2013 Duke Postdoctoral Professional Development Award Winners

The Duke Office of Postdoctoral Services, along with the Vice Provost for Research and the Vice Dean for Basic Sciences, is pleased to announce the winners of the 2013 Postdoctoral Awards for Professional Development. These awards are designed to support postdocs' professional development needs by providing reimbursement for activities that directly enhance the individual's professional growth.

Diego Bohórquez, PhD, Division of Gastroenterology

Diego V. Bohórquez attended college at the Pan-American School of Agriculture in Honduras, and obtained his PhD in Nutrition from North Carolina State University in 2010. He is a third year Postdoctoral Scholar in the Division of Gastroenterology. His research focuses on how food in the gut triggers satiety in the brain, leading to the development of therapeutic treatments for obesity. In 2010 he was awarded an NIH NRSA F32 Fellowship focused on neurobiology.

Dr. Bohórquez will attend the 2013 Summer Neurobiology Course at the Marine Biological Laboratory in Woods Hole, MA, allowing him to bridge his knowledge in gastroenterology with intensive, laboratory-oriented training in neurobiology.
As a youth, Jason explored the outdoors of rural South Dakota, developing his love for amphibians and nature. He received his PhD in Biology from East Carolina University in 2009. He is a Postdoctoral Associate in the Biology Department working with Dr. Anne Yoder to integrate geographic information systems, statistics and genetic analyses to better understand, predict and mitigate the genetic consequences of future climate change.

Dr Brown will use the Postdoctoral Professional Development Award to present his research at the 2013 joint annual meeting of the Society for the Study of Evolution, the Society of Systematic Biologists, and the American Society of Naturalists (aka Evolution 2013).

Nishad Jayasundara received his PhD in Biological Sciences from Stanford University and has been a Postdoctoral Associate in Richard T. Di Giulio’s laboratory at the Nicholas School of the Environment since November 2012. Dr Jayasundara investigates mechanisms underlying toxic effects of environmental pollutants (complex hydrocarbon mixtures) and fitness tradeoffs and bioenergetic consequences associated with adaptation to these chemicals in fish inhabiting thermally variable environments. Dr Jayasundara is a native of Sri Lanka and enjoys spending his spare time working with a non-profit he co-founded that focuses on improving access to higher education for Sri Lankan students.

To obtain a better understanding of bioinformatics approaches to analyzing large data sets, Dr Jayasundara will use the Postdoctoral Professional Development Award to attend a short course, “Introduction to Programming for Bioinformatics”, at the University of California-Berkeley.
Andrew Macintyre received his PhD in immunology from the University of Dundee, Scotland, and has been a Postdoctoral Associate in the Department of Pharmacology and Cancer Biology since January 2010. Dr Macintyre currently studies metabolism in normal and cancerous immune cells. His research aims to identify ways of targeting glucose metabolism to improve anti-cancer and immune therapies.

Dr Macintyre will use the Duke Postdoctoral Professional Development Award to attend the American Association for Cancer Research workshop “Translational Cancer Research for Basic Scientists” in Boston, MA. At this workshop he will learn how to maximize the clinical impact of his research.

Emily O'Brien received her PhD in Epidemiology from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 2012 and is a Postdoctoral Associate at the Duke Clinical Research Institute. Her primary research focus is causal inference methodology for observational cardiovascular disease cohorts, with specific applications to atrial fibrillation, stroke, and hypercholesterolemia. Dr. O'Brien's current projects include assessment of obesity and long-term outcomes for heart attack patients, regional healthcare resources and quality of acute stroke care, and population-based interventions to reduce hypertension.

Dr. O'Brien will use the Postdoctoral Professional Development Award to attend the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services workshop “Introduction to the Use of Medicare Part D Data for Research” in Minneapolis, MN. The workshop provides an overview of the strengths and limitations of research within Medicare claims, as well as strategies to address specific challenges such as systematic bias, drug exposure misclassification, and ascertainment of clinical outcomes.
The Office of Postdoctoral Services thanks the 2013 Awards Committee: Dr. Melissa Bostrom, Dr. Talline Martins, Dr. Stefan Oehlers, Ms. Molly Starback, and Dr. Anne West.