



IN THIS ISSUE

SPECIAL THANKS TO DR. RANDAL JAFFE

A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

DEPARTMENT HEADLINES 2020 - 2022

OUR NEWEST ALUMNI 2020 - 2022

RETIRING FACULTY

NEW FACULTY

FACULTY & STUDENT AWARDS 2019-2022

IN MEMORIAM

THINGS TO COME

PHYSIO FRIDAYS

GIFTING



Happy 2022 Grads!

We're Back !

After a challenging 2-year pandemic hiatus, we are please to return to provide you with our bi-annual departmental *Alumni Newsletter*.

A Special Thanks to Dr. Jaffe

This also represents the first newsletter we have generated since the full retirement of our Editor, Professor Emeritus, Dr. Randal Jaffe, in 2020. Since 2004, Dr. Jaffe has single handedly provided a continued historical record of our department activities through 3-5 alumni newsletters annually, historical timeline, and thousands of student, faculty, and event photos. He also first established and maintained the bank of alumni contact information that we tapped into to reach out to you today. Our many thanks to you, Randy.

Look back at this amazing historical record Dr. Jaffe leaves us as part of his legacy with UIC.

Alumni Newsletters (2004 -2019) <https://physiology.uic.edu/about/alumni.html>

134 years of our Department History <https://physiology.uic.edu/about/history.html>

1000's of student, faculty, and event photo's dating back to 2004

<https://physiology.uic.edu/about/photos.html>



Special thanks to our retired Editor-in-Chief, Dr. Randal Jaffe. See his welcoming comments (right) from his very first newsletter back in August 2004.

Alumni Newsletter 2004
Department of Physiology and Biophysics
University of Illinois at Chicago

Welcome

This is what I hope will be the first of many sporadic alumni newsletters. What prompted me to begin this endeavor? Three recent occurrences led me to put this newsletter together. In part it began when I tried to find the e-mail address for one of my former students, Chuck Woody. This was soon followed by my being placed in charge of the James L. Ferguson Memorial Fund (more about this later). Finally, I found that the Department did not have a master list of the e-mail addresses of all our former students. As I began accumulating e-mail addresses I thought it would be a good idea to let all our former students know what their Department was up to.

I hope to make this newsletter responsive to your interests. I have tried to include some of the most important goings on. In addition, I have included a profile of one of our alumni. If you

would like to have your information included in a [profile](#) send it to me. If there is information you would like e-mail me and I will respond directly or include it in a future newsletter.

At the end of this [newsletter](#) I have listed all the people I have e-mail addresses for (I will only give out e-mail addresses with permission) and those alumni I do not. If you know the e-mail addresses of any of those I do not have contact me with their information. I know I have not included all the students before 1980. If you have names and e-mail addresses I would be delighted to include them in the list.

Finally, if you are in the Chicago area on October 2 join us at our Departmental picnic. Contact me for specific information as to location and times.

Randal C. Jaffe, Ph.D.
Professor
e-mail: rcjaffe@uic.edu





A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Alumni and Friends,

We are pleased to kick-off this new academic year with our first alumni newsletter in two years. Many thanks to Dr. Randal Jaffe for helping our new editorial team with this transition. The new team includes the department Outreach Committee, under the direction of Dr. Alexandra Naba, and the administrative support of Edgar Solis. Thanks to all of you.

We are dedicated to continue the newsletter in the tradition and format set by Dr. Jaffe. We also have plans to extend this format to spotlight the activities of you, our Alumni. Furthermore, plans are to invite you back to campus (live & virtual) and engage you with our current class of trainees through career advisory activities. Please respond to our coming enquiries and share your news and advice with us! See our next newsletter in six months.

We also pause to remember and celebrate the life of Dr. Robert Loizzi. Dr. Loizzi was with the Department from 1966 through 1999. See our tribute to Dr. Loizzi, as he is remembered for his warmth, generosity, and his standard of professionalism.

Michael O'Donnell, PhD



DEPARTMENT HEADLINES (2020-22)

Leadership Announcements

Dr. Kitajewski named as new Cancer Center Director. Steps down as CCVR Director
Alumni, Dr. Jonna Frasor, named Department of Physiology and Biophysics Assoc Head

Dr. Dawood Darbar named CCVR Director

Drs. J.-P. Jin (*Physiology*) and Sarah Lutz (Anat Cell Bio) named CCVR Associate Directors

New Educational Initiative 2022

We are delighted to announce a new Masters degree, a *Masters of Physiology for Therapeutic Development (MaPTD)*. The Program received state IBHE approval in June and is headed by Drs. Paul Goldspink and Ahlke Heydemann. This Masters will offer a similar core curriculum as our Masters in Medical Physiology Program (MSMP), in addition to advance graduate courses in the pharmaceutical industry and skills used in that sector.

New Symposium Initiatives

2020 Physiology and CCVR co-sponsor first Neurovascular Research Symposium

2021 Physiology and CCVR co-sponsor first T32 Trainee Symposium

Professional School Admittance Rates for MSMP Alumni

2017 58% Admission (Inaugural Year)

2018 100% Admission

2019 92% Admission



OUR NEWEST ALUMNI 2020 - 2022

2020 GRADUATES



- **PH.D. PROGRAM, MARAH ARMOUTI** (Advisor – Carlos Stocco, Ph.D.)
- **Masters of Science in Medical Physiology**

Muneeba Ahmed	Bobak Khalili	Naif Mansury	Kai Mongan	Danielle Olson	Katherine Ortell
Chirag Divecha	Kian Khalilli	Christine Mendoza	Bret Olson	Ivan Ortega	Guadalupe Ruiz
Michaela Jacob	Emily Leiderman				

2021 GRADUATES

- **MASTERS OF SCIENCE IN PHYSIOLOGY AND BIOPHYSICS**
 - ELISABETH DINELLO (Advisor – Brenda Russell, Ph.D.)
- **PH.D. PROGRAM**
 - MAXIMILIAN McCANN (Advisor – Chong Wee Liew, Ph.D.)
- **MD/PH.D. PROGRAM**
 - MATTHEW KLEINJAN (Advisor – Jan Kitajewski, Ph.D.)

Masters of Science in Medical Physiology

Michael Ang	Michelle Omega
Kathleen Carpenter	Yasmin Rassouli
Gloria Choi	Alexander Scotty
Jessica Ehredt	Sean Stencil
William Fabiano	Sara Valdivia
Nicholas Harvey	Elizabeth Voss
Alejandro Hernandez	
Sara Izquierdo	
Kelley Maranan	



2022 GRADUATES

- **MASTERS OF SCIENCE IN PHYSIOLOGY AND BIOPHYSICS**
 - ZARI DUMANIAN (Advisor – Jan Kitajewski, Ph.D.)
- **PH.D. PROGRAM**
 - ANTHONY ARENA (Advisor – Dan Shaye, Ph.D.)
 - ANNA BARQUE FALGUERA (Advisor – Alexandra Naba, Ph.D.)
 - KYLE DITTOFF (Advisor – Brenda Russell, Ph.D.)
 - TALIHA NADEEM (Advisor – Henar Cuervo Grajal, Ph.D.)
 - KRISTEN LEDNOVICH (Advisor – Brian Layden, Ph.D.)

Masters of Science in Medical Physiology

Ajibola Ayeni	Wryan Marek
Amanda Azam	Luke Mueller
Chidiebere Azubuike	Sarah Roe
Grace Borkowski	Ashley Ross
Julia Borovkov	Katherine Sadera
Amulya Jolepalem	Stephanie Senanou
Sonam Khanna	Refah Zabin
Nicholas-George Koto	
Laura Marek	





OUR LATEST RETIRED FACULTY 2020 - 2022



Randal C. Jaffe, PhD.
Professor Emeritus



Mark Rasenick, Ph.D.
Distinguished Professor



Primal de Lanerolle, Ph.D.
Professor Emeritus



Brenda Russell, Ph.D.
Professor Emerita



Sergey Popov, PhD.
Associate Professor Emeritus



R. John Solaro, Ph.D.
Distinguished University Professor



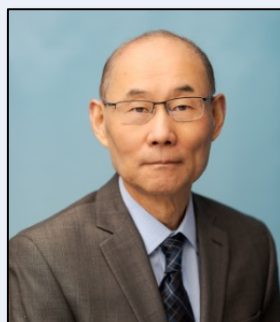
Mrinalini C Rao, Ph.D.
Professor Emerita



Pieter de Tombe, Ph.D.
Professor



OUR NEWEST FACULTY 2020 - 2022



Dr. J.-P. Jin, Professor, Department of Physiology and Biophysics

Dr. Jin joined the faculty of UIC in December 2020. He was Chair of the Department of Physiology from 2009 to 2020 at Wayne State University School of Medicine. Dr. Jin completed his medical degree and cardiology resident training in China and received his PhD degree in Biology from the University of Iowa. Dr. Jin's research interest is in the area of protein structure-function relationships focusing on the actin filament-associated regulatory proteins troponin and calponin for improving cardiovascular health and therapeutical applications.



OUR NEWEST FACULTY 2020 – 2022 (con't)

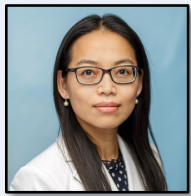
Tenure Track – Assistant Professors



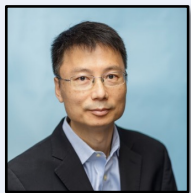
Dr. Emrah Er received his BSc in Molecular Biology and Genetics from Bilkent University in Ankara and PhD in Cell and Developmental Biology from Harvard University. After his postdoctoral training at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, he started his own research laboratory with us in 2019. He is broadly interested in understanding how mechanochemical signal transduction within the tumor microenvironment impacts cancer metastasis.



Dr. Monica Lee earned her PhD in Biomedical Engineering from the University of Virginia where her doctoral work focused on the smooth muscle cell component of atherosclerosis and acute vascular injury. She continued her cardiovascular training at Yale University to lead studies investigating endothelial cell function using various Akt mouse models. Dr. Lee is currently an Assistant Professor in the Department of Physiology & Biophysics (UIC) and a member of the CCVR.



Dr. Yuwei Jiang received her BS degree in Biological Sciences from Fudan University, China. She was awarded her PhD degree in Molecular and Human Genetics from Baylor College of Medicine where she focused on organ development and gene regulations. She then moved to the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center as a Postdoctoral Fellow in the Department of Developmental Biology and the Division of Endocrinology. Dr. Jiang started as an assistant professor in the Department of Physiology and Biophysics in August 2018. Her current research focuses on the roles of adipose progenitor cells in adipose tissue development, expansion, and aging.



Dr. Sang-Oh Yoon received his PhD at the Korea Advanced Institute of Science and Technology in South Korea. During his research period as a postdoctoral fellow at Harvard Medical School, he focused on the cancer signaling pathways that control mRNA translation and tumor cell survival. In faculty appointments at the University of Cincinnati College of Medicine and Weill Cornell Medical School, Dr. Yoon continued cancer signaling and anti-cancer drug resistance. He then joined the University of Illinois College of Medicine as an assistant professor. He studies tumor signaling governing mRNA translation, tumor resistance, and phenotype change.

Research Assistant Professors



Dr. Naiche Adler
Laboratory of Dr. Kitajewski

(Not Pictured)

Dr. Hanzhong Feng

Dr. Sejeong Shin

Dr. Bhairavi Swanminathan



Faculty Promotion

Dr. Andrius Kazlauskas was promoted to full professor in 2022. He investigates the pathogenesis of diabetic retinopathy.





FACULTY & STUDENT AWARDS 2019 -2021

PHILIP L. HAWLEY DISTINGUISHED FACULTY AWARD



2019



DR. DANIEL SHAYE

2020



DR. ALEXANDRA NABA

2021



DR. JONATHAN COLOFF

***In recognition of the faculty members who best represent those values held dear by Dr. Hawley:
Supportiveness, Enthusiasm, Sincerity***

This award was established by the students of the Department of Physiology and Biophysics to honor Dr. Philip L. Hawley shortly after his sudden death in 1993. Dr. Hawley was born in Hartford, Connecticut. After receiving his undergraduate degree Bowdoin College and his masters degree at Wesleyan College he began teaching at the American University in Beirut. He returned to receive his doctorate at the University of Illinois before returning to teaching overseas at the Haile Selassie I University in Ethiopia eventually becoming the dean of students. He returned to the US to teach at Loyola University before joining our Department of Physiology and Biophysics at the University of Illinois at Chicago in 1966. His teaching was very popular with the students and he was a great supporter of them.

MARK R. LAMBRECHT AWARD FOR SCHOLARSHIP AND COMMITMENT

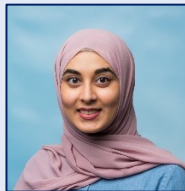


2019



Anthony Arena
(Dan Shaye Lab)

2020



Taliha Nadeem
(Henar Cuervo Lab)

2021



Anna Barque Falguera
(Alexandra Naba Lab)

In recognition of pre-doctoral candidates who best represent excellence in Scholarship and Commitment

Mark R. Lambrecht was born March 18, 1966, in Rochester, NY. He moved with his family to Highland Park in 1971 and graduated from Highland Park High School in 1984. He received the B. Sc. from the University of Rochester in 1988. Mark was an exceptional student. His favorite sport was tennis, and his great avocation was black and white photography. Mark decided to explore a career in medicine and research, and in 1988 joined the laboratories of the Department of Physiology and Biophysics, where he was involved in studies on neuro-biology, biochemistry and biophysics of behaviour. Owing to Mark's considerable talents and wonderful personality, he took at on a broader role in implementing the use of electronic mail in the department in what was then a relatively new and unfamiliar technology. On March 31st, 1989, we lost Mark in a tragic accident. To honor Mark's memory, the Department of Physiology and Biophysics instituted the Mark R. Lambrecht Award for Scholarship and Commitment as an annual award for pre-doctoral candidates. Lambrecht family pictured right.





FACULTY & STUDENT AWARDS 2019 -2021

KATE BÁRÁNY GRADUATE STUDENT AWARD



2019



Alexandra (Lexie) Socovich
(Dan Shaye Lab)

2020



Anthony Arena
(Dan Shaye Lab)

2021



Tung Nguyen
(Monica Lee Lab)

***In recognition of a graduate student who is diligent, conscientious, punctual,
well organized and displays a high degree of integrity***

Dr. Kate Bárány joined the faculty of the department of Physiology and Biophysics at the University of Illinois at Chicago in 1974. At UIC, Kate continued her scientific accomplishments, while at the same time displaying a unique and avid dedication to classroom teaching, and to helping women students and faculty cope with the special issues facing their pursuit of careers in science, medicine, and education. She received the coveted Golden Apple Award from medical students and University wide teaching recognitions. As an active member of the UIC Committee on the Status of Women, she saw no barrier too big to overcome. Kate was instrumental in establishing the UIC Children's Center and fought for flexible tenure and career guidance for women in science and for an end to the practice of paying lower pensions to women who had invested the same rate as men. In recognition of her active efforts as well as her history as a role model going back to a period when very few women chose a scientific profession, Kate was named Woman of the Year at UIC in 1996.

JOHN AND KATHY SOLARO GRADUATE FELLOWSHIP AWARD



2020



Kristen Lednovich
(Brian Layden Lab)

2021



Fred Lee
(Alexandra Naba Lab)

***In recognition of a pre-doctoral candidate who represents an appreciation for the importance of
research, scientific rigor and independence***

R. John Solaro served as Head of the Department of Physiology and Biophysics at University of Illinois at Chicago from 1988 to 2015 and continues as Professor. He was appointed Distinguished University Professor in the University of Illinois System in 1998. In 1975–1976, as a British-American Heart Fellow, he studied with Professor S. V. Perry in Birmingham, England. In 1977, he joined the faculty at the University of Cincinnati, where he was supported by an NIH Research Career Development Award and was offered an AHA Established Investigator award. In 1987, he was a Fogarty International Fellow at University College, London. At UIC, Dr. Solaro has received the University Scholar Award, the Faculty of the Year Award, and the Mentor of the Year Award. Dr. Solaro's major research interest is in the general area of cellular and molecular mechanisms controlling the contraction of the heart and how these mechanisms are altered in pathological conditions and by pharmacological interventions. He has published more than 300 peer-reviewed paper and is the past director and founder of the UIC Center for Cardiovascular Research. When John was named Head of the Department of Physiology and Biophysics at UIC, Kathy became engaged in interactions with faculty partners and with faculty, many of whom were women. Kathy took the lead in hosting events associated with faculty retreats in the Solaro home and with trainees in the Solaro labs. Kathy was at John's side in virtually every social and award event in the department.



FACULTY AND TRAINEE AWARDS 2019-2021

Congratulatory Tribute to Faculty, Postdoctoral, Student and Staff Awardees

30th Annual Physiology and Biophysics Awards Night 2019

<https://acrobat.adobe.com/link/review?uri=urn:aaid:scds:US:5cb39f95-1c60-3318-afc9-636f2c12e531>



31st Annual Physiology and Biophysics Awards Night 2020

<https://acrobat.adobe.com/link/review?uri=urn:aaid:scds:US:7debf682-d247-382a-a77c-c20b8cc8dc85>

(No Pics Available – Virtual Event)



32nd Annual Physiology and Biophysics Awards Night 2021 (March 31st, 2022)

<https://acrobat.adobe.com/link/review?uri=urn:aaid:scds:US:33d46b35-db82-3e16-89e6-93382d50c282>

(No Pics Available – Virtual Event)



PHYSIO FRIDAYS



Our Department's social hour, **Physio Friday**, is a fun event held on the first Friday of each month. The event's goals are to allow trainees of the Department to bond, foster intra-departmental collaborations, and create a welcoming and relaxing environment for trainees to mingle with faculty and staff.

After a two-year hiatus due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Outreach Committee has resumed organizing these fun events. Make sure to check your mailbox for upcoming events.

We look forward to seeing you at an upcoming event!

(Photo provided by Mete Emir Ozgurses, Student representative to the Outreach Committee)



IN MEMORIAM 2022



Robert F. Loizzi (1935-2022)

We regret to inform you that Prof. Emeritus Robert (Bob) F. Loizzi, Professor Emeritus of our Department passed away on April 21, 2022. Bob was an excellent cell biologist and physiologist, using biochemical techniques and electron microscopy to study secretory processes and presented at national and international meetings of Cell Biology. Bob joined UIC in 1966 and devoted the next 33 years to teaching, research and administrative service in the department and the College of Medicine.

Bob was born on October 18, 1935, in Oak Park Illinois, the son of a tailor and a homemaker, both of whose families had origins in Bari, Italy. Bob was the first in his immediate family to go to college. The research bug had bitten Bob as an undergraduate student at Loyola University (1957) where he studied frog development. Bob's M.S. thesis in Physiology from Marquette University (1960) examined muscle metabolism and O₂ consumption in rats. From 1960-1963 Bob served the nation as a Navy Medical Services Corps Officer, teaching aviation physiology to pilots and air crew. He joined our department in 1966 as an Assistant Professor, a freshly minted PhD from Iowa State University where he had studied cellular mechanisms of secretion in the crayfish hepatopancreas. At UIC, he continued to focus on the cellular physiology of secretory process with an emphasis on the hormonal regulation of microtubules and microtubule associated proteins and their role in mammary gland differentiation and secretion.

Bob was an exemplary teacher and taught physiology in many health science colleges, directed and taught in the M-1 Physiology course, offered a graduate course in Cell Physiology, guided PhD students and was an Associate Dean for Curriculum. Bob's fair and high standards, measured consideration, and belief in the good of the institution, made him sought after as a member/ chair of numerous critical UIC committees; the 1983-4 annual report stated he was serving on 23 committees at one point! These included, student thesis committees, the Departmental Advisory Committee, the COM Promotion and Tenure Committee, the Executive Committees of COM and the Graduate College, and Leadership Search committees at all levels in the University. Bob played a critical role in drafting the initial MD/PhD program and in UIC's response to NIH mandated animal care guidelines in the mid 1980s. An addition to Bob's legacy was his key role in directing the West-Side UIC Research Resources Center in the late 1980's-90's when there was a surge in demand for a centralized facility to coordinate the need assessment, purchase, and utilization of high-tech research instrumentation. Bob shepherded this with his inimitable skills and provided vitality to UIC's research mission.

Most of all, Bob was warm and compassionate and was always willing to lend a listening ear to faculty and students. Bob was a distinctive presence whose full head of black curly hair and full beard (long after the point that most men have grey hair, if any) was the envy of many. Bob had a rich, resonant, and soothing bass voice, which most of us never heard raised above a conversational tone. After his retirement in 1999, Bob channeled his energies to varied activities, most notably in 2002, he became a covenant companion with the Wheaton Franciscan Sisters, a role that brought him much satisfaction. He combined this with being an avid digital photographer, a phenomenal cook (many of us savor the memories of his cuisine), a great problem solver, a voracious reader, who appreciated jazz and classical music, enjoyed a good laugh and last but not least, was a doting husband, father, and grandfather. Bob is survived by his wife Charlotte, known to many of us as a charming lady with a ready smile and words of joy, their children, Robert, Mary-Frances Zimmerman (James), Christopher (Tina) and John (Stephanie) and their seven grandchildren and myriads of friends.

UIC has lost one of its best faculty who contributed much to teaching, furthering of the research mission and to what it means to be an upstanding academic citizen. He will be remembered for his warmth, generosity, and his standards of professionalism, which still imbue our departmental ethos. He wished to be remembered "with a warm smile". May his memory serve as a blessing and may he rest in peace.

(Our special thanks to the Loizzi family, Dr. Meena Rao and our colleagues for preparing this memoriam to Dr. Loizzi)



THINGS TO COME

Alumni Engagement Coming Attractions!

By engaging alumni, we hope to benefit from our alumni skills and experience. Alumni are great role models for current students and are often well placed to offer practical support to students as they start their careers.

Our coming **Alumni Spotlight** program is a great approach for showcasing and recognizing some of our alumni leaders, who could serve as outstanding role models for prospective students, our trainees, and young alumni.

Our coming **Alumni Career Panels** will offer networking opportunities, which can connect our trainees with established professionals and help them pursue career changes. Networking can take many forms. *Alumni Career Panel* might offer online career fairs or host virtual networking events with tips for job interviews.

ALUMNI AND FACULTY GIVING

Your generous donation to the Department of Physiology and Biophysics will directly supplement the mission of our faculty and students in Neurosciences, Gastrointestinal Sciences, Women's Health and Reproductive Sciences, and Cardiac and Vascular Sciences. To donate to the Department, please click the link below:

<https://physiology.uic.edu/about/giving.html>



EDITORIAL BOARD & CONTACT INFO

-- EDITORIAL BOARD --

Editor-in-Chief: J. Michael O'Donnell, PhD

Administrative Support: Edgar Solis

Spotlight Series Subcommittee: Drs. M Lee, Y Jiang

Spotlight Series Faculty Advisor: Dr. Meena Rao

Alumni / Trainee Career Panel: (Volunteers Needed)

Physio Fridays Contributor: Mete Ozgurses

-- OUTREACH COMMITTEE --

Chair: Alexandra Naba, PhD

Emrah Er, Yuwei Jiang, Monica Lee, Mike O'Donnell,
Mete Ozgurses, Meena Rao, Edgar Solis

Newsletter Phone: (312) 996-7620

Visit our website for the latest information:

<https://physiology.uic.edu/>

Follow Us on [Twitter](#) and [LinkedIn](#)

Alumni Newsletter Contact

esolis9@uic.edu ; odonnell@uic.edu

Need to Update Alumni Information

[Fill out contact form](#)

