

NHS Pathology and Microbiology Celebrate National Lab Week

National Medical Laboratory Week is a time set aside to recognize medical laboratory professionals and the vital role they play in every aspect of health care. This year NHS celebrated National Medical Laboratory Week – April 21st through 25th - with a variety of special events.

National Medical Laboratory Week is an important event in which medical laboratory personnel take the time to celebrate their professionalism and are recognized for their efforts on behalf of their patients.

This year NHS Pathology kicked off the week of celebration with a pizza luncheon for lab staff personnel. The speaker for the luncheon was Cathy Heck, Director of the Learning Network. Each day of the week held surprises, giveaways and lots of great food.

Activities for Lab Week included theme days, such as “crazy hat” day, “luau” day and “clash day”. Tours of the new automation facility and tandem mass spectrometer equipment were offered. There were

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Dr. Booth Receives Two Awards for Teaching

James Booth, Ph.D., started his teaching career as a teaching assistant at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln while working on his doctoral education. When he was recruited to UNMC 25 years ago, it was to teach microbiology to future physicians, physician assistant and pharmacy students. Today, he is Associate Professor in the Department of Pathology and Microbiology, as well as Year Two Director in the College of Medicine.



(Dr. James Booth)

In March, Dr. Booth was given the honor of receiving not one, but two awards for teaching excellence. The UNMC Outstanding Teaching Award and the Hirschmann Prize for Teaching Excellence.

The UNMC Outstanding Teaching Award is awarded by UNMC faculty and was presented to Dr. Booth at the March 31st annual Faculty Meeting.

The Hirschmann Prize for Teaching Excellence is awarded annually to two outstanding faculty members, one clinical and one pre-clinical, who demonstrate a devotion to teaching. Each year the M4 class nominates and selects the winner. Guidelines for nominations include innovative educational methods, professionalism and awareness of the students' educational needs. This year, Dr. Booth was bestowed the honor of the pre-clinical faculty member by the class of 2003. According to colleagues and students, a big part of his success as a teacher is the attention he pays to each student and his friendly style. The department congratulates Dr. Booth on both of these great achievements.

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Letter from the Chair

Exceptional Performance!

On Saturday evening, May 10, 2003, we had a dinner celebrating the numerous accomplishments of our faculty. Despite significant challenges with respect to budgetary and space constraints, our faculty have achieved at remarkable levels in all of our missions.



(Dr. Sam Cohen)

Dr. Jim Booth received an Outstanding Teacher Award from the Faculty Senate, and also the Hirschmann Prize for Teaching Excellence from the graduating medical students. In research, Dr. Julia Bridge received the Pathology Young Investigator Award from the U.S. – Canadian Academy of Pathology, Dr. Steven Hinrichs was named the Stokes-Shackleford Professor of Microbiology and Dr. Howard Gendelman was awarded a program project grant from NIH on neurodegenerative disorders. Clinically, Dr. Dennis Weisenburger was named one of America's Best Doctors. In technology, Dr. Rodney Markin has carried his idea of laboratory automation, conceived nearly 15 years ago, from brain child to implementation to formation of a company (LAB-Interlink), with recent successful implantation of a new automation system in our own clinical laboratory. Eleven of our faculty will be promoted, effective July 1, 2003. Dr. Harry McFadden, Emeritus Professor, will receive the Distinguished Service to the College of Medicine Award from the Dean for his long service to the Medical Center as professor, clinician, and former chair of Microbiology.

We have much to celebrate, and even greater successes are on the horizon, with new faculty, residents, fellows and students about to arrive, new buildings being completed and new programs being started. It is an exciting time to be at the University of Nebraska Medical Center and in the field of the biomedical sciences.

Be glad you had the moment.

– Steve Shagan

NHS Lab Week Celebrated

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hundreds of prizes and gifts given away throughout the week, and a special “Star Employee” contest was held. The winner, chosen by the NHS Pathology Managers based on specific criteria, was Susan Griffith from the LIS Office. Susan was awarded a deluxe accommodation and dinner for two package at Harrah’s Hotel and Casino in Council Bluffs.



(Susan Griffith receives her “Star” prize from Glenn Fosdick while Steve DeBerg looks on.)

In addition to the “Star Employee” contest, several other winners were awarded great prizes throughout the week. Winners and prizes included: Glynnis Tanksley - two UNO basketball and two UNO football tickets; Holly Mixan - a wine basket; Mary Kolar – four Coaches Corner Omaha Beef tickets; Rhonda Bartak – wine tasting for six; Dee Amos – Lancers hockey tickets; Amy Peyton – four Ameristar Casino meal tickets; Jane Larson – 15 reserve seat tickets to the Omaha Royals, Sandy Antoniak – Bottle of 2000 Zaca Mesa Chardonnay and Yvette Adamson – a gift certificate to Charlie’s on the Lake.

Although National Laboratory Week is a time for celebrating all the hard work and effort of the laboratory staff, it was also a time to take a look at the many ongoing state-of-the-art projects that make our lab so unique. Some of the projects highlighted included:

- Tandem Mass Spectrometer Project: the implementation in progress of two liquid chromatography – tandem mass spectrometers to provide measurement of immunosuppressant drugs used for transplant patients. The timely and accurate measurement of these drugs is important to maintain levels of values sufficient for immunosuppression without exceeding levels that cause toxicity.

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New Hires:

Tiana Curry-McCoy – Other Hourly Worker – 3/1/03
Erin Fender – Lab Assistant – 3/3/03
Catherine Gebhart – Clinical Laboratory Analyst – 4/28/03
Joel Haman – Lab Assistant – 4/14/03
Dianna Jackson – Lab Assistant – 4/28/03
Ken Kohno – Visiting Research Associate – 3/1/03
Deseyre Magee – Lab Assistant - 4/21/03
Melissa Marohl – Lab Assistant – 4/23/03
Amy Petersen – Staff Medical Technologist – 3/17/03
Anne Pierce – Lab Assistant - 4/28/03
Lyn Pfaltzgraff – Administrative Technician – 3/3/03
Jennifer Rasmussen – Rapid Autopsy Specialist – 3/31/03
Lisa Ryan – Rapid Autopsy Specialist – 3/31/03
John Shandera – Lab Assistant – 2/3/03
Samantha Stott – Clerical Associate – 2/10/03
Trent Walters – Research Technologist I – 3/31/03
Masaru Yamamoto – Postdoc Research Associate – 4/1/03
Tong Zhao – Visting Research Associate – 4/1/03

Promotions:

Candy Boylan was promoted to Lead Lab Assistant 1st shift on south campus Phlebotomy.

Michele Jurgensmeier has been promoted to Teaching Coordinator for Microbiology.

Histology Symposium

The Nebraska Histology Society presented a mini-symposium on April 12, 2003, at NHS University Hospital. Speakers for the event, all from Pathology and Microbiology, were Rodney McComb, M.D., Anthony Sambol, MA, and Konnie Zeitner, HTL(ASCP). The NE Histology Society wanted to take this opportunity to thank the pathology department for its continuing support of this educational event.

Grants Awarded:

Eric Anderson, Ph.D. Student, under the co-supervision of Dr. Howard Gendelman and Dr. Huangui Xiong. Synaptic Transmission and Plasticity in a Murine Model of HIV-1 Encephalitis. Awarded by: DHHS/NIH/NINDS. \$26,956.

Julia Bridge, M.D., Clinical specimen analysis of breast tissue specimens hybridized with the PathVysion probes, via manual enumeration and on the automated MetaSystems scanner instrument. Awarded by: Vysis, Inc. 2/01/2003 – 1/13/2004. \$12,200.

Howard Gendelman, M.D., Molecular Mechanisms of HIV Neuropathogenesis. Awarded by: DHHS/NIH/NINDS. 4/1/2003 – 3/31/2004. \$349,125.

Anuja Ghorpade, Ph.D. Astrocyte Activation, Fas Ligand and HIV-1 Dementia. Awarded by: DHHS/NIH/NINDS. 4/1/2003 – 3/31/2004. \$209,475.

Yuri Persidsky, M.D. BBB Tight Junctions During HIV-1 Dementia. Awarded by: DHHS/NIH/NIMH. 4/1/03 – 5/31/04. \$294,000.

New Residents Join Department

Three new first year residents will be joining the department in July:

Shane Kohl, Geoffrey Talmon and

Michael Belenky.

Shane and Geoffrey are 2003 graduates from UNMC.

Michael Belenky is a graduate of St. Petersburg State Medical Academy in

Russia. He is moving here from Vancouver, British Columbia.



(Shane Kohl, M.D.)



(Geoffrey Talmon, M.D.)



(Michael Belenky, M.D.)

Biomedical Research Forum

The 34th Annual Midwest Student Biomedical Research Forum was held on Friday, February 21, 2003 at the Double Tree Hotel. The following UNMC graduate students received awards:

- Cory Bernadt – First Place – Graduate Student Poster
- Matt Wiebe – First Place - Graduate Student Oral Presentation
- Gina Razidlo – Second Place – Graduate Student Oral Presentation
- Zanggang Pan – Third Place – Graduate Student Poster
- Jeff Talbot – Fourth Place – Graduate Student Poster
- Robert Kortum – Fourth Place – Graduate Student Oral Presentation
- Gina Razidlo – Streck Laboratories Inc., Award for Excellence in Manuscript Writing
- Matthew Wiebe – First Place Oral Presentation Award – Basic Science Category
- Robert Kortum – Second Place Oral Presentation Award – Basic Science Category
- Cory Bernadt – First Place Poster Presentation Award – Basic Science Category
- Zenggang Pan – Second Place Poster Presentation Award Basic Science Category
- Matthew Wiebe – Graduate College Cash Award
- Cory Bernadt – Eppley Cancer Center Award for Excellence in Cancer Research

New Arrivals

Kim and Steve Christian are the proud parents of a new baby girl. Jacee Carolyn was born on Friday, March 28th. She weighed 6 lbs, 9 ½ oz. Jacee is the second girl for Kim and Steve.

Congratulations to Jana and Tony Clark on the birth of their newborn son, Joshua. He was born on Tuesday, April 15th and weighed 8 lb, 4 oz.

Kim and Jeff Goble became proud parents of a new baby boy, Jake. Jake was born on Tuesday, March 11th. He weighed 8 lbs, 11 oz. He joins sister, Grace.

Congratulations to Julie and Jim Gulizia on the birth of their fourth son, Tyler Sebastian. Tyler was born on April 14th. He weighed 9 lbs. 5 oz.

Faculty Promotions

The Department of Pathology and Microbiology would like to congratulate the following faculty members for their promotions this year:

- Dr. Rodney McComb to Professor
- Dr. Phyllis Muellenberg to Professor
- Dr. Paul Fey to Associate Professor
- Dr. Anuja Ghorpade to Associate Professor
- Dr. Pete Iwen to Associate Professor
- Dr. James Landmark to Associate Professor
- Dr. Yuri Persidsky to Associate Professor
- Dr. Ronald Rubocki to Associate Professor
- Dr. Rakesh Singh to Associate Professor
- Dr. Jialin Zheng to Associate Professor
- Dr. Larisa Poluektova to Assistant Professor

Virtual Cervical Cytology Database Created

Amber Donnelly, Education Coordinator of Cytotechnology Program and Dr. Stan Radio will be working on a federally funded grant with Dr. Fred Dee, University of Iowa. The title of the project is: "Database of Virtual Cervical Cytology." It is funded by the National Library of Medicine.



(Amber Donnelly)



(Dr. Stan Radio)

The project is initially aimed at web-based education for cytotechnology schools and continuing education for practicing cytotechnologists. It will also serve as a model for certifying examinations, national proficiency testing and laboratory accreditation via the Internet. It will also lay the groundwork for web-based virtual slide education for other cytology specimens such as those used in the diagnosis of bladder and lung cancers.

NHS Lab Week Celebrated

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- **Laboratory Automation Project:** The system provided by LAB-InterLink is a flexible mechanized system that automates front-end processing and core lab analyzer integration along with back-end storage and retrieval of specimens. LAB-InterLink Process Control and interface software components will consolidate, standardize and optimize the operations of our high volume lab. The software, in combination with the LAB-InterLink Transport System, will integrate a comprehensive system of automation modules.

- **Real Time PCR System:** Recent advances in molecular biology have provided tools to physicians that aid in the rapid diagnosis of life threatening infectious diseases. While traditional laboratory methods can be used to detect these organisms, the testing can take extended periods of time (ie., days to weeks), thus delaying treatment. The real time PCR system allows the lab to detect these organisms within hours. This provides the patient's physician with an opportunity to employ appropriate medications to eliminate these organisms before infections become life threatening.

- **Integration and Consolidation of north and south side Rapid Response Laboratories:** Over the last few years major testing functions in the laboratory have been integrated and consolidated, eliminating duplication and improving efficiency and services. The last remaining areas to be consolidated are the rapid response laboratories. They will be consolidated on the south campus, taking advantage of the automation system now being implemented. Also, with the addition of a pneumatic tube connection to the south emergency room to reduce specimen transportation time, we will be positioned to provide improved services to the ED.

- **Glucose Meter and Connectivity Project:** This recently implemented project involved nursing, IT, facilities and several other departments. The multi-departmental planning and coordination has helped make this a very successful effort. Existing point of care testing glucose meters were replaced with state-of-the-art devices which allow downloading of patient and quality testing information to a central database. Test results are posted to the Carecast Information System. Compliance tracking, regulatory reporting and billing are automated.

Honors & Awards

The Alpha Omega Alpha Spring Convocation and Faculty Honors Convocation was held on April 24, 2003 in the Eppley Science Hall Amphitheatre. The Faculty Honors Convocation is an opportunity for the College of Medicine and the School of Allied Health Professions to recognize significant academic achievements in teaching, service or research by the faculty. This year, four of our faculty members were honored for "Special Achievements."

Paul D. Fey, Ph.D., received the Internal Medicine Basic Science Research Award from the Department of Internal Medicine.



Dr. Samuel M. Cohen, M.D., Ph.D., and Chair, was elected President, Carcinogenesis Specialty Section Society of Toxicology.

Mary C. Haven, M.S., - Chair-Elect, Nominating Committee, American Association for Clinical Chemistry.



John C. Chan, M.D., Member, Executive Committee Hematopathology Society, U.S. and Canadian Academy of Pathology.

The College of Medicine Alumni Association also recognized dedicated non-alumni faculty who have served the College of Medicine for 25 years or more with honorary membership in the Alumni Association:

S. James Booth, Ph.D., Associate Professor and James D. Landmark, MD., Assistant Professor, were both honored this year.



(James Booth, Ph.D.)



(James Landmark, M.D.)

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Path/Micro Baby Party

Each year the annual Path/Micro Baby Party seems to grow with more and more families participating, and this year was no exception. Over 20 infants and small children were the honored guests of this year's event which was held on April 16th in the UNMC Private Dining Rooms. Gift bags filled with small toys, rattles, and t-shirts were given to all the infants and toddlers, while Winnie-the-Pooh (Mary Barry) and Tigger (Cindy Burgener) entertained the children and posed for pictures. All employees of the department who have had a new arrival to the family within the past year or so were invited to celebrate this annual event.



(L to R: Mary Barry, Nicholas Vollmer & Cindy Burgener)

This year's honored guests included: Oskar and Kyricc Borgman with their parents Kathleen and Jason Borgmann, Kimberly Carlson and her son, Zane Anthony; Jacee and Morgan Christian and their mother Kim Christian; Alison Diaz and her godmother, Peggy Slagle; Jake and Grace Goble with their parents Kim and Jeff Goble; Karen Graser with her son Cooper; Lily Haas with her father Eric Haas; Mason and Tanner Strong and their grandmother Karen Hansen; Sidney Matthias and her parents Troy and Cathy Matthias; Ashley McCarthy with her grandmother, Sue McCarthy; Hina Naushad and her daughter Sahr Qureishi; Kala and Mikey Sierra and their parents Robyn and Mike Sierra; Peder and Lasse Sorensen and their parents Karen and Peder; Nicholas and Joseph Vollmer along with their parents Sheri and Greg Vollmer, and Nicole Young with her parents Keith and Patricia Young.

Achievements

Julia Bridge, M.D., was one of three pathologists from the United States and Canada elected to the Council of the United States and Canadian Academy of Pathology. Her term will be for three years.

Pete Iwen, Ph.D., received the Merck & Co., Inc. Young Investigator Award in recognition of the meeting's top abstract. The title of the abstract was "Molecular Identification of *Rhizomucor pusillus* as a Cause of Sinus-Orbital Zygomycosis in a Patient with Acute Myelogenous Leukemia. Other authors on the paper included Drs. Alison Freifeld, Steven Pavletic and Stefano Tarantolo at UNMC, and Lynne Sigler at the University of Alberta.

Congratulations to Michelle Varney, a researcher in Dr. Rakesh Singh's laboratory, for receiving her Master's Degree in Pathology in May.

Assistantships/Fellowships

Each year, Graduate Studies holds a Graduate Studies Assistantship/Fellowship Competition for PhD students at UNMC. This year, the following Path/Micro graduate students received awards:

Danielle Slater received the NSF Predoctoral Fellowship. The award is for three years with a stipend of \$27,500 per year.

Brian Farrell (M.D./Ph.D. student) received an individual predoctoral fellowship from the National Institutes of Neurological Disorders and Stroke.

One year Fellowships or Assistantships in the amount of \$20,000 each were awarded to the following students for the 2003-2004 academic year: Scott Koepsell, Luke Handke, Heth Turnquist, Cory Bernadt, Jodi Alt, Jill Pecha, Xiaoling Shen, Benjamin Swanson, Chunhui Yi and Jarrod Tremayne.

Motivation –

The secret of getting ahead is getting started.

– Sally Berger

Publications

Larson, M. A., Wei, S. H., Weber, A., Weber, A. T., and McDonald, T. L. 2003. Induction of human mammary-associated serum amyloid A3 expression by prolactin or lipopolysaccharide. *Biochem. Biophys. Res. Commun.* 301(4):1030-1037.

Larson, M. A., Wei, S. H., Weber, A., Mack, D. R., and McDonald, T. L. 2003. Human serum amyloid A3 peptide enhances intestinal MUC3 expression and inhibits EPEC adherence. *Biochem. Biophys. Res. Commun.* 300(2):531-540.

Mack, D. R., McDonald, T. L., Larson, M. A., Wei, S., and Weber, A. 2003. The conserved TFLK motif of mammary-associated serum amyloid A3 is responsible for up-regulation of intestinal MUC3 mucin expression *in vitro*. *Pediatr. Res.* 53(1):137-142.

Honors & Awards

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Karen Honeycutt was recognized for her promotion to Assistant Professor in July, 2002.



(Karen Honeycutt)

Nora Chapman, Ph.D., and Timothy Greiner, M.D., were given special recognition for receiving Tenure, effective July 1, 2002.



(Nora Chapman, Ph.D.)



(Tim Greiner, M.D.)

I discovered I always have choices and sometimes it's only a choice of attitude.

– Judith M. Knowlton

Histotech Spring Symposium

Konnie Zeitner, HT (ASCP) HTL, is the lead technologist in the neuropathology lab and is the Region V Director for the National Society of Histotechnology (NSH). In March, she attended the Iowa Society of Histotechnology Spring Symposium in Iowa City, where she presented “Creutzfeldt-Jakob and other Transmissible Spongiform Encephalopathies.” Konnie also gave the attendees an update on activities in Region V and the National Society. At this time, Konnie is serving on an NSH task force set up to create a standardized histology and surgical pathology workload recording system to replace the old CAP workload recording standards.



As can be seen from the picture at left, it is not all work for Konnie at these meetings. The photo was taken at the ISH

Award Banquet, the theme of which was “Proud to be a Histotech, American Style.” A kazoo band played “Yankee Doodle” and other patriotic songs during the banquet. Konnie states that Nebraska Health System is lucky that her histotechnology skills are better than her kazoo playing skills or she would probably be out searching for a new job.

NHS Lab Week “Star” Employee Nominees

The Department of Pathology and Microbiology would like to congratulate the NHS “Star Employee” nominees for the hard work and effort that merited their nominations during Lab Week:

Lawan Ali, Deb Bergman, Nate Butler, Mary Conley, Coleen Dickens, Jason Garriets, Susan Griffith, Robert Guerin, Sophie Hauxwell, Andi Hudson, Brenda Jershin, Verna Katzenstein, Mary Kolar, Ermie Kyamko, Chad Marshall, Kim Mathewson, Courtney Olson, Cindy Page, Amy Peyton, Diane Pursel and Konnie Zeitner.

Birthday Wishes To:

February Birthdays:

2/1 - Cheryl Churchill
Min Wei
Fil Martello
Samantha Stott
2/3 - Jennifer Fontana
2/4 - Michele Jurgensmeier
Jan Weber
2/5 - Kai Fu
2/7 - Alison Lueders
2/9 - Kathy Brown
Charles Kuzynski
2/10 - Janice Petersen
2/11 - Mashide Horiba
2/12 - Katherine Swanson
James Tresemer
2/13 - Jacqueline Bailey
Jessica Behn
Barbara Bell
2/14 - Tina McGaugh
Raisa Persidskaia
Poonam Sharma
2/15 - Michelle Petersen
2/16 - Kevin Klahn
Phillip Haberman
Darlene Waters
Thomas Williams
2/18 - Greg Olsen
2/20 - Lilian Calisto
Eric Haas
Patricia Hansen
Carol Kindig
Kim Schrader
2/21 - Jim Booth
Champ Cudahay
2/23 - Jill Faraci
Robyn Sierra
2/25 - Mary Jo Rome
2/26 - Jason Schweitzer
2/28 - Eddie Akon
Tom Jerrells
Courtney Olson

March Birthdays:

3/3 - Donna Czarnecki
3/4 - Lori Beiermann
3/6 - Betty Alspach
Tiana Curry-McCoy
3/7 - Phyllis Warkentin
3/9 - Lynne Owen
Amy Petersen
3/13 - Luanne Brightweiser
Barbara Nielson
Andrew Schmidt
3/15 - Rachelle Hartley
3/16 - Nora Chapman
Kurt Matthews
Doug Stickle
Monica Wilcox
3/17 - Paul Actor
3/18 - Amy Armbrust
Howard Gendelman
Allison McConachie
3/19 - Susan Griffith
3/21 - Carol Hale
Catherine Mathias
Spring Holter
3/23 - Terica Hudson
Hina Naushad
3/24 - Eric Benner
Megan Gosch
Joel Haman
3/25 - Nanette Cumpston
3/28 - Patricia Woodward
3/29 - Greg Cochran
3/29 - Regina English
3/30 - Christine Reyes
3/31 - David Studts

April Birthdays:

4/1 - Audrey Euans
Lisa Ryan
4/2 - Denise Beister
4/3 - Abigail Hallam
4/5 - Kerry Bernal
4/7 - Randi Nelson
Kevin Olmer
Marina Zelivyanskaya
4/8 - Beverly Lavoie
4/9 - Steven Carson
Tong Zhao
4/10 - Trevor Ambron
Katina Antonucci
Jessica Holmstrom
4/14 - Jeffrey Sparrock
4/15 - Andrew Forman
4/16 - Teresa Clark
Mary Marlatt
Travis Rinehart
4/17 - Kathryn Firley
Debra Lytle
Therese McGinn
4/18 - Gina Le-Foreman
Theresa Grutel
4/19 - Christine Glaser
Anthony Odhiambo
4/22 - Pamela Althof
4/23 - Marilyn Stewart
Connie Souza
4/24 - Jianxing Zhao
4/25 - Jason Gerriets
4/27 - Frances Aguilera
4/28 - Jie Liu
4/29 - Javeed Iqbal
Nancy Page
Diane Schafer