

The Crimson Chronicle

PDA Council Newsletter

HARVARD | T.H. Chan SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH

Edited by Gillian Franklin, MD, MPH, PhD

Fall 2014

Welcome to The Crimson Chronicle, the PDA Council Newsletter for the Harvard Public Health Scientific Community. The Newsletter is intended to provide a variety of information including, but not limited to short articles, resources, views, comments, and opinions for Postdoctoral Fellows and Research Associates, by Postdoctoral Fellows, Research Associates, and other members of our Scientific Community.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

From the PDA President Christian Suharlim

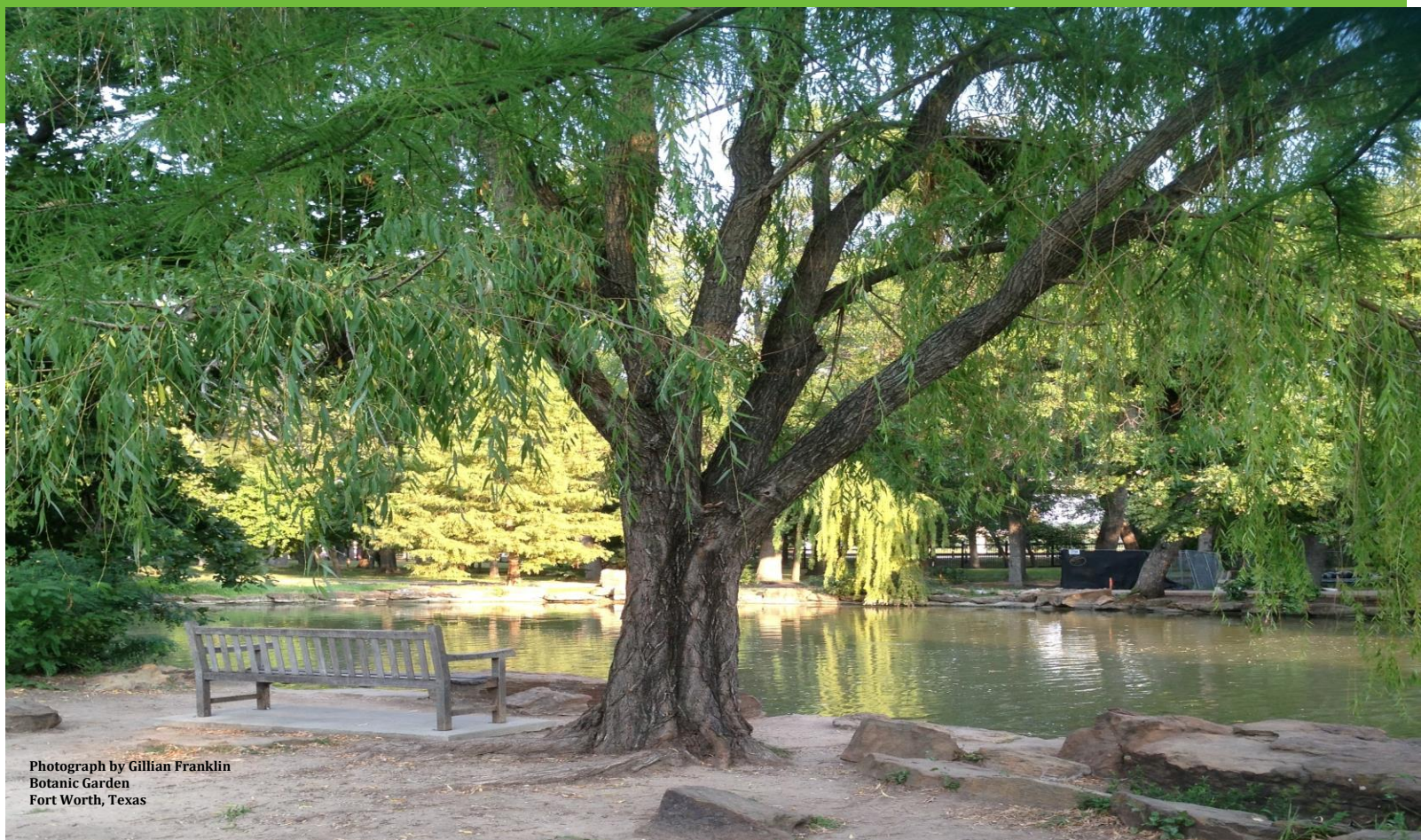
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Photograph by Gillian Franklin
Botanic Garden
Fort Worth, Texas

From the PDA President



Dear Postdocs and Research Associates: **Happy holidays!**

I am very excited to **welcome 2015!**

We had such a **good year!** We reintroduced **HSPH Poster Day**, prepared **PDA Nanocourses for Spring 2015**, awarded **travel grants** to 8 postdocs, invited **Kocaeli students** to HSPH, and hosted **multiple social events** throughout the Fall of 2014. Yet, there is still plenty to do.

I am happy to continue the tremendous work by the **previous year's PDA council**, led by **former PDA President, Usheer Kanjee** and **Vice President, Benedicte Mengel**.

This month, we were able to fully **integrate research associates** into the PDA. **David Gregory**, recently appointed as the **representative of research associates**, will work together with other council members to advocate the interests of research associates, as well as postdocs.

It is well understood that Postdocs and Research Associates have **limited resource** from the school in regards to **grant writing**. However, with 320 postdocs and 152 research associates at HSPH, we can do so much more. One particular PDA agenda we plan to advance is the **execution of Post-Doctoral Grant Proposal Network (GPN)**.

The GPN, under the **leadership of Alex Carll**, will establish a network of Postdocs and Research Associates to advance peer mentoring in grant writing. This will make HSPH Postdocs and Research Associates more competitive when applying for grants.

Further, we will host **Nanocourses this spring** to provide teaching experience, and offer workshops with Office of Faculty Affairs throughout the year to help postdocs and research associates achieve their career objectives.

We are here to enhance your experience at HSPH. We are here for you. I invite you to **attend our social events** and **get to know other postdocs** and **research associates**. Let's face 2015 with confidence and optimism. Together, we will accomplish great things.

Warm Regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Christian', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Christian Suharlim, MD, MPH

President, HSPH Post-Doctoral Association 2014-2015

Words With Dr. Jane J. Kim

In this issue of the Crimson Chronicle, we are pleased to continue the tradition of the “Words with” column, following its inauguration last year.

Featuring **Jane J. Kim, Ph.D., Associate Professor** of Health Decision Science in the Department of Health Policy and Management has been chosen as the winner of the PDA **2014 Outstanding Mentor Award**. Here, Dr. Kim gives us some insight from her years as a researcher.

Dr. Kim is originally from New Jersey, the Garden State. After completing her **undergraduate work at Dartmouth College** in 1995, she immediately began her career working at Mass General Hospital where she had her first real research experience while **studying pediatric psychopharmacology**, mostly in kids with depressed/anxious parents, and kids with ADHD.

In 1999, she moved on to **Harvard** for her **graduate training** in the SM2 program in **Health Policy and Management**, after which she moved on to the **PhD program in Health Policy** (GSAS) in 2001. Dr. Kim subsequently **joined the HSPH/HPM faculty in 2006**, where she remains to-date.

With her positive **words of wisdom**, she encourages us to **never, ever be ashamed to say “I don’t know”** when asked a hard-ball question! The best way to improve in anything that you do is to **practice, practice, practice**—whether it is writing or presenting, practice is the best way to improve. And get sleep!

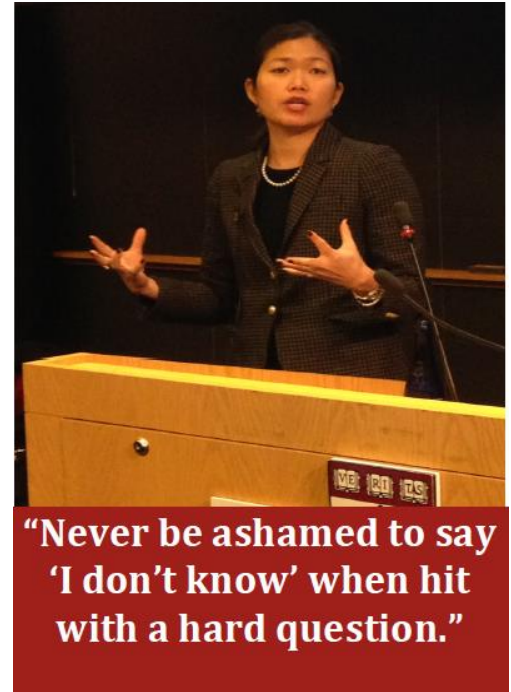
The **best way to get along with others** is to always **show respect and don’t be dishonest**. We all know that at some point in our careers, as students, as professors, or in whatever we do in our lives, we will inevitably work in large groups. **Team-work can be challenging** at times, but if everyone **shows a bit of humility** in their work and roles, all challenges can be overcome.

The **mentoring relationships** between a mentor and their mentees are best when mentees are given the opportunity to **discover something they love** in terms of research (and hopefully decision science research), in my case. My **style of mentoring depends** on where the baseline is for my mentee. Some students benefit from more of a hands-on approach, while others are ready to fly. Either way, I like **staying in close touch with students/trainees** to make sure they have **opportunities to ask questions and stay on-target**.

I define success in three ways: (1) having an **impact on something outside of academia**, whether it is at the individual or policy level; (2) **achieving #1** while also loving what I do; and (3) **passing my love/passion** for decision science and health policy **onto the next generation**. I have been successful in large part because of my own **amazing mentors and role models**. Most notably, **Sue Goldie** who has **taken any inherent skills that I may have had in public health research and taught me how to effectively apply them**.

My typical day is busy with back-to-back meetings and conference calls because I like to **stay in close touch with my research team and mentees** on any active projects. Usually after my kids are in bed in the evening, I get back on my computer to do some writing and/or catching up on emails.

My best **advice to my mentees for success** is that it is important to have balance in your life, and to be certain that you **love what you do**, even if it ends up being something other than public health research.



“Never be ashamed to say ‘I don’t know’ when hit with a hard question.”

Your 2014-2015 Postdoctoral Association Council



Christian Suharlim
President

Department: Center for Health Decision Sciences
Research: Resource allocation and cost-effectiveness analysis on vaccines, HIV/AIDS, and Tuberculosis interventions in low and middle-income countries.



Morteza Asgarzadeh
Vice President

Department: Nutrition
Research: Built environment and perception, physical activity, injury prevention.



Fred Tabung
Secretary

Department: Nutrition-Yerby Postdoctoral Research Fellow
Research: Diet and cancer associations, including inflammation, hyperinsulinemia, metabolism and diet-gene interactions.



Sylvia Ley
Treasurer

Department: Nutrition
Research: Dietary approaches to prevent and manage type 2 diabetes; Pregnancy and reproductive risk factors of diabetes and cardiovascular disease over the lifecourse.



Shoukai Yu
Educational Initiatives Chair

Department: Environmental Health
Research: Analysis of genetically modulated environmental diseases, including genome-wide association studies, pathway analysis, and next generation sequencing studies.



Alex Carll
Grants and Research Strategy Chair

Department: Environmental Health
Research: I investigate the biological mechanisms underlying the adverse physiological effects of air pollutants on the cardiovascular system. I am particularly interested in how air pollution exposure weakens the heart.



Guy Harling
Social co-chair

Department: Global Health and Population
Research: Statistical analysis of social determinants of HIV, mainly in sub-Saharan Africa; risk factors for HIV infection and other infectious disease (Tuberculosis and bacterial STIs).



Mudit Chaand
Social co-chair

Department: Immunology and Infectious Disease
Research: I use an *in vitro* erythrocyte culture system and RNAi knockdown technology to identify potential host proteins required for malaria parasite invasion. These essential steps may guide the development of erythrocyte-based interventions to control malaria infections, as an alternative to current parasite-targeting drug resistant therapies.

Your 2014-2015 Postdoctoral Association Council, *continued*



Martha A. Clark
Workshops Chair

Department:

Immunology and
Infectious Disease

Research: My research
interests are in
identifying
environmental stimuli
that shape malaria
parasite virulence and
transmission during
malaria infection of the
human host.



Gillian Franklin
Editor-in-Chief

Department: Environmental
Health-Yerby Postdoctoral
Research Fellow

Research: My research
interests are in skin (the
Integumentary system), and
skin related disorders or
diseases. I am currently
working on an epidemiologic
study, assessing for
cumulative arsenic exposure
in premalignant skin lesions
in a Bangladeshi population
who were chronically
exposed to inorganic arsenic
from natural deposits in their
drinking water supplies.



Gholamali Rahnavard
Webmaster

Department: Biostatistics

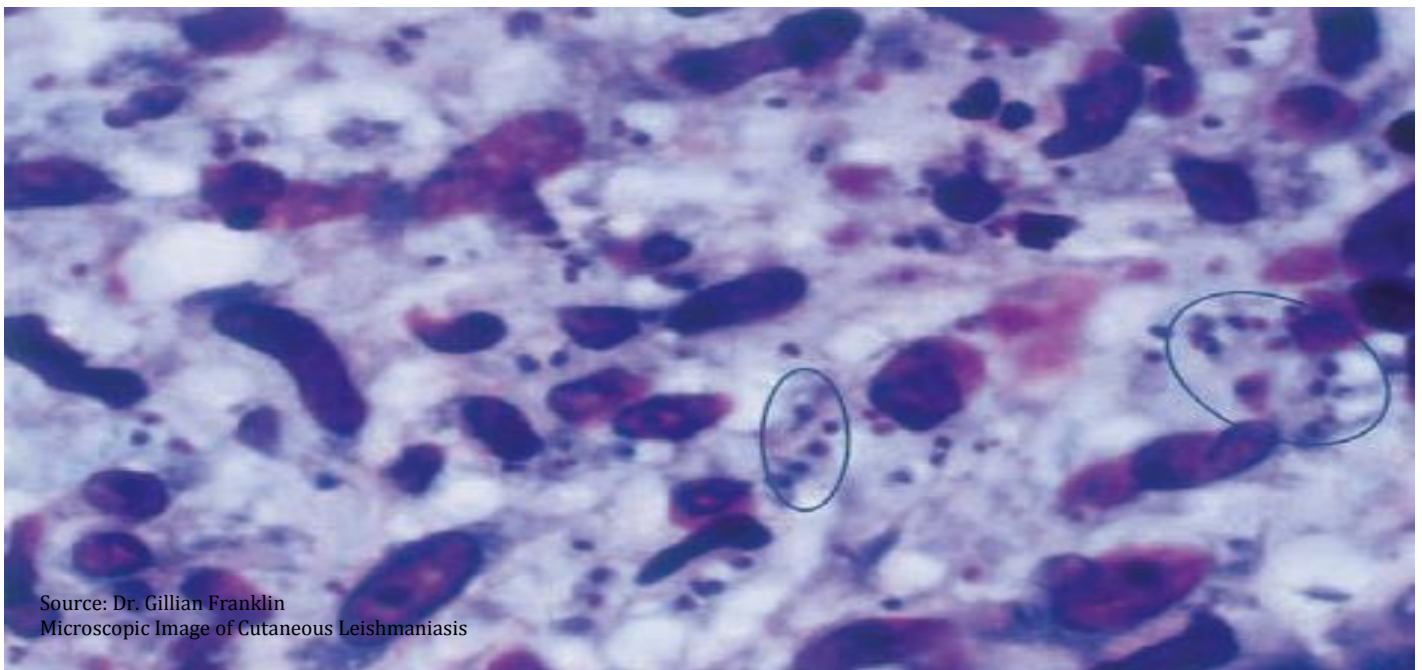
Research: I am interested
in the development of
efficient algorithm and
software systems to apply
high-throughput
technology and large data
sets to complex diseases. I
focus on developing
methodology and
associated software for
mining metagenomics data
sets and statistical
techniques for microbial
biomarker discovery.



Shinichi Tomioka
General Council

Department: Global Health
and Population

Research: My research
interests are in inequality of
health care treatment
among various groups of
different backgrounds. I am
currently investigating
differences of hospital
treatment based on
reimbursement data of
Japan.



Source: Dr. Gillian Franklin
Microscopic Image of Cutaneous Leishmaniasis

Your 2014-2015 Postdoctoral Association Council, *continued*



Mohlopheni Jackson Marakalala
PDA Representative to DACDI

Department:

Immunology and Infectious Disease

Research: Immunology of tuberculosis; mycobacterial genes requires to survive host immune stress; profiling of proteins associated with various stages of granuloma formation in TB-infected humans.

David Gregory
Representative of Research Associates

Department:

Research: Involves the ways macrophages resist or succumb to infection with intracellular pathogens. RNAi screen to identify genes that contribute to macrophages death following infection with the bacteria that cause anthrax, plague or tularaemia are conducted. A bioinformatic meta-analysis is used to identify a micro-RNA that protects macrophages from infection. Identifying the molecular mechanisms by which these gene products influence the outcome of infection is key.



Usheer Kanjee
Special Advisor to the Council

Department: Immunology and Infectious Disease

Research: Understanding the basic biology of malaria parasite *Plasmodium falciparum*, focusing on the parasite's ability to recognize the appropriate red blood cell surface receptors before invading it.



Benedicte Mengel
General Council
Department: Genetics and Complex Diseases
Research: The role of calcium homeostasis in liver cells of obese animals; Cellular lipid accumulation; Insulin resistance.



Clara Burbano-Herrera
General Council

Department: FXB Center for Health and Human Rights

Research: European, Inter-American and African systems of human rights and interim measures in international human rights law, specifically the three regional human rights systems.



Mark McGovern
General Council
Department: Harvard Center for Population and Development Studies
Research: Health and development economics, that covers infant and childhood health, aging, and correcting for missing data in HIV research. Mark received his PhD in Economics from University College Dublin.



Archana Swami
Research Associate Volunteer
Department:
Research: Targeted nanoparticles for spatio-temporal drug delivery, nanocarriers to manipulate tumor microenvironment to overcome metastasis and multidrug resistance of cancer cells. Nanodevices to improve surgical implants for enhanced osseointegration.

PDA Council

Postdoctoral Fellows

Research Associates



DACDI-Dean's Advisory Committee on Diversity & Inclusion

NPA- National Postdoctoral Association

SPOTLIGHT ON

Fred Tabung, M.S.P.H., Ph.D.

Tell us a little bit about yourself... I am originally from Cameroon, Central Africa where I grew up and studied medical laboratory science for my undergraduate degree. Later, I worked in a hospital for a couple of years helping to diagnosed cancers. Most of the people we diagnosed with cancer died of their cancers. This motivated me to study cancer epidemiology in graduate school, so as to be able to contribute to designing cancer preventive strategies. In 2007, I obtained my MSPH in epidemiology from the University of South Carolina, and went to work in the countries of the Horn of Africa for two years and then returned to the same department to continue pursuing a PhD. I completed the PhD program and accepted the postdoc position at HSPH in September 2014. So I have been here only a couple of months.

Tell us about your research. I am studying the role of diet on cancer prevention and control, and I am specifically interested in helping to elucidate biological pathways underlying the associations between diet and cancer; including inflammation, hyperinsulinemia, metabolism and diet-gene interactions. Knowledge on these pathways could be useful in designing effective diet-related cancer prevention and control strategies. I am working under the mentorship of Dr. Edward Giovannucci in the department of Nutrition.

Why did you come to Harvard? What attracted me to Harvard was the availability of research resources including the work of Dr. Giovannucci that aligned perfectly with my research interests. Also, the Harvard cohorts provide a huge amount of data to advance my research interests.

What would you have been doing if you were not a postdoc here at HSPH? I would probably be doing a postdoc elsewhere, or if I were not doing science at all, I would probably be honing my soccer skills somewhere. I like playing soccer or watching it on TV.

Best and worst things about Boston? Boston is a great city! Commuting within Boston and its surrounding cities is easy. I use the commuter rail to get to and from work. There are many recreational places to ease off the stress of work, or provide a different view to life. I arrived here in late summer and haven't yet explored these places but hope to take full advantage of the recreational facilities as from next summer. The worst thing about Boston...hmmmmmm, probably, the winter weather! In the South, winters are not as bad, but I am adjusting fairly well, though I would be the happiest man if summers never ended.

What's your favorite place to eat in town? Given that I live outside of town, I haven't come to Boston to eat in the restaurants, but when I am at HSPH, I mostly eat at the Sebastian's café.

If you could be a superhero, what would your superpower be? Rid the earth of cancer, create endless time for work and fun, and then make sure summers never end.



A penguin walks through your door wearing a sombrero. What does he say and why is he here? (Stolen shamelessly from *Huffpost* in the

past, and will continue the tradition!): He walked through the right door and is busy making the most out of what he finds in the room in order to enhance understanding of diet-disease relationships but he also understands that to achieve this, he needs to acquaint to the cold weather and have fun as well.

What last fun question do you want to answer about yourself? *What do I do with my time out of work?* I love to spend time with family and friends. I have a beautiful wife with three great kids-two boys and a girl, who make life away from work very pleasant.

Thank you Fred!

PDA Council Events

Past Events

HSPH Poster Day went **electronic** on November 7, 2014.

In collaboration with **HSPH Student Government** this was the first time the HSPH used an **electronic poster board** format. This format allowed for **dynamic interaction** and **multimedia**. There were **50 abstracts** submitted, of which **45 posters** were showcased, and judged by **29 judges**, including myself.

The day went very smoothly and closed with six **(6) poster winners**, in various categories.

Dean of Academic Affairs, David Hunter, ScD, MPH, MBBS, closed the **ceremony** with an inspiring **talk**, followed by the **award presentations**.

A very **BIG thank you** to all of the **planning committee members, judges**, and other **volunteers** who participated.

Winners and Winning Categories

Best Overall Poster: Winners were two students

Youngji Cho

Poster Title: The Effects of a Depleted Microbiome on Ozone-Induced Airway Hyperresponsiveness in Mice

Slawa Rokicki

Poster Title: Let's Text About Sex: Evaluation of an Interactive Mobile Phone Program to Improve Knowledge of Reproductive Health among Ghanaian Adolescents

Research Fellow and Research Associates Posters:

The **first place prize** went to our **PDA President, Christian Suharlim**

Poster Title: Bridging the gap between science and the media: the potential role for social ventures

The **second place prize** was awarded to **Assieh Saadatpour**

Poster Title: Characterizing heterogeneity in leukemic cells using single-cell gene expression analysis

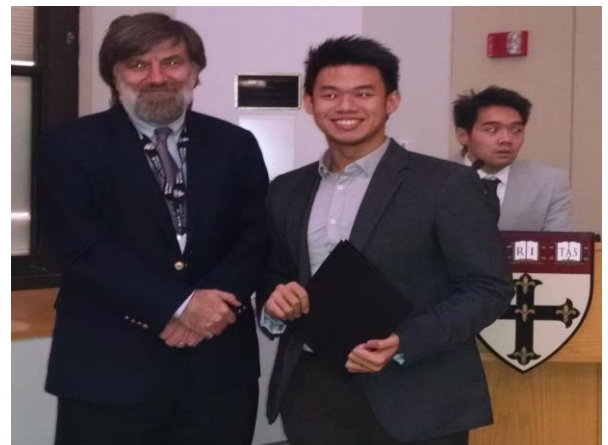
Graduate Student Posters:

The **first place prize** went to **Sandra V. Pirela**

Poster Title: Consumer exposures to engineered nanoparticles released during printing: A case study of life-cycle EHS implications from nano-enabled products during consumer use.

The **second place prize** went to **Rose Filoramo**

Poster Title: Determining the Role of Pubertal Status in Sepsis Survival



Left: Dean Hunter; Right: Christian Suharlim, PDA President



Left: Mohlopheni Jackson Marakalala Right: Martha Clark

PDA Council Events, continued

Past Social Events

The PDA hosts several social events over the year, including but not limited to the Ice Cream Social, Stop Hunger, and the Holiday Lunch.

Bright Postdoctoral Fellows and Research Associates always find time to play after working very hard. **“All work and no play makes Jack a very dull boy”**. Jack Nicholson, *The Shining* (Film). Social skills are a necessary life skill, therefore, we find time to socialize with our colleagues, friends, and family. Take a look at how some postdocs put their social skills to work at various fun events hosted by the PDA Council.

The ***Ice Cream Social***, September 16th, 2014 on the “hill” (Kevin Fitzgerald Park on Mission Hill). This event was a part of the **Fifth Annual National Postdoc Appreciation Week** (NPAW) celebrations.



During NPAW, Postdocs celebrate throughout the week all over the country. This is a way of raising awareness and recognizing Postdocs contributions to the research scientific community, according to the National Postdoctoral Association (www.nationalpostdoc.org)



Image Source: www.hdwallpapersinn.com



HSPH Postdocs and Research Associates participated in a **“meal packing event”**, the ***Stop Hunger Now*** international hunger relief campaign on **November 19th, 2014**. The event was organized by the **Office of Student Affairs (OSA)**. The goal was to package **10,000 meals** for **children** and their **families** in need all over the world. This event was an opportunity to **make a difference** in the lives of **those in need**, and it shows the **big hearts** of many in the **Harvard community**. This event also provided an **opportunity** for Postdocs and Research Associates to **meet** and get to know each other. The group headed out to have more fun with **trivia at Jerry Remy’s** after meal packing.



PDA Council Events, continued

Past Social Events

Happy Holidays!

Annual Postdoc Holiday Lunch

Join fellow postdocs for a catered lunch (first-come, first-served) & announcements of the Fall HSPH PDA Travel Awards!

Where: FXB Atrium

When: December 19th, 2014

Time: 12:00 PM- 1:00 PM

Sponsored by the  **HSPH POSTDOC ASSOCIATION**



Holiday Lunch and PDA Travel Award Ceremony

Meet, greet, eat and **celebrate** your winnings!



Left to right, 1: Shinichi Tomioka, 2: Shu Yang 3: Christian Suharlim

The **Travel Award statistics**; the PDA received 24 applications for **Spring 2014 travel awards**. During the PDA Travel Award Ceremony on December 19th, three (3) postdocs **Shu Yang, Kerry Ivey, and Maya Vadiveloo** were the **winners** of the Travel Awards.

Congratulations to the three winners!



Mudit, the food was very good!



PDA Council Events, continued

Upcoming Events

HSPH PDA Nanocourses: Spring of 2015

These courses were a huge success last year. The Public Health 101, **6-course series**, taught by Postdocs and Research Associates on public health will be launched again in the Spring.

These are **mini-courses** that are approximately 6-9 hours total, and are completed over a two-day period.

If you would like to teach a course, or would like to team up with someone else to teach a nanocourse please come to our next meeting on **January 23rd, 2015 from 9:00 – 10:00 am, place TBD.**



Nanos & Other Courses

<https://nanosandothercourses.hms.harvard.edu/node/242>

Ice Skating: HSPH PDA co-sponsor **Ice Skating Social** with Boston PAN-PDA in January, 2015. This is an excellent opportunity for Postdocs and Research Associates to **meet other Postdocs** in the Boston/Cambridge area. Hot chocolate will be provided. More **details coming soon!**

Other Important Items!

In **September 2014** the Harvard School of Public Health was **renamed** the **Harvard T. H. Chan School of Public Health**. Thanks to a **generous gift** from The Morningside Foundation and the **Chan family**.

The HSPH **Research Associates** now join the HSPH PDA. We are very excited to have **David Gregory** and **Archana Swami** to join the PDA Council.



HSPH PDA T-Shirts for sale, only \$15.00!

Enhance your wardrobe in Harvard pride and style! These tees look awesome and are simply irresistible! Just look at the fit on our stylish model above!

Men Tees-Crimson Red

Women Tees-Midnight Blue

Order via email: pda@hsph.harvard.edu

*The PDA Council would like to thank **Jennifer Moltoni** and **Christina Burkot** for all of their assistance at several of our events, in addition to conducting workshops that benefit postdocs! **Read more...***

Jennifer Moltoni is the **Assistant Director of Faculty Affairs for Postdoctoral and Research Appointments**. Jennifer **oversees all annual non-faculty academic appointments** at HSPH, and serves as **Department Administrator of Faculty Affairs, the Director of Research Scientist Appointments, Reappointments and Promotions, and supervises all postdoctoral career development programming**. She is also the **Director of the HSPH Yerby Postdoctoral Fellowship**.



Christina Burkot is the **Senior Search and Review Officer in the Office of Faculty Affairs** at the Harvard School of Public Health. In this role, she **supports the HSPH Postdoc Association and Postdoc Advisory Committee, manages the postdoc career development programming, and helps run monthly orientation sessions for new incoming postdocs**. In addition, she manages the **HSPH Yerby Postdoctoral Fellowship**, a program designed toward diversity expansion of those entering academic public health. She received her B.A. from **Wesleyan University** in Connecticut, and is currently enrolled at **Boston University** (MA Administration).

We are easy to find, so don't hesitate to look us up!



HSPH
POSTDOC
ASSOCIATION

www.hsph.harvard.edu/pda



HSPH Postdocs



PDA@hsph.harvard.edu

JOIN THE PDA

HERE IS WHAT WE ARE ABOUT...

Enhance your Postdoc experience

Enable your conference trip, through Travel Awards

Liaise between Postdocs, Research Associates, and the administration/faculty

Promote professional enrichment and development

Provide opportunities to network and socialize



Photograph by Gillian Franklin

There are **many opportunities** to attend events and many activities to get involved in as a part of **giving back** to the community.

I hope that you find this issue interesting and useful.

Please do not hesitate to contact us at:

pda@hsph.harvard.edu

Gillian Franklin, MD, MPH, PhD

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The **HSPH PDA** is here for **YOU!**

Please send us **your ideas** for courses, socials, events, and more! As you can see we are always **EXCITED** to hear from you, always! **Write** to us at pda@hsph.harvard.edu!

