ROYCHOUDURY RECEIVES NIH F99/K00 AWARD

BY ADAM CORNISH

Shrabasti Roychoudury is a fifth year student in Dr. Kishor Bakhat's lab. She studies DNA base damage repair and how it regulates transcription in mammalian cells. Shrabasti recently received a prestigious National Cancer Institute Predoctoral to Postdoctoral Fellow Transition (F99/K00) Award. In an application process which allows only one from each institution, Shrabasti was identified as the highest quality candidate from UNMC to submit the application. Then, with only a month to prepare, and just returning from being married to fellow graduate student, Aniruddha Sarkar in January, Shrabasti, in a flurry of effort and hard work, put together an outstanding application which resulted in the award. This grant will fund her last two years of predoctoral training and the first four years of her postdoctoral training. When asked about how she feels about the award, Shrabasti remarked, “[I am] very much excited. I think this is a golden opportunity for me to explore career options. I have more options now. I always wanted to stay in academia so four years of postdoctoral funding is just perfect for my career path.”
This is the inaugural issue of the monthly Molecular Genetics and Cell Biology (MGC) doctoral program newsletter. The MGC program is hosted by Genetics, Cell Biology and Anatomy (GCBA) and includes nearly 70 faculty members from 12 departments. This year, the program continues to expand through addition of nine students – four that were committed to MGCB and five from IGPBS that started the year “uncommitted”. This newsletter is one forum we will use to introduce MGCB faculty, highlight student and faculty achievements, announce future events, and provide information about recent programmatic developments. We hope you find this newsletter to be informative and we appreciate any comments for improvements.

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Genetics, Cell Biology and Anatomy

Events and Deadlines

- February 1: UNMC Graduate Fellowship abstracts and initial applications due
- February 17: Midwest Student Biomedical Research Forum (Creighton University)
- March 1: Completed UNMC Graduate Fellowship applications due

"TAKE A BREATHER"

Submitted by: Adam Cornish

Looking for a great new place to go out to eat? Check out Stirnella in the Blackstone district for delicious cuisine that is sure to satisfy those looking for a fancy night out (3814 Farnam Street) don’t forget to get ice cream down the street at Coneflower afterwards!

Jyothi Arikath, Ph.D., Developmental Neuroscience, Munroe-Meyer Institute

What is your current research focus?
- My aims are to understand the molecular mechanisms that regulate neuronal structure and plasticity and elucidate how these mechanisms influence neural circuit formation and function in the developing and diseased brain.

How did you develop your research interests?
- My background started off in microbiology and biomedical engineering. I had an excellent professor as a master’s student, who was a neurobiologist, and I took two of his classes and was hooked in neurobiology.

What was your favorite memory as a graduate student?
- When I defended my thesis and my advisor hugged me and said, “You did a great job!”

Do you have any advice for beginning graduate students?
- Pick something that is really exciting and just enjoy the ride. It’s going to be like a roller coaster. Take your time to find the right lab and the right mentor. Throw yourself into research 200% and it will be worth it in the end.

If you were a graduate student today, would you still go into neurobiology?
- Absolutely! It is the most exciting field because there is so much technology and the brain is like the last frontier!

What area of science would you be in if not neurobiology?
- I would probably be in either bioengineering or electrical engineering.

What is your favorite activity outside of lab?
- I used to like to paint, but I don’t really have time anymore. But I enjoy art and spending time with my kids.