Chair Newsletter | Ali Shilatifard
Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine
Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Genetics

November | 2018
Issue 3
Volume 1

Quote

"I was taught that the way of progress was neither swift nor easy."
Marie Curie, physicist, chemist, and winner of the 1903 Nobel Prize in Physics and the 1911 Nobel Prize in Chemistry

Any of my lab members or faculty in the department, may at one time or another have heard me say, "publish, publish, publish," or "Any good data for me?", as if producing great data or publishing was like baking and you just needed to mix things up, put it in the oven, forget about it and pull out a nice creation. As we all know well, the reality is having the right ingredients, skill and patience, as Marie Curie is quoted above, ..."the way of progress is neither swift nor easy." Nature has taught us that it is in its slow process that amazing creations are made, to my point, the Grand Canyon carved by water and wind, the Rockies, the Redwood Forests, and the Niagara Falls to name a few. This is not to say that we have hundreds of years in our own lifetime to do great science, but I do encourage you to enjoy the daily push that wears away at the questions we are asking that will lead to great discoveries.

Do take a look at the publications this past month that came out of our department from the Foltz, Peter, and Shilatifard labs.

*Dan Foltz's lab manuscript titled, "*Inheritance of CENP-A Nucleosomes during DNA Replication Requires HJURP,*" was published this month in Developmental Cell and was chosen for the cover as well.*

Marcus Peter was interviewed by the BBC for his work and highlighted in the Northwestern News. See in the link below.
https://news.feinberg.northwestern.edu/2018/10/cancers-most-deadly-assassin-exists-in-every-cell

Studies from our lab by Kevin Liang and Edwin Smith in collaborations with Rintaro Hashizume and Gary Schiltz reported the identification of the first class of processive elongation inhibitors that could be very useful for Myc-induced cancer therapy. Please see https://news.feinberg.northwestern.edu/2018/10/disrupting-gene-transcription-elongation-to-treat-cancer/

As I see such great progress in our department, I am reminded that "A dream doesn't become reality through magic; it takes sweat, determination and hard work."

Ali Shilatifard
Professor and Chairman

Publications

Foltz Lab

Zasadzińska, E., Huang, J., Bailey, A.O., Guo, L.Y., Lee, N.S., Srivastava, S., Wong, K.A., French, B.T., Black, B.E., Foltz, D.R. (2018) Inheritance of CENP-A nucleosomes during DNA replication requires HJURP. *Dev. Cell*, Oct 3. pii: S1534-5807(18)30732-9. doi:

https://www.cell.com/developmental-cell/fulltext/S1534-5807(18)30732-9

Foltz's image was also selected for the cover of the November issue of *Developmental Cell*

Marcus Peter Lab in collaboration with Elizabeth Bartom

Putzbach, W., Haluck-Kangas, A., Gao, Q.Q., Sarshad, A.A., Bartom, E. T., Stults, A.M., Qadir, A.S., Hafner, M. and Peter, M.E. (2018) CD95/Fas ligand mRNA is toxic to cells. *eLife,* 7, e38621.

Gao, Q.Q., Putzbach, W.E., Murmann, A.E., Chen, S., Sarshad, A.A., Peter, J.M., Bartom, E.T., Hafner, M. and Peter, M.E. (2018) 6mer seed toxicity in tumor suppressive microRNAs. *Nature Comm*, 9, 4504.

https://www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2018-10/nu-cmd102518.php

Shilatifard lab

Liang, K., Smith, E.R., Aoi, Y., Stoltz, K.L., Katagi, H., Woodfin, A.R., Rendleman, E.J., Marshall, S.A., Murray, D.C., Wang, L., Ozark, P.A., Mishra, R.K., Hashizume, R., Schiltz, G.E., Shilatifard, A. (2018) Targeting processive transcription elongation via SEC disruption for MYC-induced cancer therapy. *Cell* 175, 766-779.

https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/30340042

Other Departmental News:

Liming Li Lab

Dr. Li shared that "Rowan Hussein, a Northwestern University undergraduate student working in the Li lab, was recently selected as a Northwestern Education and Undergraduate Research on Neuroscience student (NEURON) (Oct, 2018). Besides enhancing Rowan's research skills and her interdisciplinary interactions, NEURON program will also give support to the host lab, including a stipend to Rowan's in-lab mentor, Dustin Goncharoff, a NUIN graduate student."

Upcoming SQE Symposium November 30, 2018

Please make sure to make it to our first Simpson Querrey Center for Epigenetics Symposium

https://www.feinberg.northwestern.edu/sites/epigenetics/