We officially announce the appointment in January 2015 of Mark Rosenblatt, MD, PhD, MBA, as an Associate Director of the MSTP. Dr Rosenblatt became Head of the Department of Ophthalmology & Visual Science in autumn 2014 and quickly expressed his interest in offering his expertise in MD-PhD training to our program. Specializing in advising the students on clinical matters (preparing for Step 1, engaging in Clinical Connections during the PhD years, choosing their M3 tracks, preparing for their M4 year interviews and choosing their residency specialty), he has already established a strong rapport with the students and guided many of them.

Dr. Rosenblatt received his BS in Biology from the University of Miami Honors Program in Medical Education and his MD and PhD degrees from the U Miami SOM MD-PhD Program, studying Biochemistry, Cell and Molecular Biology for his PhD and achieving Alpha Omega Alpha status in his medical studies. He also received his MBA from the Leonard N. Stern School of Business at New York University. He pursued a residency in Ophthalmology at the Massachusetts Eye & Ear Infirmary of Harvard Medical School followed by a research fellowship at the Schepens Eye Research Institute at Harvard Medical School and a clinical fellowship in Cornea Service at the MEEI. Prior to joining the UIC Dept. of Ophthalmology in autumn 2014, he served as Assistant Professor in the Dept. of Ophthalmology & Vision Science at UC Davis from 2005 to 2008 and other various positions, culminating in his position as Vice Chair, in the Dept. of Ophthalmology at Weill Medical College of Cornell University from 2008 to 2014.

His research focuses on four areas: A. Mechanisms of Corneal Nerve Repair; B. Investigation of Corneal Epithelial Stem Cell Determinants; C. Bioengineered Silk Films for Ocular Surface Reconstruction; D. Corneal Gene Therapy.

Dear Esteemed Colleagues, Honored Alumni and Cherished Students:

Due to a combination of health conditions that impede my work efficiency, I find it necessary to leave the position I have loved so deeply for 12-1/2 years and retire at the end of May 2015. Since last summer when this decision was reached, I have dreaded telling you about it, first because I kept hoping that my physical condition would improve enough to allow me to stay on, and second, because I didn’t want you to think that I didn’t care about you. But now I can assure you that rather than abandoning my duties, I am merely transferring them to a marvelous women who will run the program with even greater efficiency and loving care to all your needs. And so, along with your program directors, Larry Tobacman, Nancy Freitag and Mark Rosenfeld, I am delighted to introduce (trumpet fanfare) the new administrative Director of the UIC MSTP, Mrs. Julie Mann.

Currently the Associate Director of Undergraduate Medical Education in the COM, Julie is totally familiar with all aspects of medical school training at UIC and probably already knows a lot of you. A graduate of Tulane University with a BA in Art History and National Louis University with a Master of Arts in Teaching, she is currently a PhD candidate in Curriculum Studies at UIC, thus the embodiment of understanding of what each of you experiences in your PhD studies as well as your medical curriculum.

OPEN LETTER FROM ROBERTA BERNSTEIN

SAVE THE DATE
RETREAT REPEAT
June 30-July 1
Starved Rock
State Park

Bus transportation will be provided. Details to follow in separate bulletin.
CONGRATULATIONS 2015 GRADUATES

Sarah Hatch Berth  Residency: Internal Medicine: Neurology, Johns Hopkins U.
BS, Biology, Northwestern University, 2004
PhD, Program in Neuroscience; Advisor: Scott Brady, PhD
PhD Thesis: “Mechanisms of Fast Axonal Transport Impairment by the HIV Glycoprotein gp120”

Ryan Carr  Residency: Internal Medicine, Mayo School of Grad. Med. Ed.
BA, Molecular Biology/Psychology, UIUC, 2008
PhD, Dept. of Microbiology & Immunology; Advisor: Bellur Prabhakar, PhD
PhD Thesis: “Utilizing the Warburg Effect to Enhance TRAIL-Induced Apoptosis in Several Cancer Types”

Andrew Czysz  Residency: Psychiatry, UT Southwestern Medical School
BA, Biochemistry & Psychology, University of Florida, 2008
PhD, Program in Neuroscience; Advisor: Mark Rasenick, PhD

James Frencher  Residency: Radiology, UCSF (1st year-Surgery, Mt. Sinai, NY)
BS, Microbiology, 2007; MS, Molecular-Cell Biology, 2008, University of Michigan
PhD, Dept. Microbiology & Immunology; Advisor: Zheng W. Chen, MD, PhD
PhD Thesis: “Role of Isoprenoid Biosynthesis in Listeria-based Tuberculosis Vaccine Efficacy”

Ikenna Madueke  Residency: Urology, UIC (1st year-Surgery)
BS, Biology, Chicago State University, 2007
PhD, Dept. of Physiology & Biophysics; Advisor: Gail Prins, PhD
PhD Thesis: “The Roles of Canonical Wnt2 and Wnt10b in Prostate Gland Development and Prostate Cancer Progression”

Tammy Tamayo  Residency: Psychiatry, UIC
BS, Neurobiology, Physiology & Behavior; MS, Material Sci. & Engineering, UC Davis, 2006
PhD, Dept. of Physiology & Biophysics; Advisor: Jesus Garcia, MD, PhD
PhD Thesis: “Role of A2D1 in the efficacy of satellite cell grafts into mdx mice”

Marisa Young  Residency: Ob-Gyn, Emory U. School of Medicine
BA, Latin American Studies, University of Washington, 2002
PhD, Dept. of Epidemiology & Biostatistics, SPH; Advisor: Robert Bailey, PhD

Joseph Zapater  Residency: Internal Medicine, UIC
BA, Biology, University of Chicago, 2006
PhD, Dept. of Biochemistry & Molecular Genetics; Advisor: Karen Colley PhD
2015 Thesis Defenses—Congratulations

Sarah Baumgarten, End of May, 2015, Dept. of Physiology & Biophysics; advisor: Carlos Stocco, PhD
“Role of Insulin-like Growth Factors in Granulosa Cell Differentiation and Follicle Maturation in the Ovary”

Joseph Bogaard, 5/20/15, Neuroscience Program; advisor: Iris Kassem, MD, PhD
“Evaluation of Therapeutic Interventions for the Treatment of Eye Disorders”

Jason Buhrman, 4/30/15, Dept. of Biopharmaceutical Sciences, COP; advisor: Richard Gemeinhart, PhD
“Recombinant protein immobilization and controlled-release mediated by a non-covalent protein anchor”

Michael Fettiplace, 4/10/15, Neuroscience Program; advisors: Guy Winberg, MD; Richard Minshall, PhD
“A Comprehensive Mechanism for Reversal of Cardiac Pharmacotoxicity by Intravenous Lipid Emulsion”

Alicia Rizzo, 6/1/15, Department of Pharmacology; advisor: Steven Dudek, MD
“The Role of Abl Family Kinases in Acute Respiratory Distress Syndrome”

Farah Shareef, 5/12/15, Dept. of Bioengineering; advisor: Michael Cho, PhD
“Development of a Light Responsive Artificial Iris”

Brian Shy, End of May, 2015, Dept. of Biochemistry & Molecular Genetics; advisor: Bradley Merrill, PhD
“Genome Editing and Differentiation of Embryonic Stem Cells”

Allen Ye, 5/28/15, Dept. of Bioengineering; advisor: Richard Magin, PhD
“Improving Diffusion Measurements at a Micro-, Meso-, and Macro-scale Within the Brain”

LETTER FROM ROBERTA, cont. from page 1.

Prior to joining the COM staff in 2008 as a Coordinator of the ECM course, Julie’s career encompassed diverse activities that broadened her life experiences, knowledge of how things are done in the business and non-profit worlds, and understanding of all kinds of people. First she worked at Christie’s Inc. in property control in New York, then in wine management in Chicago. Next came a stint in banking management at the Northern Trust Company in Chicago. Next she became the Director of Lindop School Lab of Success Labs, Inc. in Broadview, IL, which led her into educational marketing (Site Manager, Roosevelt Middle School, Maywood, IL) and finally teaching (Head Teacher, Humboldt Community Christian School, Chicago). In her free time she has engaged in a variety of community and social service organizations including the Junior League of Chicago, The Oak Park & River Forest Day Nursery, the Village of Oak Park Public Arts Advisory Commission, the Parent Teachers Organization of District 97 in Oak Park, and the Community Leadership Program of Oak Park.

I am pleased that Julie and I will have the opportunity to work together for a month to ensure a smooth transition. By the time she is fully in charge, you will all know her well and will understand that she is the right person to maintain the standards of the program and, above all, to be ready, willing and able to respond to your every question and need, or just enjoy your company in frequent spontaneous chats. I will continue to be available to help out in any way I can as needed and will keep in touch an attend your thesis defenses, grand rounds, graduations and, I hope, many more auspicious occasions. Though I will miss seeing you on a daily basis, I leave knowing that the program’s administration is not only in good hands but will thrive and blossom under Julie’s care.

So please join me in extending a warm and heart welcome to Julie Mann.

Best wishes to all, Roberta
Awards, Honors, Presentations – Congratulations!

Nancy Freitag Named Official Hooder for 2015 Graduation

Following upon her 2014 Golden Apple from the COM Class of 2016, MSTP Associate Director Nancy Freitag received the following letter of esteem from the COM Class of 2015 graduates (including 8 MD-PhDs):

March 1, 2015

Dear Dr. Freitag: As you may know, each year the graduating medical school class asks one esteemed faculty member to ‘hood’ each graduate, thus symbolizing their entrance into the profession of Medicine. This moment is the graduate’s step across the threshold into a career of service, compassion and lifelong challenge. They have poured their lives into this endeavor, and this event represents a celebration of their accomplishments and the promise of a bright future.

We would be thrilled if you would do us the honor of serving as the Commencement Hooder for the Class of 2015. Our Class holds you in the highest regard. You made a profound impact on each of us, helping guide us and teach us and making us

Federle wins 2015 Research of the Year Rising Star Award

Popular MD-PhD Trainer (he currently has 2 MD-PhD students pursuing their PhDs in his lab at once—Erin Shenker, G3 and Reid Wilkening, G2) Michael Federle, PhD, lst row center, was the recipient of the UIC Researcher of the Year Award Rising Star in Basic Life Sciences, presented at a special convocation on Feb. 25, 2015 in Student Center West, followed by a gala reception. Dr. Federle, Associate Professor in the Department of Medicinal Chemistry and Pharmacognosy (COP), studies cell-to-cell communication in bacteria, aka “quorum sensing”, which is considered one of the most exciting topics in modern infectious diseases. His group has provided a proof of concept that bacterial conduct can be harnessed and provides an important new direction for antibacterial drug discovery because—in contrast to conventional antibiotics which inhibit bacterial growth—the drugs that would jam the communication between bacterial cells will be less prone to select resistant strains. In recognition of this work he was one of only 10 US scientists who received a prestigious five-year grant from the Burroughs Wellcome Fund. He is a member of the editorial board of the Journal of Bacteriology and a long-time member of the MSTP Admissions Committee. He was our very popular keynote speaker at our 2014 retreat.

From UIC News, 4/13/15: Unique UIC center will study alcohol’s effect on genes

Funded by a five-year, $7 million federal grant, the UIC College of Medicine will create a new center, the first of its kind, to study the effect of long-term alcohol exposure on genes. The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, one of the National Institutes of Health, awarded the funding to establish a Center for Alcohol Research in Epigenetics (CARE). Subhash Pandey, UIC professor of psychiatry, will direct the center. The CARE researchers will investigate how alcohol-related epigenetic changes influence gene expression and “synaptic remodeling” — the networking of nerve cells to each other. They will also look closely at how these changes correlate with behavior, such as anxiety and depression, and whether epigenetics may play a role in the withdrawal symptoms that make abstinence difficult.

“This award will allow the College of Medicine to build on Professor Pandey’s exemplary research on chronic alcohol use and alcoholism in addition to bolstering our leadership in understanding the causes of alcoholism as well as finding new ways to treat this devastating disease,” said Dr. Dimitri Azar, dean of the University of Illinois College of Medicine.

Dr. Pandey is the trainer of two current MD-PhD students, Tiffany Berkel, G2, and Evan Kyzar, G1, and alumnus Sachin Moonat (2014).

Michael Fettiplace, G3 (Weinberg and Minsahll labs) who defended his PhD thesis on April 10, was a winner of the Graduate College Deiss Chancellor Award for his research project entitled: “The Role of Akt in lipid-induced intropy and reversal of bupivacaine toxicity”.

The College of Pharmacy recently announced its list of winners of awards by COP personnel, among whom three recipients were MD-PhD students pursuing their PhD studies is COP labs: Reid Wilkening, G2 (Federle Lab) received 2a O14 American Heart Association Predoctoral Fellowship. Erin Shenker, G3 (Federle Lab) received a NIH NIAID F30 fellowship for her project “Specificity and Promiscuity In The ComRS System of Gram-Positive Pathogens”.

Jason Buhrman, G4 (Gemeinhart Lab) won a Protein Society Best Poster Award during the 2014 Symposium.

On March 23, The School of Public Health informed Marisa Young M4 (Bailey Lab) that she was the recipient of the SPH Donaldson Award, entitling her to be the graduating class speaker at the 2015 SPH convocation.
Alumni News

Thanks to Tatiana Grzeszkiewicz (2003) for another generous “holiday” gift to the students to use for “a social experience”. Here’s her beautiful children celebrating Valentine’s Day. Won’t be long before they’re knocking on our door.

Congratulations to Samuel Blackman (2001) on a new position (since June 2014) as Senior Medical Director of Juno Therapeutics in Seattle, WA. He writes on his LinkedIn page: “I am physician scientist and pediatric hematologist-oncologist focused intensely on clinical development of CAR T cells and high-affinity recombinant TCT cellular therapeutics for cancer. I currently lead the CD19 CAR T cell program for B cell malignancies at Juno Therapeutics.”

Congratulations to Scott Feldman (2012), now finishing his residency in Internal Medicine at Mt. Sinai Hospital in New York City, on being accepted into a Fellowship for allergy-immunology at Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine, starting July 1. We look forward to welcoming you home, Scott, and hope you’ll have time to hang out at your old stomping grounds once in a while.

In the Alumni Mailbag

From: Brenton Mar brentonmar@gmail.com  Date: January 19, 2015
Hi Roberta! I hope things are going well in Chicago with you and the program. I’ve been keeping very busy here in Boston. We welcomed a new addition to the family last year with our son, Luca, who is now 8 months old and just got his first two teeth! Valentina is now 3.5 years old and learning to ice skate. My wife Silvia is doing well and has recently been promoted to an assistant director at a small pharma company in Cambridge working on molecularly targeted agents.

I’m currently in my 3rd year as an instructor at Dana Farber/Boston Children’s Hospital, focusing on the clonal evolution of leukemia and how it affects chemotherapy resistance and response to therapy. I’m also involved in several exciting clinical sequencing projects, trying to influence patient therapy based on their mutation profiles. 2014 was a pretty good for me with a first authored paper and 3 coauthored papers and 3 funded grants, including a K12. I’m going on the job market for a lab based physician-scientist position this year, so if you know any openings in pediatric oncology, let me know! -Brenton

From: David Ramsey dram800@gmail.com  Sent: February 01, 2015  Subject: Julia and Vale
Dear Roberta:
Finally got Brenton to visit with family. The kids had fun! Pax, David

Note to all alumni: Please keep the updates on your news coming. And if you’re going to be in Chicago, please stop by for a visit which can be informal or a formal presentation, as you wish.

Congratulations to: Joseph Goldenberg on his wedding March 15 in Chicago to Rebecca Weinshenker who is an actuary at Blue Cross Blue Shield of Illinois.

Congratulations to: Jenny Zhang on her engagement to Ken T. who is an Algorithmic trader in Chicago. The wedding will take place August 15 in Chicago.
Recent Student Publications – Autumn 2014 to February 2015

Tiffani Berkel, G2

Sarah Hatch Berth, M4


Andrew Czysz, M4


Ryan Lahey, M3

Michael Marshall, G2

Michael Marshall, G2

J R Sysol

Justin Sysol, G2


Matt Tobin, G2


Alan Tseng, G1

Allen Ye, G3

Alexandria Young, G3

Student Grand Rounds Presentations 2015

Friday, January 30, 3:00 pm, 3175 COMRB - In conjunction with the Department of Obstetrics & Gynecology
Topic: “PCOS: Then and Now”
Clinical Presentation: Ikenna Madueke
M4, defended doctoral thesis June 21, 2013 in the Dept. of Physiology & Biophysics (advisor: Gail Prins, PhD)
Research Presentation: Sarah Baumgarten
4th year graduate student, will defend doctoral thesis in Spring 2015 in the Dept. of Physiology & Biophysics (advisor: Carlos Stocco, PhD)
Presentation Faculty Advisor: Albert Asante MD, MPH, Assistant Professor, Dept. of Obstetrics and Gynecology

Tuesday, March 17, 12:30 pm, 3175 COMRB - In conjunction with the CCTS
Topic: "Emerging Roles for Deep Brain Stimulation in Neurologic and Psychiatric Disease"
Clinical Presentation: Sarah Hatch Berth
M4, defended doctoral thesis February 27, 2013 in the Department of Anatomy & Cell Biology on (advisor: Scott Brady, PhD);
Research Presentation: Michael Fettiplace
3rd year graduate student, will defend doctoral thesis April 10, 2015 in the Neuroscience Program (advisors: Guy Weinberg, MD and Richard Minshall, PhD)
Presentation Faculty Advisor: Michael Schrift, MD, Director of Neuropsychiatry, Dept. of Psychiatry

Thursday, March 19 Noon, NPI-7th Floor-North conference room - In conjunction with the Dept. of Neurology
Topic: “Dementia and neuroimaging - current and future utility in diagnosis and prognosis of disease”
Clinical Presentation: Andrew Czyz
M4, defended doctoral thesis June 11, 2013 in the Neuroscience Program on (advisor: Mark Rasenick, PhD)
Research Presentation: Allen Ye
3rd year graduate student, will defend doctoral thesis May 28, 2015 in the Dept. of Bioengineering (advisor: Richard Magin, PhD)
Presentation Faculty Advisor: Alex Leow, MD, PhD Associate Professor, Bioengineering and Psychiatry

Monday, April 13, 12:30 pm, 303 CSN
Topic: "The role of devices in the scale-up of voluntary medical male circumcision for HIV prevention in sub-Saharan Africa: epidemio-logic and bioengineering perspectives on the AccuCirc and PrePex"
Clinical Presentation: Marisa Young M4, defended doctoral thesis September 16, 2013 in the Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics, SPH (advisor: Robert Bailey, PhD)
Research Presentation: Farah Shareef
4th year graduate student, will defend doctoral thesis May 12, 2015 in the Department of Bioengineering (advisor: Michael Cho, PhD).
Presentation Faculty Advisor: Robert C. Bailey, PhD, Professor of Epidemiology, Division of Epidemiology and Biostatistics

Tuesday, April 21, 12:30 pm, 3175 COMRB - In conjunction with the CCTS
Topic: "Thyroid-Associated Orbitopathy: Pathogenesis, Clinical Presentation and Treatment"
Clinical Presentation: Joseph Zapater
M4, defended doctoral thesis May 30, 2013 in the Dept. of Biochemistry & Molecular Genetics on (advisor: Karen Colley, PhD)
Research Presentation: Joseph Bogaard
3rd year graduate student, will defend doctoral thesis May 29, 2015 in the Neuroscience Program (advisor: Iris Kassem, MD, PhD)
Presentation Faculty Advisor: Dr. Nathalie Azar, Associate Professor of Clinical Ophthalmology; Director, Pediatric Ophthalmology & Adult Strabismus Service

Wednesday, April 29, 12:30 pm, 2175 COMRB - In conjunction with the CCVR
Topic: "Challenges of Pharmaceutical Therapy in the Prevention of Reentrant Arrhythmia following Ischemic Events"
Clinical Presentation: Tammy Tamayo
M4, defended doctoral thesis July 22, 2013 in the Dept. of Physiology & Biophysics (advisor: Jesus Garcia, MD, PhD)
Research Presentation: Cody Rutledge
M3, defended doctoral thesis June 5, 2014 in the Dept. of Physiology & Biophysics (advisor: Samuel Dudley, MD, PhD)
Presentation Faculty Advisor: Christopher Gans, MD, Asst. Prof. of Clinical Medicine, Dept. of Medicine: Cardiology.

TBD, 12:30 pm, 5175 COMRB
Topic: "TBA"
Clinical Presentation: James Frencher
M4, defended doctoral thesis May 29, 2013 in the Department of Microbiology & Immunology (advisor: Zheng Chen, MD, PhD);
Research Presentation: Ryan Carr
M4, defended doctoral thesis May 24, 2013 in the Department of Microbiology & Immunology on "Utilizing the Warburg Effect to Enhance TRAIL-Induced Apoptosis in Several Cancer Types" (advisor: Bellur Prabhakar, PhD).
Presentation Faculty Advisor: TBA
The UIC MSTP cordially invites you to its
Graduation Seminar and Banquet
Thursday, May 7, 2015
Marcello’s Restaurant, 645 W. North Ave. (at Larabee)
6:00 p.m. Reception  6:30 p.m. Seminar  7:30 p.m. Dinner
Our Honored Graduates:

Sarah Berth  Ryan Carr  Andy Czesz  James Frencher

Ikenna Madueke  Tammy Tamayo  Marisa Young  Joseph Zapater

Our Guest Speaker:
Edwin De Zoeten MD, PhD (UIC 2001)
Associate Professor of Pediatrics
University of Colorado School of Medicine
Scientific Director-Pediatric Inflammatory Bowel Disease Center
Children’s Hospital Colorado Digestive Health Institute
“Change Is Good:”
Identifying New Methods to Treat Chronic Inflammation”

RSVP by April 30 to Roberta Bernstein, Roberta@uic.edu

Spring 2015 Dinner Seminars

Thursday, April 23, 2015, 6:00 pm Univ. of Chicago Knapp Center, 900 E. 57th St.
Annual Joint Seminar with MSTPs of Northwestern Univ. and Univ. of Chicago
Michael Welsh, MD, Professor of Internal Medicine – Pulmonary, Critical Care and Occupa-
tional Medicine, The University of Iowa
“My Pathway to a Career as a Physician-Scientist”

Tuesday, April 28, 2015, 5:30 pm, 300 CSN
Brad Merrill, PhD, Associate Professor, Dept. of Biochemistry & Molecular Genetics
Genome Engineering and Stem Cell Biology: disruptive potential from some basic biologi-
cal research