



Department of Internal Medicine Newsletter -- September 2011



Recipient, Debra Romberger, MD



Lynell Klassen, MD, and recipient, Cyrus Desouza, MBBS



Recipient, Jill Poole, MD



Recipient, Brian Boerner, MD



Recipient, Kathryn Lazure, MD

2011 Internal Medicine Research Awards

Five researchers were recognized for their exceptional achievements in research at the 2011 Internal Medicine Research Awards and Grand Rounds presentations on Friday, June 3.

- Debra Romberger, MD, professor, Pulmonary, Critical Care, Sleep and Allergy Division, received the Internal Medicine Career Excellence Research Award
- Cyrus Desouza, MBBS, associate professor, Diabetes, Endocrinology and Metabolism Division, received the Internal Medicine Clinical Research Award
- Jill Poole, MD, associate professor, Pulmonary, Critical Care, Sleep and Allergy Division, received the Internal Medicine Basic Science Research Award
- Brian Boerner, MD, at the time fellow, Diabetes, Endocrinology and Metabolism Division, received the Internal Medicine Fellowship Research Award
- Kathryn Lazure, MD, house officer III, Department of Internal Medicine, received the Internal Medicine Resident Research Award

After the awards presentation, Dr. Desouza gave a Grand Rounds talk titled "Strategies towards the control of diabetes and its complications."

Debra Romberger, MD, career excellence recipient, completed her medical degree and a pulmonary/critical care fellowship at the University of Kansas. She became a faculty member of the Pulmonary, Critical Care, Sleep and Allergy Division at UNMC after completing a research fellowship in this division.

According to her nominator, Dr. Romberger has an established national reputation in the area of lung injury, alcohol, and organic dust exposure-related respiratory disease, as demonstrated by her extensive publication list. She has maintained investigator-initiated

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Rupp Appointed Chief, Infectious Diseases

Mark Rupp, MD, became the chief of the Division of Infectious Diseases on July 1, 2011. He takes over for Philip Smith, MD, who led the division since July of 1998.

"I am very pleased and honored to be chosen for this leadership opportunity," Dr. Rupp said. In outlining his goals for the future of the division, he

said, foremost, he will be building on the firm foundation established by Dr. Smith in previous years.

Dr. Rupp said his vision for the future could be expressed in the following scenario. One of his faculty or staff members tells someone he meets at

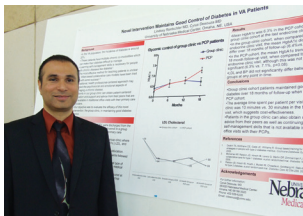
(See full newsletter)

Research Awards (continued from page 1)

funding throughout her career, and is currently the principal investigator for both an R01 and a VA Merit award.

Her nominator said she is regarded as a highly effective and supportive mentor. Several currently successful Internal Medicine faculty members have sought her guidance with research and their careers. Dr. Romberger has directed the Internal Medicine Summer Undergraduate Research Program for over 10 years. The program has supported over 200 undergraduate student scholars, of which approximately 45 percent are known to have furthered their education in medicine or science.

Dr. Romberger has held many leadership roles at both UNMC and the Omaha VA Medical Center. She is currently the Associate Chief of Staff/Research at the VA Nebraska Western Iowa Health Care System, and is Vice Chair for Research of UNMC's Department of Internal Medicine. She has been Interim Chair of the Department of Internal Medicine, as well. She has also served on numerous UNMC and VA committees and on several community boards.



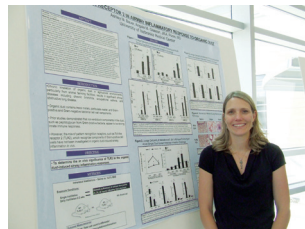
Cyrus Desouza, MBBS, received his MBBS and completed an internship at St.

John's Medical College and Hospital in Bangalore, India. He completed an internal medicine residency at Barnabas Hospital in New York, and an endocrinology fellowship at Tulane University. He was recruited to UNMC in 2002. This April, he became the chief of the Division of Diabetes, Endocrinology and Metabolism.

His other current leadership roles include being director of the VA Diabetes and Obesity Program, chair of the Diabetes Advisory Committee at the VA and chair of the VA VISN 23 Obesity Work Group. He is the director of the UNMC Endocrinology Fellowship Program and is a member of the American Diabetes Asso-

ciation's National Scientific and Medical Programs Oversight Committee.

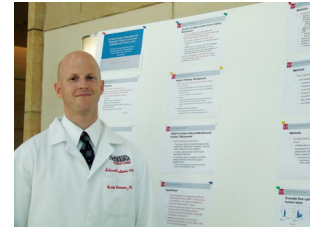
Dr. Desouza's nominator said he has developed a national reputation in the area of inflammation and repair of vascular endothelium in insulin resistance and diabetes. He has published 35 articles and book chapters. He is first author on two-thirds of these. He is the principal investigator on a VA Merit Review, site principal investigator on two National Institutes of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases grants, one National Cancer Institute Grant and has been PI or co-investigator on multiple clinical trials. Dr. Desouza was recently invited to be considered site director for the next landmark NIH multicenter diabetes trial.



Jill Poole, MD, received her MD with high distinction from UNMC. She was the recipient of a Clinical Research Scholars Program Fellowship from the National Institutes of Allergy and Infectious Diseases. She completed an internal medicine residency at Barnes Jewish Hospital in conjunction with Washington University in St. Louis and was the chief medical resident at the John Cochran Veteran's Administration Hospital in St. Louis. She completed an allergy, asthma and immunology fellowship at National Jewish Medical and Research Center in Denver, and a research fellowship there, as well. She became a UNMC Internal Medicine faculty member in 2005.

Dr. Poole's recent research focus is on the effects of repeated exposure to organic dust on the lung immune response. In 2007, she obtained a K08 award through the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences, and later, a supplement to this grant. In 2010, she was awarded an R01 Outstanding New Environmental Scientist or "ONES" grant. She has obtained other extramural grants, including from the American Academy of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology; a Nebraska Experimental Program to Stimulate

Competitive Research (EPSCoR); and subcontracts with Colorado State University's High Plains Center for Agricultural Health and Safety. She has 15 first-author, peer-reviewed publications.

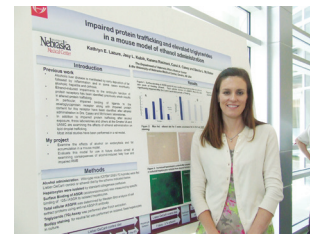


Brian Boerner, MD, completed his MD; internal medicine residency; and diabe-

tes, endocrinology and metabolism fellowship at UNMC. He became a faculty member in the Division of Diabetes, Endocrinology and Metabolism on July 1, 2011.

During his residency, Dr. Boerner received special recognition for a poster presented at the Endocrine Society National Meeting. He has been actively involved in developing a new research program in islet transplant biology. Recently, he received a College of Medicine-funded Physician Scientist Training Program award. With this funding, he is working with Dr. Nora Stravetnick on a project with human pancreatic beta cell regeneration.

Kathryn Lazure, MD, obtained her MD at UNMC.



According to Dr. Lazure's nominator, she is an excellent student who has a long-

standing interest in academic medicine. In July and August of 2009, and again in November of 2010, Dr. Lazure participated in research rotations. She was quick to learn and master techniques new to her. Her nominator also said her data was of high quality, which resulted in a poster presentation at the 2010 Digestive Disease Week (DDW) meetings and an oral presentation at the 2011 DDW. A manuscript is in preparation based on her results.