Welcome to the Fall 2023 version of the UArizona Department of Immunobiology newsletter. This quarter, we are particularly happy and proud to welcome to our ranks two new faculty members: Assistant Professor, Dr. Katherine Rhodes, an expert in bacterial pathogenesis of reproductive tract bacteria, and Associate Professor, Dr. Koenraad Van Doorslaer, an evolutionary virology expert with interests in the human papilloma virus and its oncogenic transformation potential. We are delighted that they are our new faculty!

- Janko Ž. Nikolich, MD, PhD
  Director, the Aegis Consortium for Pandemic-Free Future
  Bowman Professor and Head, Department of Immunobiology
  Co-Director, University of Arizona Center on Aging

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New Faculty

Katherine Rhodes, PhD
Koenraad Van Doorslaer, PhD

Hats Off to Our Summer 2023 Graduates!!

Emily Merritt, PhD
Henrik O’Brien, PhD

Emily is working in the Koshy Lab as she applies for postdoctoral positions.

Henrik is continuing in the Johnson Lab in a postdoctoral position.
Awards and Laudatory Notes

Faculty

**Michael D.L. Johnson, PhD,** was appointed the Associate Dean for Basic Science Research and Graduate Studies at the UA COM-Tucson. This role involves advancing basic science research efforts and supervising graduate student scholarship.

**Anita Koshy, MD,** was honored as a “2023 Women in Medicine Torchbearer” by COM-T. This award “encourages inclusivity, empowers female professionals, and ensures a brighter, more diverse future for healthcare.”

**Koenraad Van Doorslaer, PhD,** was selected as the co-leader for the Cancer Biology Program at the UA Cancer Center.

**Felicia Goodrum, PhD,** and **Gayatri Vedantam, PhD,** were recognized as Women of Impact by the Office of Research, Innovation and Impact for being “forward-thinking leaders whose impact resonates across the U of A campus and beyond.”

**Students**

**Pierce Longmire** (GPMM, Goodrum Lab) received an 2023-24 ARCS Scholarship.

**Yamil Sanchez-Rosario** (GPMM, Johnson Lab), was awarded an HHMI Gilliam Fellowship.

**Chloe Park** (Undergrad, Koshy Lab), was selected for and completed a BRAVO project during summer 2023 at the University of Glasgow (Sheiner Lab).

**Shruti Attreya** (Undergrad, Koshy Lab), completed an honor’s thesis and graduated from UA in May 2023.
Fond Farewell

Mladen Jergovic, PhD, left the department at the end of July to take a position as Senior Scientist at Hooke Laboratories in the greater Boston area.

Maggie So, PhD, retired from the University at the end of July; however, she will maintain emeritus status. She is hosting a retirement symposium on Friday, October 27, from 10am-3:15pm in MRB 102.

In the Public Spotlight

Deepa Bhattacharya, PhD, was featured in:
- June 5 Interview with UA President, Robert C. Robbins, “Creating the future of Medicine in Arizona: CAMI (Center for Advanced Molecular and Immunological Therapies) will lead as precision medicine transforms patient care.”
- Aug 13 ICI Premiere Radio, “COVID keeps evolving, but so does our immunity. Are we now at a ‘stalemate’ with this virus?”
- Sept 13 NPR, “The new COVID boosters are coming: here’s what you need to know.”

Felicia Goodrum, PhD, was featured in:
- March One Health Trust-One Health, One World Podcast with Maggie Fox, “The origins of COV-19 – what scientific research tells us.”
- May 24 MSN story, “There is no evidence strong enough to end the pandemic-origins debate.”
- Sept KOLD interview: “Are masks making a comeback, Tucson health officials weigh in possible new CDC guidelines.”
- Sept Nature interview: “First global survey reveals who is doing ‘gain of function’ research on pathogens and why.”

Janko Ž. Nikolich, MD, PhD, was featured in:
- May 30 UAHS “Tomorrow is Here” series, “Fighting the Second Pandemic: Long COVID.”
- Sept 7 Arizona Science Podcast with Tim Swindle, “Updating the Phenomenon of Long COVID.”


Grants and Funding

Anita Koshy, PhD
Faculty Seed Grant, Developing single cell RNA-seq for the inflamed brain.

Rebekah Mokry, PhD

Janko Nikolich, MD, PhD
1R01AG082541 (NIH/NIA) The role of CMV in HIV-associated accentuated aging, 9/1/23 – 5/31/24 ($3,239,227).

Yamil Sanchez-Rosario
GT16604, (Howard Hughes Medical Institute/Gillian Fellows Program) Mechanisms of copper assisted entry into Streptococcus pneumoniae, 9/1/23 – 8/31/26 ($159,000).

IIDA T32 Grant

Announcing the 2023-2024 IIDA T32 Grant Awardees:

Kevin Kasper, BME, Gutruf Lab
Jennifer Kraszewski, Epidemiology, Klimentidis Lab
Ivan Sarabia, BME, Wertheim Lab
Bao Thai, GPMM, Bhattacharya Lab

SAVE THE DATE
4th ANNUAL INFECTIOUS DISEASES PROGRAM SYMPOSIUM
FRIDAY, JANUARY 11, 2024

IMB Post-Docs

The IMB postdoc group is one of the first program-specific postdoc groups at UA. Our mission is to improve recruitment and retention, identify and create training opportunities, and ensure postdoc success. Reach out to co-organizers Rebekah Mokry or Zoe Lyski with questions, feedback, or if you have a new postdoc interviewing/on-boarding and would like to set up a meeting with other IMB postdocs. If you have information for the IMB postdoc community, you can use our new listserv to quickly share that information with us: imb_postdocs@list.arizona.edu
Welcome to IMB!

General Announcements

Land Acknowledgment

We respectfully acknowledge the University of Arizona is on the land and territories of Indigenous peoples. Today, Arizona is home to 22 federally recognized tribes, with Tucson being home to the O’odham and the Yaqui. Committed to diversity and inclusion, the University strives to build sustainable relationships with sovereign Native Nations and Indigenous communities through education offerings, partnerships, and community service.

Outreach

Felicia Goodrum, PhD,
* is a mentor in the American Society for Virology Mentoring Program.
* is Co-Chair for the Cellular and Molecular Medicine search for Department Head.
* was a panel member for Women’s History Month.
* was a panel member for BIOS Inspiring Women in STEM.

Rob Jackson, PhD, (Van Doorslaer lab) co-hosted a lab tour for the Banner University Medical Center Community Program.

Mike Kuhns, PhD, is an invited member and participant in Solving for Science, https://solvingfor.org.

Isabelle Tobey (Van Doorslaer Lab)
* was a guest lecturer for a course entitled, “Biotechnologies” at Hampshire College.
* co-hosted a lab tour for the Banner University Medical Center Community Program.

Welcome to IMB!

The following have joined our department since May 2023:

Admin:
Angus Aron, Accountant

Lab Personnel:
Md Abdur Rahman Apu, GA, Bothwell Lab
Amy Banka, GA, Van Doorslaer Lab
Luis Garcia, Research Technician, Purdy Lab
Rob Jackson, PhD, Van Doorslaer Lab
Kelly King, GA, Van Doorslaer Lab
Jaclyn Marroquin, Student Worker, Van Doorslaer Lab
Chloe Nikolajczyk, Student Worker, Bhattacharya Lab
Candice Nkoy, Research Technician, Nikolich Lab
Sofia Ragibese, Student Worker, Van Doorslaer Lab
Esha Rajadhyaksha, Student Worker, Van Doorslaer Lab
Zeni Ramirez, Lab Coordinator, Goodrum Lab
Malini Sajeev, Intern, Bothwell Lab
Suraj Sakaram, Data Scientist, Bosco Lab
Chloe Scott, Student Worker, Johnson Lab
Rebekah Starks, Data Scientist, Bosco Lab
Joel Thompson, Research Tech I/MS Student, Purdy Lab
Isabelle Tobey, GA, Van Doorslaer Lab

Volunteers:
Abigail LoCascio, Undergrad, Kuhns Lab
Sanjay Menghani, PhD, Johnson Lab

General Announcements

Room Scheduling
To request a room reservation, go to resource-scheduler.pharmacy.arizona.edu/s/roomgrid.pl

Well-Being Resources
Students can reach out to the CAPS team, and employees and members of their households can work with Employee Assistance Counseling. If you need help, or know someone who does, please use these resources. Creating community is important and you are encouraged to look out for one another.

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