

CONGRATULATIONS 2021 GRADUATES



**Alexander Agelidis** — BA, Molecular and Cell Biology, UC-Berkeley, 2009  
PhD Dept: Microbiology & Immunology; Advisor: Deepak Shukla, PhD  
PhD Thesis: "Role of Heparanase in Herpes Simplex Virus Pathogenesis"  
**Residency: Internal Medicine-PSTP, Scripps Clinic, La Jolla CA**

**Matthew Durst** — BA, Anthropology, Chemistry: Biochemistry, Washington U.-St. Louis, 2012  
PhD Dept: Biochemistry & Molecular Genetics; Advisor: Arnon Lavie, PhD  
PhD Thesis: "Exploring Drug Discovery and Validation Through Three Unique Projects"  
**Residency: Pediatrics, University of Toledo, Toledo, OH**



**Laura Rodgers Hardy** — BA, Biology, Swarthmore College, 2012  
PhD Dept: Pharmacognosy; Advisor: Joanna Burdette, PhD  
PhD Thesis: "Investigating the role of PAX8 in high grade serous ovarian cancer"  
**Residency: Pediatrics-PSTP, Cincinnati Children's Hospital, Cincinnati, OH**

**Mathew MacDougall** — BS-Honors, Queen's University at Kingston, 2010; MSc, Lab Medicine & Pathobiology, Toronto, 2012 PhD Dept: Biochemistry & Molecular Genetics; Advisor: Bradley Merrill, PhD  
PhD Thesis: "Elucidating the Genetic Determinants for Exit from the Naïve State of Pluripotency"  
**Residency: Pediatrics-PSTP, Stanford University, Palo Alto, CA**



**Christopher Manzella** — BS, Chemistry, St. John Fisher College, 2013  
PhD Dept: Physiology & Biophysics; Advisor: Ravinder Gill, PhD  
PhD Thesis: "Serotonin is an endogenous regulator of the aryl hydrocarbon receptor in the intestine"  
**Residency: Internal Medicine, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA**

**Alan Perez-Rathke** — BS, Computer Science, UIUC, 2005; MS, Computer Science, UIC, 2011  
PhD Dept. Bioengineering; Advisor: Jie Liang, PhD  
PhD Thesis: "Mechanisms of Biological Functions Through Polymer Deep Sampling: Protein Gating and Chromatin Folding"  
**Residency: Internal Medicine-PSTP, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN**



**Adam Schaefer** — BS, Biochemistry, Indiana University-Bloomington, 2013  
PhD Dept.: Microbiology & Immunology; Advisor: Lijun Rong, PhD  
PhD Thesis: "Novel Small Molecule Therapeutics and Mechanisms of Action for the Treatment of Filovirus Diseases"  
**Residency: Internal Medicine, Indiana University**

**Cody Schott** — BA, Molecular Biology & Genetics, Northwestern University, 2013  
PhD Dept: Microbiology & Immunology; Advisor: Patricia Finn, MD & David Perkins, MD, PhD  
PhD Thesis: "Host-Microbiome Interactions Influence Pulmonary Disease Development"  
**Residency: Internal Medicine-PSTP, University of Colorado, Denver, CO**



**Alexander Ticho** — BA, Chemistry, St. Olaf College, 2012  
PhD Dept: Physiology & Biophysics; Advisor: Waddah Alrefai, MD  
PhD Thesis: "S-acylation is crucial for ASBT-mediated bile acid uptake: monitoring the transport activity in real time"  
**Residency: Internal Medicine-PSTP, Mayo Clinic, Rochester**

**Benjamin Turturice** — BS, Molecular Biology & Biochemistry, Loyola University-Chicago, 2012  
PhD Dept; Microbiology & Immunology; Advisor: Patricia Finn, MD & David Perkins, MD, PhD  
PhD Thesis: "Early Origins of Childhood Asthma: Role of Perinatal Microbial Exposure and Innate Immunity"  
**Residency: Internal Medicine-PSTP, Stanford University, Palo Alto, CA**



**Alexandria Young** — BS/BA, Molecular Biology & Anthropology, University of Pittsburgh, 2012  
PhD Dept; Pharmacognosy; Advisor: Joanna Burdette, PhD  
PhD Thesis: "The Pre-clinical Development of Phyllanthusmins for the Treatment of High Grade Serous Ovarian Cancer: "  
**Residency: Ob/Gyn, Brigham and Women's Hospital, Boston MA**

## Awards, Honors, Presentations – Congratulations!

### COM Graduation Awards

**Alexander Agelidis, M4** — The Ervin G. Erdos, MD and Sara F. Rabito Erdos, MD Prize for Excellence in Basic Sciences. This award was endowed to the College of Medicine by Drs. Erdos for purpose of providing annual awards for excellence in basic sciences for graduating COM MD or MD/PhD students at the time of graduation.

**Alexander Ticho, M4** — **Michael and Kate Bárány Research Award:** The Michael and Kate Bárány Research Award, established in 2002, is presented to a graduating MD or MD/PhD student for outstanding research achievement while enrolled in the UI College of Medicine at Chicago.

**Alexandria Young, M4** — The 2021 recipient of the **Granville A. Bennett Award**. This award recognizes an M4 student who assisted the college and its students through contributions to medical education.

### F-30 Student Fellowship Awards:

**May Barakat, G3—F30**  
**Greg Heller, G3– F30**

**Tova Bergsten, G2—F30**  
**Kai Huang, G3-F30**

**Ben Gordon, G2 -F30**  
**Yi Shin Chang, G3 - F30**

### Other Awards:

**Tova Bergsten, G2** The Chancellor's Student Service Award (2nd time) recognizing students who have made an outstanding contribution to the University through campus and community service.

**Joseph Geraghty, G5** 3rd Place in Graduate Student Symposium of the 2021 Chicago Society for Neuroscience Annual Meeting.

**Cutler Lewandowski G4** Paul D. Doolen Graduate Scholar for the Study of Aging by the University of Illinois for 2020-21, awarded in November 2020.

**Ben Gordon G2, Casey Blaha M3, Ally Young M4 and Tova Bergsten G2-** Best Poster in Cancer Prevention and Control, at the Gary Kruh Research Day, UIC Cancer Center

**Greg Heller, G3, -Award for Graduate Research** (formerly Provost's Award for Graduate Research and the W.C. and May Preble Deiss Fund for Biomedical Research Award).



### **In the Alumni Mailbag– Michael Fettiplace, MD, PhD (2017)**

I am finishing up residency in Anesthesia at MGH and starting as staff in July before coming on the T32 grant to work on aspects of memory and consciousness with Ken Solt. During my time at MGH I helped start the MGH housestaff council to advocate for resident well-being and access to medical care. I have also continued to work and publish with Guy Weinberg (UIC advisor) on topics related to local anesthesia. I have a wonderful condo in East Boston across from the airport. If anyone is coming to Boston to interview, please feel free to reach out; I've hosted a number of UIC students for their Boston area interviews and am more than happy to host MSTP students. I occasionally run into Mike Marshall '19 in the hospital (usually the stairwell) but our respective lives in the OR and pathology lab are very divergent. I see Christine Haddad '16 much more frequently since we are in the same department. She was previously a glutton for punishment getting stuck in complex liver resections but is now loving life as a chronic pain fellow with more time to spend at Revere beach when the weather is nice. I have been out to see Reid Wilkening '19 and his wife in Denver and hoping to head back out for more skiing/hiking once the pandemic improves.



## Baby Booties & Pets

(Wedding Bells)

### Congratulations to:



#### BABIES:



**Laura Hardy, M4**, on the birth of her second son, Simon, on January 23rd, and to daddy, Adam Hardy and big brother Owen. "He is super cute, smiles all the time, and way more chill than his older brother."—

#### PETS:

##### **Casey Blaha, M3:**

I hope you are doing well! The only fun update I have that we got a dog this past fall. His name is Monte. Here is a picture of him joining a zoom meeting with me. We adopted him from One Tail at a Time.

**Kyle Kremiller, M2** loves his companion Tater (tot) shown right at 7 weeks and left at 7 months. His nickname is Potato (what else?)





## *In Memoriam*

### *Edward P. Cohen, MD*

**We are sad to announce the death of the MSTP's former Director, Edward P. Cohen, MD**

**on January 27, 2021 at 88 in his home in Key West, FL.**

**Despite being a brilliant immunologist who cured thousands of people in his life—both patients and recipients of his research discoveries—he unsuccessfully fought his personal battle with Covid 19.**



A research scientist specializing in the immunology of cancer, Dr. Cohen was Professor of Microbiology and Immunology at the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) from 1979 to the end of his life (emeritus since 2011); Director, UIC Medical Science Training Program (MD/PhD Program) 1993-2003; Director, UIC Office of Research Development 1981-1983; and Dean, **UIC School of Basic Medical Sciences 1979-1981**. Previously, at the University of Chicago, he was Associate Professor and then Professor of Microbiology and Medicine, Assistant Dean for Basic Sciences Instruction, and Chair of the Medical School Curriculum Committee; at Rutgers Medical School, Associate Professor of Microbiology and Medicine; at the University of Colorado, Assistant Professor, Instructor, and Fellow of Microbiology and Medicine. He earned the MD degree at Washington University in St. Louis, was an Intern in Medicine at University of Chicago Hospitals, and was a Research Associate at the National Institutes of Health. His postdoctoral training was under the supervision of David Talmage at Colorado, his training at NIH was with Harry Eagle, and his medical school thesis was written under the direction of Melvin Cohn.

Over the course of his career, Dr. Cohen authored over 135 peer-reviewed journal articles, as well as hundreds of reviews and abstracts and dozens of articles on issues in medicine in the popular press. He is the inventor on four United States patents for cancer immunotherapy technologies held by the University of Illinois. His dozens of students and trainees have established independent scientific careers across the country and around the world. In 1973, Dr. Cohen, with his postdoctoral trainee Jerrold Schwaber, reported in *Nature* the first ever creation of a hybridoma, a hybrid cell line able to secrete both mouse myeloma and human lymphocyte-derived antibodies. This was a crucial step in the invention of monoclonal antibodies, for which Milstein and Köhler were awarded the Nobel Prize in 1984.

Born in Caldwell, NJ to Rae Cohen (née Berke) and Harry Cohen, he grew up from the age of seven in Miami, and attended the University of Miami for three years before entering medical school. Dr. Cohen lived most of his life in Chicago, residing in the Hyde Park-Kenwood neighborhood from 1968 to 2020, when he and Mrs. Cohen moved full time to Key West.

An avid sailor, Dr. Cohen raced offshore in Chicago five decades, usually with crew recruited from the UIC community, and completed 45 Chicago-Mackinac races, finishing in every place from first to last. His eclectic interests ranged from training champion Golden Retriever dogs to cultivating prize-winning orchids in his backyard greenhouse. He made his own wine, and he fashioned metal sculptures from any steel masts and spars that might break on his boat during storms on the lake. He particularly loved music, and was an annual subscriber to the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and the Lyric Opera. With his wife Toba, he traveled the globe, from Antarctica, to the Galapagos Islands (where he retraced the steps of his hero, Charles Darwin), to Europe, the Middle East, New Zealand, China, and Korea.

Dr. Cohen said that his goal in life was to “leave tracks.” With his family, his students, his colleagues, and the legions who benefited from his research, he certainly achieved his goal.

At the UIC COM, in addition to his stellar research in the immunology of cancer, Dr. Cohen achieved rock star status as the co-founder and 10-year director of the MSTP (then called the MD/PhD Training Program). During his term as Dean of the UIC School of Basic Medical Sciences, from 1979 to 1981, he was approached by Assoc. Dean, Dr. Robert F. Loizzi, with a plan to form an MD-PhD Program at UIC. Without hesitating, Dr. Cohen asked Dr. Loizzi to write a narrative describing the combined MD-PhD program to accompany the suggested, integrated curriculum time line model. Dr. Loizzi produced a five-page document titled [A PROPOSAL FOR A COMBINED MD-PhD PROGRAM](#) and these two documents comprised the MD-PhD proposal which was distributed to the heads of the existing basic science departments at the time (Anatomy, Biological Chemistry, Microbiology and Immunology, Pharmacology, and Physiology and Biophysics) with a cover letter asking them for input, including comments from their appropriate faculty and graduate advisory committees.

Dr. Cohen asked Dr. Loizzi to present the proposal to the SBMS Instruction Committee which usually included course directors and other members of the basic science departments. Dr. Cohen also invited the basic science heads to attend and provide their input. The main concern of the heads was that control of their departments' own graduate programs would not be compromised. After a thorough exchange of comments and ideas, there was a unanimous vote recommending that the Dean of SBMS approve the proposal and forward it to the College for further action. On October 21, 1981, Dr. Cohen reported to Executive Dean Creditor that the MD-PhD proposal had been approved by the College Committee on Education Policy and he listed several recommendations of the Executive Committee,

pending approval by the Academic Council, regarding selection of an advisory committee, recruiting, admissions, support, working with the departments, and other practical issues in implementing the plan. On November 12, 1981, Dr. Cohen reported to the SMBS Executive Committee that the proposal had been “approved unanimously and without modification” by the College of Medicine.

At the November 11, 1981 meeting of the Academic Council, the School’s plan for a formalized MD-PhD program was approved by all present. In 1993, he assumed the position of Program Director, which immediately infused the needed energy to make it take off. It began attracting more applicants each year and each matriculant quickly became a devoted admirer of their dynamic and loving leader.

In early 2003, he decided to step down as director and initiated and conducted the search for his replacement, resulting in the fortunate hiring of Dr. Larry Tobacman who arrived in September 2003. The October 2003 issue of this newsletter reported:

“Dr. Edward P. Cohen, the Director of the MD/PhD Program for the last 10 years, officially turned over the directorship to Dr. Larry S. Tobacman in a warm-hearted ceremony and reception on September 24. The festivities, presided over by Student Affairs Committee President, Nate Stitzel, with the help of Mike Broman, consisted of



Reminiscences and Tributes by various students and Program Coordinator, Roberta Bernstein; the presentation of a thank-you gift from the students to Dr. Cohen, a watch inscribed “for all the times that you have touched our lives”; a talk by Dr. Cohen in which he reflected on the accomplishments of his administration and charged the new director with the tasks that lie ahead; a talk by Dr. Tobacman, thanking Dr. Cohen for his work in building the Program and for his sage advice for the future; the presentation of a welcome gift from the students to Dr. Tobacman, a College of Medicine sweatshirt, and the presentation by Roberta of a short Power Point welcome to Dr. Tobacman. Many faculty members joined the almost total complement of MD/PhD students in attending the event and expressing their gratitude to Dr. Cohen and hearty welcome to Dr. Tobacman. Of course, good food and drink were abundant for all to enjoy in celebration together of this happy event.

He is survived by his wife, Toba Cohen of Key West; by brother Martin Cohen (Deborra) of Oakland, CA; by children Mark Cohen (Jane) of Atlanta, Lauren Small (Donald) of Baltimore, Jennifer Cohen (Steven Caudill) of Chicago, and Jonathan Cohen (Zeena Meurer) of New York; by eight grandchildren and four great-grandchildren. Dr. Cohen was predeceased by his brother Arthur Cohen of Los Angeles and his sister Thelma Altshuler of Miami.

Dr. Cohen said that his goal in life was to “leave tracks.” With his family, his students, his colleagues, and the legions who benefited from his research, he certainly achieved his goal. Throughout his career, Dr. Cohen believed in no principle more strongly than the proposition that, of all the work that anyone can do in their lives, by far the greatest benefits for human health derive from basic research in the biological sciences. In this spirit, the Alumni Association of the UIC Medical Science Training Program presents annually the Dr. Edward P. Cohen Medical Scientist Training Award to an outstanding MSTP student who is returning to medical school after successfully defended their PhD thesis. The family requests that memorial donations be made to support this award. Checks may be made payable to Medical Scientist Training Program. Write “Cohen MSTP Award” on the memo line of your check, and mail to: MSTP Program Administration, UIC College of Medicine MC784, 1853 W. Polk Street, Chicago IL 60612.

### Condolences In the Alumni Mailbag

I am so saddened to hear this. Ed was my Ph.D. Mentor as well as the MSTP director when I was there and always such a great supporter of mine. He was so caring. I will miss him dearly. **Ed de Zoeten**

Edwin F. de Zoeten, Hoover Endowed Chair for Pediatric Digestive Disease Research; Director-Inflammatory Bowel Disease Center, Children’s Hospital Colorado; Associate Professor- Pediatrics, University of Colorado Anschutz School of Medicine

I was deeply saddened at this news. Dr. Cohen was a role model for me during my training. I have sent a small token to the MSTP program to add to the Cohen MSTP Award fund in his memory. Thank you, and I hope you are doing well and keeping healthy. **Todd Druley**

Todd E. Druley, MD, PhD, Associate Professor of Pediatrics, Genetics & Developmental Biology; Division of Hematology & Oncology, Washington University School of Medicine

## RECENT STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

### KATE ALEXANDER, M1:

Sabina Kaczanowska, Daniel W. Beury, Vishaka Gopalan, Arielle K. Tycko, Haiying Qin, Miranda E. Clements, Justin Drake, Chiadika Nwanze, Meera Murgai, Zachary Rae, Wei Ju, **Katherine A. Alexander**, Jessica Kline, Cristina F. Contreas, Kristin M. Wessel, Shil Patel, Sridhar Hannenhalli, Michael C. Kelly, Rosandra N. Kaplan.

Genetically engineered myeloid cells rebalance the core immune suppression program in metastasis,

Cell, 2021, ISSN 0092-8674, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cell.2021.02.048>.

(<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0092867421002373>)

### ANDREW BURNS, M1:

sdINGYIN Tao, Miao Xu, Atena Farkondeh, **Andrew Burns**, Steven Rodems, Matthew Might, Wei Zheng, Christopher A. LeClair. High-throughput protein modification quantitation analysis using intact protein MRM and its application on hENGase inhibitor screening. In press, Talanta, 1 April 2021

### JOSEPH GERAGHTY, G5:

1. **Geraghty JR**, Senador D, Maharathi B, Butler MP, Sudhakar D, Smith RA, Wu Y, Loeb JA. Modulation of locomotive behaviors by location-specific epileptic spiking and seizures. *Epilepsy & Behavior*. 2021;114(Pt A):107652.

2. Hirsch Y, **Geraghty JR**, Katz EA, Testai FD. Inflammasome caspase-1 activity is elevated in cerebrospinal fluid after aneurysmal subarachnoid hemorrhage and predicts functional outcome. *Neurocritical Care*. 2020. [Online ahead of print].

3. **Geraghty JR**, Ocampo R, Liang S, Ona Ayala K, Hiltz KA, McKissack H, Hyderi A, Ryan MS. Medical student views on the Core EPAs: Tensions, approaches, and recommendations from student leaders at the Core EPA pilot institutions. *Acad Med*. 2021;96(2):193-198.

4. Russel SM, **Geraghty JR**, Kobayashi KR, Patel S, Stringham R, Hyderi A, Curry RH. Evaluating core clerkships: Lessons learned from the implementation of an innovative, student-driven feedback system for clinical curricula. *Acad Med*. 2021;96(2):232-235.

5. Conway NB, Khan IA, **Geraghty JR**. The New Era of Pass/Fail USMLE Step 1: Medical Students' Call to Action. *Acad Med*.

### CUTLER LEWANDOWSKI, G4:

**Lewandowski CT**, Maldonado Weng J, LaDu MJ. Alzheimer's disease pathology in APOE transgenic mouse models: the who, what, when, where, why, and how. *Neurobiology of Disease*, 2020, 104811.

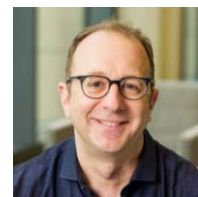
### CRISTOPHER MANZELLA, M4:

**Manzella CR**, Jayawardena D., Baur-Segura J., Pagani W., Ye L., Webber, C., Jung B., Gill, R. K. Serum Serotonin Differentiates Between Disease Activity States in Crohn's Patients. *Inflammatory Bowel Diseases*. 2020 Aug; Available online.

Holton N, Singhal M, Kumar A, Ticho A, **Manzella CR**, Malhotra P, Jarava D, Saksena S, Dudeja P, Alrefai W, Gill R. Hepatocyte nuclear factor-4 $\alpha$  regulates expression of the serotonin transporter in intestinal epithelial cells. *The American Journal of Physiology – Cell Physiology*. 2020 Jun 1;318(6):C1294–304.

## ALUMNI NEWS

The Department of Pharmacology and Regenerative Medicine recently hosted **Samuel Charles Blackman, MD, PhD (2001)** Founder and Chief Medical Officer, Day One Biopharmaceuticals, Inc. South San Francisco CA as their featured presenter at their Lung and Vascular Biology Seminar, on April 26th. Dr. Blackman talk was entitled “*RAFusing to Give Up: Development of New Targeted Therapies for Childhood Cancers*”



**SAVE THE DATE: October 25, 2021**—MSTP Annual Lecture—From Bench to Bedside, featuring **Usma Samadani, MD, PhD (2019)** Dr. Samadani is an Associate Professor in the Department of Neurosurgery at the University of Minnesota

## 2021 THESIS DEFENSES—CONGRATULATIONS

**Kate Rahbari, G4: March 18, 1:00 pm**

Department: Microbiology & Immunology; Faculty Advisor: Michael Federle, PhD

Thesis Title: **“Streptococcus pyogenes uses quorum sensing to attenuate innate immune signaling”**

**Cutler Lewandowski, G4: March 19, 12:00 pm**

Department: Medicinal Chemistry Graduate Program; Faculty Advisor: Brian Layden, MD, PhD, and Gregory Thatcher, PhD

Thesis Title: **“Non-Lipogenic ABCA1 Inducers for Type 2 Diabetes and Alzheimer’s Disease”**

**Morgan Zenner, G4: March 22, 10:00 a.m.**

Department: Biochemistry & Molecular Genetics; Faculty Advisor: Larisa Nonn PhD

Thesis Title: **“The Role of Hexokinase 2 in Breast Cancer Metastasis”**

**Joseph Geraghty, G5: March 23, 3:00 p.m.**

Department: Graduate Program in Neuroscience; Faculty Advisors: Jeff Loeb, MD, PhD and Fernando Testai, MD, PhD

Thesis Title: **“Association of Neuroinflammation with Electroencephalographic Consequences of Subarchanoid Hemorrhage”**

**Russell Dulman, G4: March 26, 1:00 p.m.**

Department: Graduate Program in Neuroscience; Faculty Advisor: Subhash Pandey, PhD

Thesis Title: **“A Tale of Two ‘CBs’: Epigenetics and Ethanol in Cerebellar Ataxia and the Forebrain Cannabinoid System”**

**Jane Ivakhnitskaia G5: April 30, 1:30pm**

Department: Graduate Program in Neuroscience; Faculty Advisor: Mark Rosenblatt, MD, PhD, MBA, MHA

Thesis Title: **“Function and Structure of Damaged and Regenerating Corneal Cold Sensitive Nerves”**

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**Sam Feldstein, a second year medical student, gives the first shot of Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine to Merrill Gassman, 77, of Glenview, “What a relief,” Gassman said of receiving his shot. (Jose M. Osorio / Chicago Tribune)**



## The Medical Scientist

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*MSTP Administration*

**Mark Rosenblatt, MD, PhD, MBA**

Executive Dean, COM  
MSTP Director

**Patricia Finn, MD**

Dept. Head & Professor of  
Medicine  
MSTP Associate Director

**Dawood Darbar, MBChB, MD**

Professor and Chief  
Cardiology, Dept. of Medicine  
MSTP Associate Director

**Olusola Ajilore, MD, PhD,**

Associate Professor Dept. of  
Psychiatry  
MSTP Associate Director

**Julie Mann, MA**

Director,  
Program Administration

**Roberta Bernstein, MA**

Medical Scientist Editor  
Chair, Alumni Affairs



**Special Feature in UIC Magazine, Winter 2021– Unsheltered Coalition Chicago– Featuring MSTP Students Shin Chang and May Barakat**

*Nursing student Jennifer Nealy, left, chats with College of Medicine MSTP student **May Barakat, G3***

**DIRECTORS' CORNER**

**Mark Rosenblatt, Director, and Associate Directors, Patricia Finn & Dawood Darbar,**

*Welcome New Associate Director*



The MSTP Leadership is thrilled to announce that Dr. **Olusola Ajilore** has joined the MSTP as an Associate Director and House Leader for Adenine House as of January 1, 2021. Dr. Ajilore is an Associate Professor in the Department of Psychiatry at UIC. He graduated magna cum laude from Harvard University with a degree in biology. Dr. Ajilore went on to pursue MD/PhD studies at Stanford University where he studied the deleterious effects of stress hormones on the brain. He joined the research track residency at UCLA where he transitioned into neuroimaging in major depression. His lab currently uses computational neuroimaging techniques and digital biomarkers to better track and treat neuropsychiatric disorders.

Dr. Ajilore has been involved with the MSTP for several years and has been highly sought out for lab rotations by our current students. He is currently the PI for Paul Thomas (G3) and the co-PI for Michelle Sheena (G1).

Prior to joining the MSTP leadership team, Dr. Ajilore was a member of the MSTP Advisory Committee (MAC) where he was affiliated with Thymine House.

Dr. Ajilore's research goal is to understand the pathophysiology of major depressive disorder in the context of medical co-morbidities and late life using novel magnetic resonance imaging techniques. His group focuses on using structural and functional brain connectivity to study the brain as a network. Using these modalities, they have developed innovative ways of discovering brain alterations associated with major depression that may lead to patient-specific targets for intervention and treatment.

As we welcome Dr. Ajilore to the leadership team, we also heartily thank Dr. Jan Kitajewski for his stellar and devoted service to our students over many years, and congratulate him on his appointment (as of 1/1/21) as Director of the Cancer Center. In addition to this new role, Dr. Kitajewski remains the Sweeney Professor of Basic Sciences and Head of the Department of Physiology & Biophysics in which role he will continue to interact and influence MSTP students.