only temporary working visa that offers working permission to spouses.

FYZ Law Group, LLP. is an immigration law firm that provides legal services to businesses, educational and research institutions, and individuals. Their attorneys have a combined experience of over 30 years in U.S. immigration law practice, and represent and advise clients on all aspects of immigration matters, including but not limited to: EB-1A, EB-1B, EB-1C, NIW, PERM, H-1B, L-1, and O-1 applications. With offices in New York, Illinois, and California, they serve clients located across the nation. For more information, visit their [website](#) or [e-mail](#). If you have questions for a lawyer, please [contact us](#).



\*\*Views expressed are of the FYZ Law Group and NOT those of UC San Diego.

Please consult with the International Scholars Office for UC San Diego policy.\*\*

<https://icenter.ucsd.edu/ifso/>



# Exposure to Industry Program

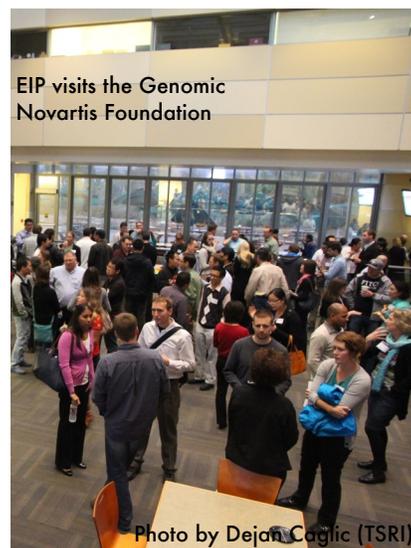
Upcoming Visits

March

13  
 Miltenyi  
 Biotech

April

1  
 Johnson &  
 Johnson  
  
 30 ACEA  
 Biosciences



EIP visits the Genomic Novartis Foundation

Photo by Dejan Caglic (TSRI)

## Exposure to Industry (EIP) Program Flourishes in Year One

*By: Milos Lazic, Co-Vice Chair of Social Programs, PDA; Co-Founder of EIP & Alejandra Nieto, Co-Vice Chair of Career Development, PDA; EIP Corporate Relations Officer*

Just over one year ago, Sheila Semaan and Milos Lazic, two UC San Diego postdocs, conceptualized and co-founded the Exposure to Industry Program (EIP). The mission of EIP is to provide postdocs the opportunity to experience first-hand biotech, pharmaceutical, high-tech, and medical device companies in San Diego. Since its debut in December 2012, EIP has organized site visits to four major local pharmaceutical and biotech companies: Pfizer, Johnson & Johnson (Janssen Pharmaceuticals), Vertex, and GNF (Novartis).

In this first year, over 200 postdocs applied for these visits, a testament to the program's wide appeal. Past participants have

described these visits as "a must do," "wonderful," "invaluable," "informative," and "inspiring" experiences, helping "navigate career paths" and providing "a unique and great opportunity to make a connection between academia and industry," "network" and "understand how projects get done in industry." Similarly, we too are extremely thankful for the opportunity to build working relationships with brilliant, enthusiastic, and energetic leaders from San Diego's pharmaceutical and biotech industries. The great news is that our EIP team continues to expand! In addition to Alejandra Nieto who joined as Corporate Relations Officer, new EIP Board Members Anindita Sarkar, Maria Noutsou, and Shu Zhou organized our latest visit to GNF and improved the application selection process. Most recently, postdocs Xiong Zhang and Zac Carrico have joined our team. The expansion of the EIP team equals greater outreach, with visits to midsize and smaller San Diego companies.

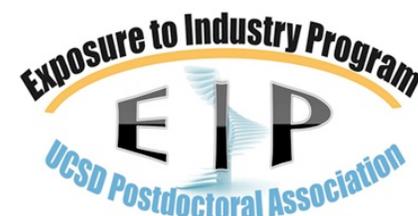
We wish you a happy and productive 2014 and look forward to receiving your applications for future EIP visits. Visit announcements will be



Networking!

Photo by Dejan Caglic (TSRI)

sent via the [UC San Diego Postdoc Association listserv](#), the PDA Facebook page, and the EIP LinkedIn group, which you are always welcome to join! To join the EIP Committee of the PDA, [contact us](#)



## What Can You Be With a PhD?

### Attendees Navigate the Career Freeway at the 2014 PDA STEM Career Symposium

By: *Ginny Hu, Co-Vice Chair of Career Development, PDA;  
PDA STEM Symposium Founder*



These days, a tenure-tracked academic position is really the “alternative” career for PhD scientists. With ever-diminishing funding resources and scarcity of faculty positions, many of us wonder what else we can do with a PhD. The Postdoctoral Association (PDA) embarked on a quest to help postdocs discover the multitude of career opportunities outside the Ivory Tower. As a result, we proudly presented the inaugural STEM Career Symposium on March 1st at the Sanford Consortium for Regenerative Medicine. The one-day event was designed for you, future leaders and innovators, to explore the career freeway.

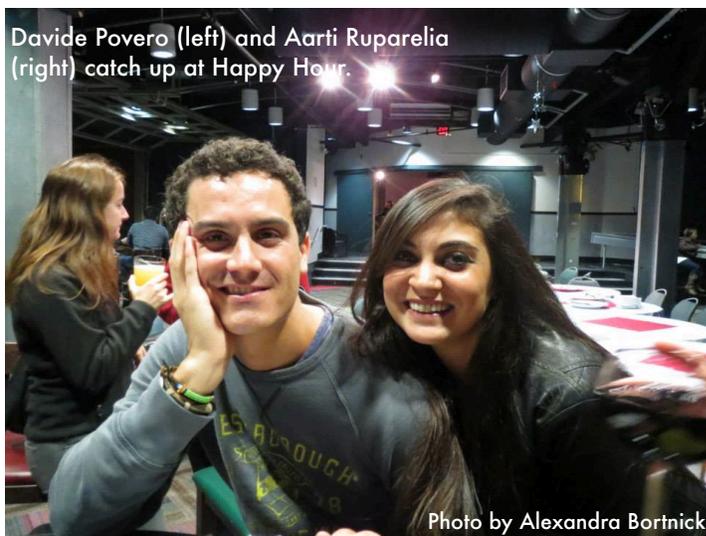
The STEM Career Symposium was an essential guide to a variety of career paths in both public and private sectors, with a focus on the pharmaceutical and biotech industry. Scientists from major local companies including Johnson & Johnson and Pfizer were there to answer questions about industry Research and Development (R&D). Experts in clinical development and medical writing discussed how to embark on these exciting paths. For those business-minded, scientists who have become product managers and business executives shared their career ventures. In other sessions, legal professionals provided insights into intellectual property law. Attendees also learned about teaching-focused and administrative roles.

The symposium was met with great enthusiasm and anticipation. Tickets sold-out two weeks before the event, and we worked hard to accommodate over 180 attendees throughout the day. If you were unable to attend this event, no worries! Stay tuned for our upcoming professional development series. Thanks again to our generous sponsors. If you would like to join the Career Development Committee of the PDA, please [contact us](#).

## Postdoctoral Association Sponsors New Social Programs

By: *Jamie Joseph, Active Member, PDA*

Are you a new postdoc at UC San Diego eager to socialize outside of lab? Take a break from lab life to meet colleagues across disciplines. Join us at Porter’s Pub every third Thursday of the month to make new friends, de-stress, and practice networking. The Postdoctoral Association (PDA) will continue to sponsor monthly happy hours with free snacks and drinks. Make networking your New Year’s resolution and come out and meet other postdocs. Also, we are looking for enthusiastic postdocs to join the Social Programs Committee. If you are interested, please [contact us](#).



Davide Povero (left) and Aarti Ruparella (right) catch up at Happy Hour.

Photo by Alexandra Bortnick

## LinkedIn Photobooth Makes a Memorable Impression

By: Swati Naphade, Active Member, PDA

A recent study in Nature Biotechnology has confirmed what we may have always known intuitively. The number of awarded PhDs is significantly outpacing available positions in both industry and academia. Intense competition and the funding-squeeze now require scientists to increase their visibility on the world wide web. Recognizing this, the Office of Postdoctoral and Visiting Scholar Affairs (OPVSA) organized events to address this topic during National Postdoc Appreciation Week, September 13 – 20, 2013. Events featuring Marc Kuchner and Kathleen Robinson emphasized the importance of maintaining a strong Internet presence. As another step in this direction, the OPVSA enlisted photojournalist [Alan Decker](#) to create a LinkedIn Photobooth, which offered professional head shots to use in your LinkedIn profile, professional meeting programs and journal bios. This service was offered to all UC San Diego postdocs at a highly subsidized rate. Though several of us were camera shy, Alan with his wonderful sense of humor made us feel very much at ease . . . and oh gosh, we love our pictures! The Photobooth was a huge success.



Milos Lazic



Swati Naphade

## Message from the Office of Postdoctoral Scholars and Visiting Affairs (OPVSA)

As a postdoc at UC San Diego, you are part of the distinguished community of scientists who drive our research advancements and contribute to our research mission. Without you, UC San Diego could not be named the 15th best research university in the world by the Centre for Science and Technology Studies of Leiden University's 2013 list that measured scientific impact of universities worldwide, or be chosen by Washington Monthly's College Guide as the #1 university in the nation on positive impact on the country in terms on enabling social mobility, research productivity and civic engagement.

The Office of Postdoctoral and Visiting Scholar Affairs (OPVSA) is a resource for you. Our mission is foster your development and enhance your postdoctoral training so that you will be successful in your professional endeavors.

We offer:

- Monthly New Postdoc Orientation
- Career and professional development seminars and symposia
- Essential training in Individual Development Plan and Challenges of Research Ethics
- Monthly 'Learn at Lunch' Health and Wellness seminars
- Annual Postdoc Appreciation Luncheon
- Annual Chancellor's Excellence in Postdoctoral Scholar Mentoring and Best Postdoctoral Scholar awards
- Advise on career counseling
- Confidential consulting
- Support the UC San Diego Postdoctoral Association (PDA)
- Postdoc Listserv

In addition, we administer postdoctoral appointments, advise and process benefit enrollment forms, and service Visiting Scholars.

If you have any questions, our staff is here to help you.

Merritt Bradford [merritt@ucsd.edu](mailto:merritt@ucsd.edu)

Analyst, Appointments & Benefit Services

David DeSpain [ddspain@ucsd.edu](mailto:ddspain@ucsd.edu)

Analyst, Visiting Scholar Program

Ginger Hazen [vhazen@ucsd.edu](mailto:vhazen@ucsd.edu)

Coordinator, Professional Development Programs

Jennifer Oh [jenn@ucsd.edu](mailto:jenn@ucsd.edu)

Director, Academic Research Personnel

For more information on our services and workshop schedule, please visit our website at [postdoc.ucsd.edu](http://postdoc.ucsd.edu).

## Newsletter Contributors

Alexandra Bortnick (Editor)  
Anjana Chandrasekhar

Swati Naphade  
Alejandra Nieto

Ginger Hazen  
Ginny Hu (Editor)

Davide Povero  
Aarti Ruparelia

Jamie Joseph  
Milos Lazic

Kristen Tolson  
Josh Wollam

Enough about us! Send us your photos and articles for the next issue. All UC San Diego postdocs are welcome to contribute.

## Vendor Show Triples the PDA Budget

By: *Kristen Tolson,*  
*Co-Vice Chair of Finance, PDA*

On Wednesday August 28, 2013, over 50 life science vendors gathered on the lawn outside the School of Medicine to kick off the UC San Diego Postdoctoral Association (PDA) Vendor Show. More



Ginger Hazen (left) and Kristen Tolson (right) update Vendor Show attendees about the work of the OPVSA and PDA.

Photo by Aarti Ruparelia

than 500 attendees, including postdocs, staff scientists, graduate students, faculty, and technical research staff mingled with vendors, entered our raffle, and enjoyed lunch from Rubio's. The funds from the Vendor Show are essential for both the ongoing and new programs of the PDA. Thanks to our vendors and generous sponsors, for the first time we were able to offer travel and research awards to postdocs at the inaugural

Postdoctoral Research Symposium, one of the many initiatives launched this year. Importantly, the PDA Vendor Show has shown continued growth since its inception in 2011. Last year's attendance outgrew the original show location near Leichtag Building.

In addition, both vendors and attendees applauded the new tent, shading us from the exceptionally hot and sunny August day. Attendees who visited at least 10 vendors were rewarded with Cal-Mex from Rubio's and raffle prizes donated by vendors and local companies, including an iPod Shuffle, \$500 gift certificates from UCSD Extension, t-shirts, mugs, Jamba Juice certificates, AMC movie tickets, and more.

Special thanks to our sponsors who donated above and beyond: Fine Science Tools, Cell Signaling Technology, GeneTex, Life Technologies, Equitech-Bio, Preprotech, Lambda Biotech, and GenScript. We also thank our postdoc, grad student, and UC San Diego retiree volunteers who helped the day run smoothly.

With your support, next year we can expand the diversity of both vendors and attendees. Please inform vendors who visit your labs about our annual show and contact us. If you have ideas to improve our event, please come to our Postdoc Open Forums (see website calendar details) and consider joining the [Vendor Show subcommittee!](#)

## UC Programs We Love:

### [ArtPOWR](#)

Avant-garde music, dance, and film. ArtPowr! brings captivating performance right to campus.

### [Friday International Cafe](#)

Enjoy your Friday lunch at the International Center. For only \$5, sample cuisines from around the world.

### [Roger's Community Garden](#)

Located on campus, Roger's Garden offers land to students, staff, faculty, and alumni to grow greens. Rent a plot or volunteer on Sundays!

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Looking to sharpen your statistical skills, branch into regulatory affairs, learn project management techniques? Register today!

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Weekly seminars on "evidence-based" teaching practices. Build your mentorship skills.