

Texas A&M University



Officer Jeffrey Pearce, Kathleen Witte, Dr. Dmitry Kurouski, Lee Sanchez

Dr. Kurouski Interviewed by KBTX!

BRYAN, Tex. (KBTX) - A new tool, developed by Texas A&M University scientists, could tell the difference between legal hemp and illegal marijuana in seconds.

“We developed this technology that allows for non-invasive, non-destructive—and what’s very important for law enforcement officers—on-site identification of cannabis,” said Dmitry Kurouski, assistant professor in the department of biochemistry and biophysics at Texas A&M University. “It’s really simple,” said Lee Sanchez, the research assistant credited with developing this machine that’s about the size of a lunchbox. “You place [the sample] against the nose cone, turn on the laser, and it’ll give us a spectra.” That “spectra” is what tells the trained eye whether the sample is marijuana or hemp. Kurouski says the machine can also detect the difference in legal CBD oil and illegal THC-infused oil. Officer Jeffrey Pearce with the College Station Police Department says he and his department appreciate new technology that could help them do their jobs more efficiently.

To read more and to view the video, please click the link below.

https://www.kbtx.com/content/news/Texas-AM-developed-device-could-detect-THC-in-the-field-567177391.html?fbclid=IwAR2Qjwyso_eTITL6-0oujRX64d04pvlL7vL9a8yoRuCaA98sERPbVA3kVal

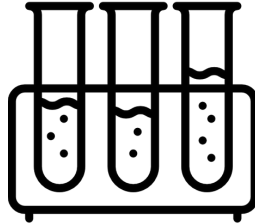
Research Publications

Congratulations to those who have published their research in the month of January! If you would like to read more on their research, please click on the link below:

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed>

Graduate Students/ Postdocs

Laura Huning
Dr. Qingan Sun
Dr. Yaxi Wang
Kailun Zhang



Faculty

Dr. Vytas Bankaitis
Dr. Robert Chapkin
Dr. Gary Kunkel
Dr. James Sacchettini
Dr. Stephen Safe
Dr. Dorothy Shippen
Dr. Ryland Young
Dr. Lanying Zeng

BGA Research Competition

BGA hosted their 28th Annual Research Competition on Friday, January 24, 2020. To kickstart the day, Vice President, Austin Lamb, invited ten vendors for BGA's Annual Vendor Show, where the vendors showcased their products for four hours in the BCBP lobby. Once that was completed, the Research Competition began and six presenters gave an oral presentation on their research. After the judges deliberated, Austin revealed that the winners were:

- 1st Place: Jason Allen (Pellois Lab) with a prize of \$500
- 2nd Place: Simon Rousseau (Sacchettini Lab) with a prize of \$300
- 3rd Place: Ka Man Jasmine Yu (Mullet Lab) with a prize of \$200

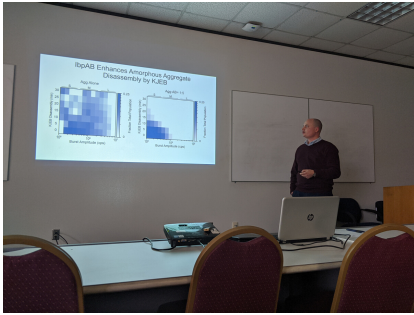
Congratulations to our top 3 winners and thank you for everyone who came to participate and show their support to their colleagues! Also, huge thank you to our judges, Drs. Elizabeth Pierson, Tamara Powers, William Rooney and Joanna San Pedro for coming out and helping with the competition!

Thank you for presenting your research to everyone!

Drake Mellott
Simon Rousseau
Tingfeng Guo
Sagnika Ghosh
Ka Man Jasmine Yu
Jason Allen

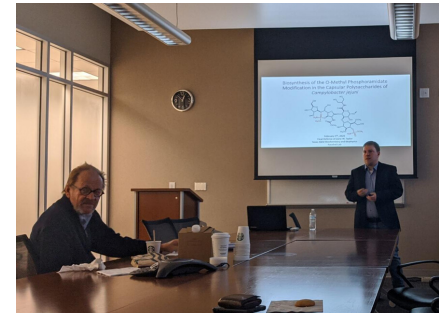


In Defense...



Congratulations to Dr. Drew Roth, from the lab of Dr. Hays Rye, for successfully defending his Ph.D. thesis on February 3rd! His dissertation defense was on the topic of: How Small Heat Shock Proteins Assist in Aggregate Disassembly.

Congratulations to Dr. Zane Taylor, from the lab of Dr. Frank Raushel, for successfully defending his Ph.D. thesis on February 5th! His dissertation defense was on the topic of: Biosynthesis of the O-Methyl Phosphoramidate Modification in the Capsular Polysaccharides of *Campylobacter jejuni*.

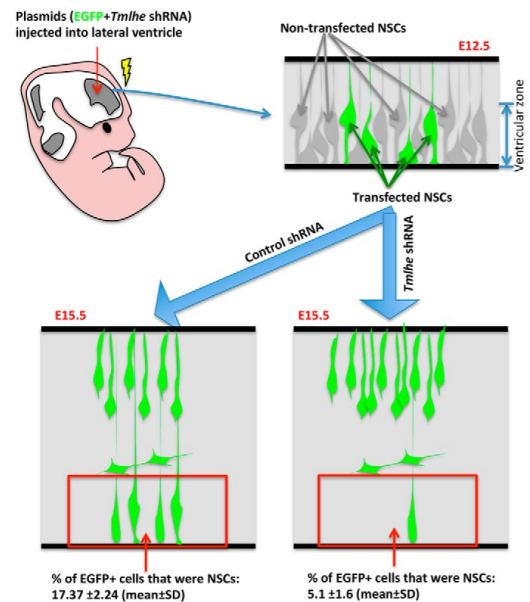
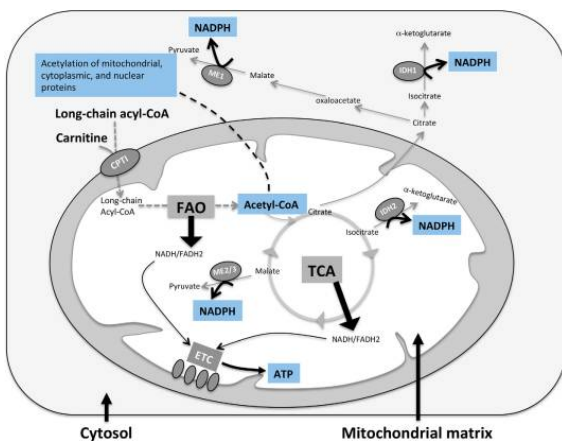


Exciting News From Bankaitis Lab

The Bankaitis lab received news earlier this month about one of their most recent publications! Their paper, "The neural stem cell/carnitine malnutrition hypothesis: new prospects for effective reduction of autism risk?" was published in the *Journal of Biological Chemistry* and was viewed 1,026 times between November through December. With this high viewing in JBC, this was quite the achievement! Congratulations everyone!

Check out their publication by clicking the link!

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6916470/>



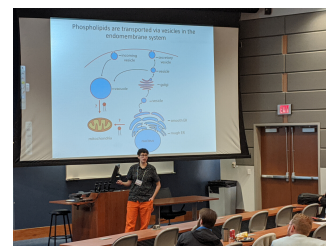
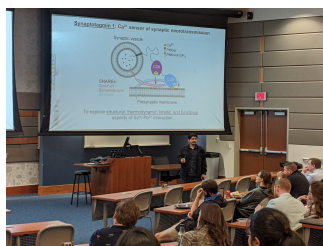
Biochemistry and Biophysics Recruitment Weekend

The Department of Biochemistry and Biophysics had their recruitment weekend from January 30th-February 1st. We had twenty recruits, with the exception of two that came the following weekend, come from all over the country to get a glimpse of our graduate program! After they arrived to the hotel on the 30th, the recruits took a tour of our NMR Facility and ILSB, which was followed by dinner with select faculty.

Friday, January 31st, was a busy day as they were interviewed by our faculty throughout the afternoon. Following their lunch break, Sachin Katti (Igumenova lab) and Donna Iadarola (Gohil lab), gave quick presentations about their research. Dr. Josh Wand concluded lunch by presenting awards to our graduate students. After a few more interviews, a poster session was held, where all the labs presented their work to all the recruits. In the evening, the recruits had dinner with their graduate student mentors, followed by a night out with the many members of the Biochemistry Graduate Association.

Saturday morning, the recruits toured various apartments and homes of our current graduate students to see where everyone lives within the city. For lunch, students gathered in front of BioBio to have a tailgate lunch with fellow students. For the remainder of the day, the recruits and select graduate students attended the first ever Life Science Recruiting Symposium, where six different departments participated. There was another poster session, just of specific graduate student research, followed by short talks of various graduate students from each program, where Joel Oliver (Mullet lab) and Sreyashree Bose (Shippen lab), presented their research. To close the night to the long weekend, there was a banquet for all the recruits and select graduate students of the participating six programs.

Now that it has been a couple weeks since recruitment weekend, offer letters have been sent out! We're looking forward to seeing how many students will be joining our graduate program next year!



Drake Mellott received the Toni-Ann Mistretta Award, for his outstanding contribution to graduate student life



Laura Huning received the Paul Barry Gayle Graduate Teaching Award, for her outstanding service as a Graduate Teaching Assistant



Sachin Katti received the John Mack Prescott Award, for his exceptional academic achievement and research in the area of Biochemistry and Biophysics

Upcoming Events

General

February 27
Faculty Thursday Talks

February 24; 4:00pm @ N127
Faculty Meeting

February 26; All Day @ MSC Bethancourt Ballroom
LAUNCH Undergraduate Research Scholars
Symposium

March 5, 19, 26
Faculty Thursday Talks

March 9-13
Spring Break

March 11-13
Faculty and Staff Holiday

Thursday Talks
February 27: Jorge Cruz-Reyes
March 5: Jae-Hyun Cho
March 19: Vytas Bankaitis
March 26: Jane Pishko

Symposiums/Seminars/Etc...

February 22; MSC Room 2400
WISE Conference

February 26; 1:30pm @ BCBP 106A
Karl Gorzelnik's Defense

March 2; 3:00pm @ N127
Incheol Yeo's Defense

Sports

February 22; 2:30pm @ Reed Arena
MBB vs Mississippi State

February 27; 6:00pm @ Reed Arena
WBB vs Alabama



★ CryoEM Faculty Candidates

February 24 & 25
Dr. Xiaowei Hou; Seminar- 3:00pm, BCBP 108 (2/24)
Faculty Chalk Talk- 11:00am, N127 (2/25)

February 26 & 27
Dr. Wen Jiang; Seminar- 4:00pm, BCBP 108 (2/26)
Faculty Chalk Talk- 11:00am, N127 (2/27)

March 2 & 3
Dr. Shaotong Zhu; Seminar- 3:00pm, BCBP 108 (3/2)
Faculty Chalk Talk- 11:00am, N127 (3/3)

March 4 & 5
Dr. Han Han; Seminar- 3:00pm, BCBP 107 (3/4)
Faculty Chalk Talk- 11:00am, N127 (3/5)

March 16 & 17
Dr. Sandip Basak; Seminar- 3:00pm, BCBP 108 (3/16)
Faculty Chalk Talk- 11:00am, N127 (3/17)

TRAINING TELEPHONE



WWW.PHDCOMICS.COM

FOLLOW US

<https://www.facebook.com/TAMUBIOBIO/>

<https://twitter.com/tamubiobio>

<https://biochemistry.tamu.edu/>



TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY
Biochemistry & Biophysics