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<td>3:00 P.M. – 3:25 P.M.</td>
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<td>3:30 P.M. – 3:35 P.M.</td>
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Kristina Andrijauskaite, PhD, MS, MEd
Director of Science, Vascular Perfusion Solutions, Inc; Review Editor at Molecular & Cellular Oncology
Topic: Industry - Biotech

Kristina Andrijauskaite, PhD, MS, MEd is a Scientific Director at the Vascular Perfusion Solutions, Inc where she leads pre-clinical studies in organ preservation field using a novel machine perfusion system to extend the time of viable organs before transplantation.

Kristina is a native of Lithuania and earned dual master's degrees: MEd in Educational Psychology from the University of Houston and MS in Biomedical Science from The Medical University of South Carolina. She also obtained a PhD in Translational Science from the joint program between UT Health San Antonio, UTSA, UT Austin, and UT Health Houston School of Public Health. She has an extensive (over 15 years) of multidisciplinary research experience including organ preservation, cancer, and space exploration. She has served as lead scientist on several suborbital space missions sending live zebrafish and murine T cells to space aboard Blue Origin's New Shepard reusable rocket, and she became the first Lithuanian female astronaut candidate for the European Space Agency's (ESA) new class of 2022 astronauts. Kristina has published more than a dozen papers in peer-reviewed journals and co-authored a book chapter. She is a member of multiple international organizations and is the review editor and active reviewer of many scientific journals. Kristina is a big advocate for women in STEM disciplines and has been a mentor to many students.

Travis Block, PhD
Chief Technology Officer, StemBioSys, Inc.; Partner, Et al BioCapita LLC; Partner, Marinkovic & Block LLC
Topic: Entrepreneurship - Start-Ups

Travis Block was born and raised in San Antonio, TX prior to moving to upstate New York to earn a BS in Biomedical Engineering from the University of Rochester. Dr. Block returned to San Antonio to earn a PhD in Biomedical Engineering from the joint graduate program at UTSA & UT Health San Antonio. After completing his PhD, Dr. Block joined StemBioSys to lead R&D efforts to develop novel cell culture technologies. Dr. Block is the co-founder of MonoMano Inc., San Antonio Science Inc., Marinkovic & Block LLC, & Et al BioCapital LLC. Dr. Block currently serves as Chief Technology Officer of StemBioSys, Partner at Marinkovic & Block, LLC, and Partner at Et al BioCapital, LLC. Additionally, Dr. Block sits on the Health & Environmental Safety Institute Cardiac Safety Committee and is adjunct faculty at UT Health San Antonio and Trinity University. Dr. Block is passionate about science communication and enjoys spending free time with his wife, Camilla, and his dogs, Oscar & Penny.

Christine Burke, PhD, MBA
Director, Commercialization, University of Texas at San Antonio
Topic: Intellectual Property, Tech Transfer & Commercialization

With 20 years of entrepreneurial and commercialization experience, Christine has helped launch university startups and commercialize invention portfolios that have included novel therapeutic compounds, biologics, medical devices, diagnostics, software, natural products, nanotechnologies, clean energy technologies, and more. She was also a founding employee of LabVelocity, a software and information services company.

Christine has a PhD in Molecular Biology from Yale University, was a Postdoctoral Fellow in Immunology at UC San Francisco and has an MBA from the University of Texas at San Antonio.
Becky Cap, MBA
Senior Vice President, Business Development, BioBridge Global; Chief Operating Officer, GenCure
Topic: Consulting

Becky Butler Cap, a 30-year veteran of the life sciences industry, currently serves as the SVP, Business Development, Advanced Therapies for BioBridge Global. Cap was named Chief Operating Officer of San Antonio-based GenCure in February 2016. BioBridge Global, provide a full spectrum of products and services aimed at enabling development and production of clinical and commercial-stage Advanced Therapies. Cap supports efforts in each of these areas and across the continuum, including Starting Materials, Process Development and Manufacturing, Donor, Facility and Finished Products Testing. Our mission is to realize the potential of donated human cells and tissue to save and enhance lives. Cap received her undergraduate degree in English and American Literature and Language along with certification to teach high school English at the beginning of her career. She obtained an MBA as her post-graduate degree and has been highly active in the development and commercialization of scientific and technical products and companies in the US and around the world.

Ricardo Carrion, Jr., PhD
Professor & Director of Maximum Containment Contract Research
Co-Lead, Disease Intervention and Prevention, Texas Biomedical Research Institute
Topic: Research Intensive Institutions (RII) - Principal Investigator (Mentor)

Dr. Carrion's research program aims to develop and characterize animal models for BSL-4 hemorrhagic fever viruses and other high consequence pathogens. He was the first to show that the common marmoset faithfully mimics human ebolavirus disease, Marburgvirus disease and Lassa Fever thus providing a novel small NHP model for evaluating countermeasures to these diseases. He has characterized several models of virus induced disease which have been used for advanced preclinical development of vaccines and therapies to support eventual licensure via the animal rule pathway. Several filovirus vaccine platforms that were in human trials were tested by Dr. Carrion's group using cynomolgus and rhesus ebolavirus macaque models. In addition, his lab performed critical preclinical studies for the first approved Ebola antibody therapy. Most recently, Dr. Carrion's lab has supported development of NHP COVID-19 models and has subsequently used these models for advanced preclinical development of several COVID-19 countermeasures including mRNA vaccines, subunit vaccines, monoclonal antibodies, and Remdesivir.

https://www.txbiomed.org/scientists/ricardo-carrion-jr/

Arthur Chang, PhD, HCLD, ELD, CC
Director, ART Labs; Professor &, Reproductive Endocrinology & Infertility, OB/GYN, UT Health San Antonio
Topic: Research Intensive Institutions (RII) - Clinical Lab Director

Dr. Arthur Chang is Professor at the Division of Reproductive Endocrinology and Infertility, Department of OB/GYN, the UT Health San Antonio, and Director of Clinical Assisted Reproductive Technology (ART) Laboratories at UT Health Reproductive Health & Fertility Center and Brooke Army Medical Center Fertility Center. He is board certified as High-complexity Clinical Laboratory Director (HCLD), Embryology Laboratory Director (ELD), and Clinical Consultant (CC). Dr. Chang is well recognized among fellow clinical reproductive biologists and technologists in the US and the international community. He has served on professional leadership positions including president/board and committee chair appointments, journal editor, accreditation inspection team leader, and consultant.
**Danté Fenolio, PhD**

**Vice President, Center for Conservation & Research, San Antonio Zoo**

**Topic: Science Policy/Advocacy/Conservation**

Dr. Fenolio holds a MS in Zoology from the University of Oklahoma and a PhD in Biology from the University of Miami (Florida) involving amphibian conservation, ecology, and taxonomy. After graduate school, he ran an amphibian conservation program for the Atlanta Botanical Garden. Dr. Fenolio was then hired by the San Antonio Zoo to develop a new Department of Conservation and Research for the institution in 2013. Active projects now span the globe ranging from deep sea work in the middle of the Gulf of Mexico to field projects in Japan and China as well as in Chile and Peru. Dr. Fenolio's research interests involve the ecology of animals living in challenging environments like subterranean ecosystems, forest canopies, or the deep ocean realm. In 2018, Dr. Fenolio was named Director of Research for the Amazon Conservatory for Tropical Studies. Using the associated ACTS canopy walkway in Amazonian Peru, he and colleagues are conducting research on the amphibians and reptiles inhabiting the treetops of a neotropical wet forest. He regularly conducts biological surveys of caves for the United States Fish and Wildlife Service and the Chinese Academy of Sciences, documenting imperiled and endangered species and monitoring their populations. Fieldwork has always been Fenolio's greatest passion. Never one for suits, ties, or big cities, he finds himself most comfortable, and happiest, far away from the grind of modern society.

**Bernard Fongang, PhD**

**Assistant Professor, Departments of Biochemistry and Structural Biology, and Population Health Sciences**

**Glenn Biggs Institute for Alzheimer's & Neurodegenerative Diseases, UT Health San Antonio**

**Topic: Career Transitions - Early Career Faculty**

Dr. Fongang is an Assistant Professor of Bioinformatics at the Glenn Biggs Institute for Alzheimer's and Neurodegenerative Diseases, the South Texas Alzheimer's Disease Research Center, the Department of Biochemistry and Structural Biology, and Population Health Sciences at UT Health San Antonio. He has expertise in genomics and transcriptomics profiling, multi-omics integration, and structural bioinformatics. He has led several international projects, including the genetic profiling of more than 800,000 individuals to discover novel variants associated with all-cause and vascular dementias. In addition, his lab is actively developing and applying multi-omics approaches to delineate neurodegenerative diseases' basis. He is also involved in collecting new data across Texas and analyzing collaborative data obtained through big consortia like the Cohorts for Heart and Aging Research in Genomic Epidemiology (CHARGE), the Alzheimer's Disease Sequencing Project (ADSP), and the Trans-Omics for Precision Medicine (TOPMed). He recently received a career development grant from the NIH to study the role of the microbiome and derived metabolites in Alzheimer's disease.
Bridget Ford, PhD
Assistant Professor, Biology, University of the Incarnate Word
Topic: Primarily Undergraduate Institutions (PUI) - 4-Year College Faculty

Dr. Bridget Ford is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Biology at University of Incarnate Word (UIW). She obtained her BS at St. Mary's University in Biological Sciences with a minor in Chemistry. She then went on to earn her PhD in Molecular Medicine at UT Health San Antonio in 2012. She completed her Postdoctoral Fellowship training at the United States Army Institute of Surgical Research in the Extremity Trauma and Regenerative Medicine task area and at UT Health at San Antonio between the Magnetic Resonance Imaging Division and the Department of Medicine.

Dr. Ford serves as the Anatomy and Physiology I and II Course Coordinator, and teaches Anatomy and Physiology I and II, Cell Biology, and a Selected Topics course in Endocrinology at UIW. She is dedicated to mentoring undergraduates in the research laboratory where her research focuses on understanding the molecular mechanisms involved in renal cell injury in diabetic kidney disease. The overall goal Dr. Ford has for all her trainees is to apply what they learn in the classroom and to ask scientific questions in the quest to become independent and creative thinkers.

John Fritz, MS, MBA
Associate Director, Technology Commercialization, Office of Technology Commercialization (OTC), UT Health San Antonio
Co-Director of the TechNovum Accelerator
Topic: Intellectual Property, Tech Transfer & Commercialization

John Fritz serves as Associate Director of Technology Commercialization in the Office of Technology Commercialization (OTC) at UT Health San Antonio and Co-Director of the Accelerator known as TechNovum and the joint (with UTSA) start-up mentoring program known as VMS-SA. Prior to OTC, Mr. Fritz served as a Project Analyst with Nerac, a Research and Advisory Firm, for companies developing innovative products and technologies. Prior to Nerac, Mr. Fritz was the Project Manager for Technology Commercialization at the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) Technology Center where he worked with early-stage technology companies to help them develop and launch new technology. He began his career with Entergy Corporation, a multi-billion-dollar utility conglomerate headquartered in New Orleans. At Entergy, Mr. Fritz worked in market research, product development and market management. Mr. Fritz left Entergy Corp. to pursue a new career opportunity at Kinetic Concepts Inc. (KCI), a major medical device company headquartered in San Antonio. At KCI, Mr. Fritz worked in the areas of manufacturing, R&D, and business development.

Mr. Fritz received his BS in Management and MBA in Marketing from the University of West Florida. He graduated with an MS in Management of Technology from UTSA and a Master's in health administration at Texas State University.
Ahmad Galaleldeen, PhD
Associate Professor, Biological Sciences, School of Science, Engineering and Technology, St. Mary’s University
Topic: Primarily Undergraduate Institutions (PUI) - 4-Year College Faculty

Dr. Galaleldeen was born and raised in Alexandria, Egypt. He earned his PhD at UT Health San Antonio and currently is an Associate Professor at St. Mary’s University. He teaches General Biology, Cell Biology and Biochemistry. His research lab focuses on studying superoxide dismutase and its role in familial Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (fALS). Dr. Galaleldeen is the Program Coordinator at St. Mary’s University and also one of the teaching mentors in the SABER/IRACDA Training Program.

Andrea Giuffrida, PhD
Vice President, Strategic Industry Ventures
Professor, Pharmacology
Principal Investigator, Voelcker Biomedical Research Academy, UT Health San Antonio
Topic: Science Policy/Advocacy/Conservation

Andrea Giuffrida, PhD is the Vice President for Strategic Industry Ventures and Professor in the Department of Pharmacology at UT Health San Antonio. He received his PhD in Evolutionary Biology from the University of Catania, Italy, and an EMBA from the University of Texas at San Antonio.

In 2011, he served as an AAAS Science & Technology Policy Fellow in the Office of Science Policy at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) working on the regulatory science of biomedical products, drug development and the NIH biannual report to the American Congress. Between 2014 and 2021, he served as Vice President for Research at UT Health San Antonio overseeing numerous initiatives to grow the university’s research infrastructure, modernize research administration and compliances, promote multidisciplinary collaborative initiatives and entrepreneurship and biotechnology commercialization, and represent the institution with federal funding agencies, foundations, and corporate research sponsors.

As a scientist, Dr. Giuffrida has provided important breakthroughs to the neuropharmacology of the cannabinoid system and its role in neurodegenerative and psychomotor disorders and authored over 86 scientific publications. Since 2014, he is a member of the “Group on Graduate Research, Education & Training (GREAT)” of the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC), Vice Chair of the Texas Healthcare & Bioscience Institute, President of the Texas Scientific Italian Community and serves on the board of advisors of the San Antonio Chamber of Commerce.

www.linkedin.com/in/andrea-giuffrida-phd
James “Jim” Hall, PhD
Professor, Math & Science, College of Arts and Sciences, Our Lady of the Lake University
Topic: Primarily Undergraduate Institutions (PUI) - 4-Year College Faculty

Dr. James “Jim” Hall earned a BS in Chemistry/Biology at Angelo State University in 1979 and a PhD in Pharmacology at the UT Health San Antonio in 1984. He is in his 38th year as a Biology Professor at Our Lady of the Lake University (OLLU) in San Antonio, where he served as Biology Department Chair for 25 years and has also served as the Health Professions Advisor. Dr. Hall teaches medically related undergraduate courses from freshman to senior level, including human anatomy and physiology, microscopic anatomy, microbiology, and pharmacology. Mentoring students and traveling with them annually to conferences, where students present their research, has been one of the most enjoyable parts of his career. Dr. Hall recently completed 12 years serving as the National Executive Director of Sigma Zeta, a National Science and Mathematics Honor Society, and OLLU students present their research at that organization’s national conference each year. He has received and collaborated on many federally funded grant projects, including a current (2015-2020; 2020-2025) NIH-funded SABER/IRACDA Postdoctoral Research/Teaching Training Program with UT Health San Antonio.

Carmen Hinojosa-Laborde, PhD, FAPS
Research Physiologist, US Army Institute of Surgical Research
Topic: Military Health Research

Dr. Carmen Hinojosa-Laborde is a native of San Antonio, TX. She earned her BS in Biology at St Mary’s University, and her PhD in Pharmacology at UT Health San Antonio. Her post-doctoral fellowships refined her training as an Integrative Physiologist. During her 17-year academic career her research focused on sex differences in blood pressure regulation with an emphasis on hypertension and aging. Dr. Hinojosa-Laborde’s current research as a military scientist focuses on increasing survival of combat casualties on the battlefield. Her studies address the effects of analgesics on the compensatory responses to hemorrhage.

Jenny Hsieh, PhD
Professor and Chair, Neuroscience, Developmental and Regenerative Biology
College of Sciences, Semmes Foundation Distinguished Chair in Cell Biology
Director, UTSA Brain Health Consortium, University of Texas at San Antonio
Topic: Research Intensive Institutions (RII) - Principal Investigator (Mentor)

Dr. Jenny Hsieh is the founding Chair of the Department of Neuroscience, Developmental and Regenerative Biology in the College of Sciences at the University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA). She is also the founding Director of the UTSA Brain Health Consortium and holds the Semmes Foundation Distinguished Chair in Cell Biology. In addition to her leadership roles, what she is most passionate about and what gets her out of bed each morning is the research that her lab performs and the students that she is fortunate to teach and mentor. She and her trainees studied many of the genes responsible for newly generated neurons in the adult mammalian hippocampus. Their work showed that aberrant neurogenesis contributes to temporal lobe epilepsy. Their most recent work focuses on using human brain organoid models to study neurodevelopmental and neurodegenerative disorders. Among her proudest professional achievements is mentoring young scientists and advocating on behalf of women and underrepresented minorities in science.
Scott Jones, PhD
Vice President, Scientific Affairs and Research & Development, BioBridge Global
Topic: Industry - Research & Development

Dr. Jones received his undergraduate degree in Microbiology from Texas A&M University and a PhD in Microbiology from UT Health San Antonio. He did his postdoctorate work at the Texas Center for Infectious Disease where he was the Director of the TB-RFLP Laboratory. He has worked at BioBridge Global/South Texas Blood & Tissue Center/QualTex laboratories since 1999. He has expertise in blood screening testing, cell and gene therapy testing and analytical assay development. He has developed NAT assays for HIV-1, HCV, Parvo-B19, HAV and HEV. He has authored and presented numerous oral and poster presentations at annual meetings for the South Central Association of Blood Banks (SCABB), American Association of Blood Banks (AABB), and the Congress of International Society of Blood Transfusion. He is an active member of AABB and SCABB.

Jonathan King, PhD
Professor, Biology, Trinity University
Topic: Primarily Undergraduate Institutions (PUI) - 4-Year College Faculty

Prof. Jonathan "Jon" King has been a faculty member in the Biology Department at Trinity University since 2001. He has brought his expertise in cellular and molecular physiology to the classroom in a broad range of courses including most prominently introductory Biology and Vertebrate Physiology. He maintains an active NIH and NSF supported research program studying epithelial cell junctions. He has mentored dozens of undergraduate researchers who have presented their findings in experimental approaches from confocal microscopy to CRISPR/Cas9 at national meetings and as co-authors on publications. Prof King’s experience in mentorship and career development has also been developed through his service as Department Chair and his central role on many faculty search committees. He is currently the Director of the Successful Starts Program (Supported by the SABER/IRACDA Training Grant Program) which focuses “Fostering Active Learning in STEM Education” helping new or aspiring faculty members to strengthen their teaching skills and consider their mentoring strategy.

Zhao Lai, PhD
Associate Professor/Research, Molecular Medicine; Director, Next Generation Sequencing Core, UT Health San Antonio
Topic: Research Intensive Institutions (RII) - Core Lab Directors/Lab Management

Zhao Lai, PhD is the Director of Genome Sequencing Facility (GSF) of Greehey Children’s Cancer Research Institute at UT Health San Antonio. The GSF utilizes state-of-the-art genomic platforms to generate high-quality genomic data and provides support with its analysis. The GSF is also the Next Generation Sequencing Shared Resource of Mays Cancer Center. Dr Lai’s major research focuses on the various aspects of functional genomics and applications using next generation sequencing technology. Specially, she assists the PIs to understand the mutation type and frequency, copy number variation, gene expression difference, chromosome structure change, modification and interaction in the different children cancer and tumor samples, with the NGS technology. Dr. Lai was awarded two NIH Shared Instrumentation (S10) grants and is currently supported with NIH NCI R50 award.
Yu "Woody" Lin, MD, PhD
Program Director and Physician Scientist, Division of Neuroscience and Behavior, National Institute on Drug Abuse/NIH/HHS
Topic: Career Transitions - Career Development

Dr. Lin has been a NIDA Program Official since 2001. His portfolio oversees training/mentoring and neuroscience research program. He has been a member of NIDA Research Training Committee and K99/R00 program Committee since 2007. Prior to joining the NIH, he was an anesthesiologist, a physician scientist in Pain Medicine, in Complementary and Integrative Health and a neuroscience investigator. He is a member of the American Academy of Pain Medicine, the Society for Neuroscience, and the NIH Pain Consortium.

His neuroscience program portfolio emphasizes clinical and translational research in the areas of chronic pain, substances use, and substance use disorders, and NeuroHIV/NeuroAIDS. It also encompasses biological mechanisms of molecular disruption and stability and neuroplasticity in the brain and immune systems of patients, as a result of chronic pain, HIV/AIDS, or prescription opiate abuse and research in health disparities.

Jennifer R. Lloyd, MBA
Senior Director, University Communications, St. Mary's University
Topic: Science Communication

Jennifer R. Lloyd is the founder of Thought Bubble Studio, a consultancy to help executives, entrepreneurs and researchers develop their personal brands through thought leadership services and coaching. She is also the Senior Director of University Communications at St. Mary's University, overseeing news and information, media relations and social media efforts. In that role, she is also Executive Editor for the University's award-winning alumni magazines, Gold & Blue Magazine and the Gold & Blue Law Edition. Earlier in her career, Jennifer covered higher education issues and scientific research as a journalist for the San Antonio Express-News. Her work has also been featured in the Seattle Times, the Seattle Post-Intelligencer, Austin Monthly, and many other publications. She has taught journalism courses at the university level. Jennifer earned her BA in Communication from the University of Washington in Seattle, her MA in Journalism from the University of Texas at Austin, and her MBA from St. Mary's University.

Philip T. LoVerde, PhD
Professor, Biochemistry and Structural Biology & Pathology and Laboratory Medicine, UT Health San Antonio
Topic: Drug Development

Dr. Philip T. LoVerde is a Professor at the UT Health San Antonio. He has over 45 years’ experience researching host-parasite interactions, especially those that involve the human blood fluke, Schistosoma. His research involves vaccine development, role of signal transduction in schistosome-host interactions, interplay between male and female parasites that results in female reproductive development, role of host genes in infection outcomes, genomics, and genetic approach to identifying drug resistant genes. Current research is focused on drug development. He has published over 200 papers.
http://gsbs.uthscsa.edu/faculty/philip-loverde-ph.d
Luis Martinez-Sobrido, PhD
Professor, Infectious Disease and Pathogenesis, Texas Biomedical Research Institute
Adjunct Professor, Microbiology, Immunology and Molecular Genetics, UT Health San Antonio
Adjunct Professor, Microbiology University of Texas at San Antonio
Topic: Research Intensive Institutions (RII) - Principal Investigator (Mentor)

Dr. Martinez-Sobrido is currently a Professor in the Department of Infectious Disease and Pathogenesis at Texas Biomedical Research Institute (Texas Biomed), Adjunct Professor in the Department of Microbiology, Immunology and Molecular Genetics (MIMG) at UT-Health San Antonio, and Adjunct Professor in the Department of Microbiology at University of Texas in San Antonio. Dr. Martinez-Sobrido is also Adjunct Professor at the Zheijan A&F and Yuanzhong Universities in China, and at Universidad Autonomia de Yucatan, Mexico. His PhD research focused on the study of viral replication and transcription of respiratory syncytial virus under the guidance of Dr. Jose Antonio Melero at the Instituto de Salud Carlos III in Madrid, Spain. He conducted Postdoctoral research on the molecular biology of influenza viruses under the supervision of Dr. Adolfo Garcia-Sastre at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai in New York, USA. Dr. Martinez-Sobrido has over 245 publications in peer review journals and his current research interest mainly focuses on the molecular biology, immunology and pathogenesis of negative-stranded and positive-stranded respiratory viruses including influenza and coronaviruses, and hemorrhagic fever viruses. Dr. Martinez-Sobrido has extensive knowledge in plasmid-based reverse genetics techniques to rescue recombinant viruses, pioneered the development of techniques and screening assays to identify and characterize viral-encoded interferon antagonist proteins, established new molecular biology techniques to study highly pathogenic viruses without the requirement of special biosafety conditions. His expertise also includes antiviral drug discovery, development of live-attenuated vaccines, and establishment of animal models of viral infections.

Chukwuemeka N. Okafor, PhD, MPH
Assistant Professor, Medicine - Infectious Disease, UT Health San Antonio
Topic: Career Transitions - Early Career Faculty

Dr. Emeka Okafor is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Medicine, Division of Infectious Diseases, and the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences. He received his PhD in Epidemiology from the University of Florida and MPH from the University of North Florida. The overall goal of Dr. Okafor’s research program is to improve health outcomes for persons with and at-risk for HIV by addressing substance use and barriers to accessing HIV prevention and treatment services. Dr Okafor is recipient of a career development award (K01) from NIH/NIDA.
Discussion Leaders’ Bios

**Tim Raabe, PhD**  
Associate Dean, Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences, UT Health San Antonio  
Topic: Research Intensive Institutions (RII) - Research Administrator

Dr. Raabe received his BS and MS in Biology from Southwest Texas State University (now Texas State University) and his PhD in Zoology (Physiology) from UT Austin. He then completed a Postdoctoral Fellowship in the lab of Dr. George H. DeVries at the Hines VA Hospital/Loyola Medical Center in Maywood, Illinois, and examined the role of neuregulins in axonal/glial cell signaling. Dr. Raabe became an Assistant Professor at St. Mary's University in San Antonio and worked his way through the ranks to become Professor and Chair of Biological Sciences and eventually the Associate Dean of the School of Science, Engineering, and Technology. After 21 years at St. Mary's, Dr. Raabe moved to UT Health San Antonio in 2018 to serve as the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs in the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences.

**Christopher Rathbone, PhD**  
Assistant Professor, Biomedical Engineering, University of Texas at San Antonio  
Topic: Research Intensive Institutions (RII) - Principal Investigator (Mentor)

Dr. Chris Rathbone is an Associate Professor in the Department of Biomedical Engineering and Chemical Engineering at The University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA). Dr. Rathbone received his PhD from the University of Missouri-Columbia in 2006. After the completion of his postdoctoral work at the University of Arizona in 2008, he was a Principal Investigator in the Extremity Trauma and Regenerative Medicine Task area at the United States Army Institute of Surgical Research until 2015. He was the Director of Research for Arteriocyte Inc. before joining the Department of Biomedical Engineering and Chemical Engineering at UTSA in 2016. Dr. Rathbone’s research utilizes tissue engineering-based approaches to understand and treat diseased and injured skeletal muscle. His research is supported by the National Institutes of Health and the National Science Foundation, which includes an NSF CAREER award. Dr. Rathbone endeavors to integrate his research objectives with education and outreach to broadly impact STEM students, with more targeted directives to influence Veterans and underrepresented minorities.

**Vivienne I. Rebel, MD, PhD**  
Executive Vice President, Chief Science & Medical Officer, bioAffinity Technologies, Inc.  
Topic: Industry - Biotech

Vivienne I. Rebel, MD, PhD, is Executive Vice President, Chief Medical and Scientific Officer of bioAffinity Technologies, Inc., a privately held biomedical company located in San Antonio, TX. Dr. Rebel received her MD from the Free University of Amsterdam (The Netherlands). She conducted her doctoral thesis at the Terry Fox Laboratory in Vancouver, BC (Canada) and her post-doctoral training at the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, Harvard Medical School in Boston, MA (USA). Dr. Rebel led her own research program in hematopoietic (cancer) stem cell biology at UT Health in San Antonio, TX (USA) before joining bioAffinity in April, 2016. At bioAffinity Technologies, she is responsible for scientific development of the Company’s diagnostic platform technology to detect cancer at its earliest stages, as well as development of a novel treatment for cancer.
Stuart Red, PhD
Director and Medical Science Liaison, Southwest US, Sunovion Pharmaceuticals
Topic: Industry - Medical Science Liaison

Stuart Red grew up in Houston, then completed a BA in Psychology at University of Texas at Austin; a PhD in Neuroscience from University of Texas at Houston. He worked as a Research Director on the Neuropsychology team at Pearson Clinical Assessments in San Antonio. In 2016, Stuart joined Teva Pharmaceuticals as a Psychiatry and Movement Disorder Medical Science Liaison covering South Texas and the Gulf Coast. Following that, he joined Alkermes as a Psychiatry and Addiction Medical Science Liaison covering South Texas. In 2019, Stuart joined Sunovion Pharmaceuticals as a Director Medical Science Liaison covering the Southwest US. He lives in San Antonio with his wife and 2 children of 1 and 4yrs old.

Wilfredo Rosario, PhD
Regional Medical Scientific Director, Merck & Co
Topic: Industry - Medical Science Liaison

Wilfredo Rosario, PhD, completed his undergraduate studies in Biology at the University of Puerto Rico, Mayagüez, in 1998, followed by a Master’s Program in Biology at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, at the Beckman Institute from 1998-2001. After the Masters, he pursued public education instruction- teaching middle school science students in Miami, Florida; while maintaining some lab skills relevant as a Lab Technician at the University of Miami in the Department of Dermatology. Wilfredo decided to return to graduate school in 2004 at the University of Chicago, for a PhD in the Committee on Neurobiology- where after a 3-year leave of absence to do Diabetes Research as a Lab Technician, ultimately completed his dissertation research on Brain Regulation of Endocrine Pancreas Physiology in 2014. He followed this with a postdoc from 2015-2018 in gut to brain communication and resultant metabolic physiology, and a subsequent researcher position in a neuropsychiatry lab, both at Duke University. Wilfredo invested additional time in teaching at the college level from Grad School through his Postdoc as an Adjunct Professor at various institutions, St. Augustine College (Chicago, IL), Elon University (Elon, NC), and Meredith College (Raleigh, NC). He joined Merck & Co in 2019 as a Regional Medical Scientific Director and Director, Medical Affairs on the Cardiovascular & Metabolism Team, based out of San Antonio, TX.

Michelle Schoonover, PhD
Medical Science Partner, UCB Inc.
Topic: Industry - Medical Science Liaison

Michelle Schoonover, PhD is currently a neuroscience Medical Science Liaison (MSL) at UCB specializing in the field of Epilepsy and Rare Syndromes. Based out of Austin, TX, Michelle has 7+ years of industry experience and won the UCB Pinnacle Award for Medical Affairs Excellence in 2023. Prior to joining Industry, Michelle earned her PhD in Biochemistry from the University of Texas at Austin, studying proposed regulatory mechanisms of protooncogenes. Postdoctorally, she became involved with neurology clinical research studying the neurodegeneration process and potential interventions in Parkinson’s Disease. Michelle transitioned to industry designing and executing educational programs for Abbott during the launch of their Deep Brain Stimulation Medical Device product. In 2018, she first moved to a Medical Affairs role within the pharmaceutical industry for a newly launching Parkinson’s Disease product at Sunovion as the MSL role merged her interest in Medical education, communication of evolving science and impacting corporate strategic direction.
Mikaela Sifuentes, PhD
Medical Writer, 3M, Medical Solutions Division
Topic: Science Communication

Dr. Sifuentes is a medical writer in 3M’s Medical Solutions Division, where she helps publish high-quality evidence on the application of 3M healthcare products. She collaborates with healthcare professionals, biostatisticians, and health economics analysts to communicate their expertise in peer-reviewed journals and at medical conferences. She also coordinates sponsored educational content on medical device sterile processing. Dr. Sifuentes earned a BS in Biology from the University of Dallas and a PhD in Pharmacology and Certificate in Translational Science from UT Health San Antonio.

Brian Stout, PhD
Professor, Biology, Northwest Vista College
Topic: Primarily Undergraduate Institutions (PUI) - 2-Year College Faculty

Dr. Brian Stout currently teaches Biology, Physiology, Microbiology and Genetics courses at Northwest Vista College (NVC). He graduated from UT Health San Antonio with a PhD in Pharmacology. During his 15 years at NVC he has served as Department Chair for the Natural and Physical Sciences and Faculty Senate President. Dr. Stout has won several service and teaching awards, as well as being nominated by the college for the statewide Minnie Piper Steven’s Award. Brian also serves as a board member for the John Jay Science Academy.

Justin C. Strickland, PhD
Assistant Professor, Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, Behavioral Pharmacology Research Unit, Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine
Topic: Career Transitions - Early Career Faculty

Justin Strickland, PhD is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Science of the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine. His research focuses on the use of behavioral economics as a theoretical framework to address issues of public health significance to include addiction and sexual health. This work applies a translational pipeline of preclinical animal research, human laboratory assessment, and clinical trials to evaluate choice and decision-making processes at the intersection of the self (e.g., genetic predisposition, reinforcement history) and setting (e.g., environmental cues, alternative reinforcers). Examples of recent research includes the interaction of expectancy and nicotine dose manipulations on cigarette abuse liability and role of behavioral economic decision-making in social context driven heavy alcohol use. Dr. Strickland is also interested in the behavioral mechanisms underlying psychedelic drug effects and treatment efficacy.
Alex Taylor, PhD
Director, Protein Biochemistry Facility, Greehey Children’s Cancer Research Institute
Associate Director, Structural Biology Core Facilities, Institutional Research Cores
Assistant Professor/Research, Biochemistry and Structural Biology, UT Health San Antonio
Topic: Research Intensive Institutions (RII) - Core Lab Directors/Lab Management

Dr. Alex Taylor is the Director of the Greehey Children’s Cancer Research Institute Protein Biochemistry Facility, Associate Director of the Structural Biology Core Facilities and a research-track Assistant Professor in the Department of Biochemistry and Structural Biology at UT Health San Antonio. He is a San Antonio native who began his career at UT Health San Antonio as a Staff Scientist focused on macromolecular structure and biochemistry. Dr. Taylor participates in team science with multiple principal investigators who use the core laboratories to investigate molecular structure, biophysical properties and function for medically relevant applications including cancer and infectious disease.

Ratna Vadlamudi, PhD
Professor & Vice Chair Research, Obstetrics and Gynecology; Tom C. and Patricia H. Frost Endowed Chair CoLeader, CDP program, Mays Cancer Center
Associate Program Director, MD/PhD program, UT Health San Antonio
Topic: Drug Development

Ratna K. Vadlamudi, PhD is a Professor and Vice Chair Research in the department of Obstetrics and Gynecology. In 1994, he graduated with a PhD in Molecular Biology from the University of Wyoming in Laramie, Wyoming. In 1997, he finished his postdoctoral fellowship at Harvard Medical School/Dana Farber Cancer Institute. He has held academic positions as Assistant and Associate Professor at the MD Anderson Cancer Center’s Department of Molecular and Cellular Oncology and Associate Professor at the Stanley S. Cancer Center/Department of Genetics in New Orleans. Dr. Vadlamudi joined UT Health San Antonio in January 2006. He currently holds the Tom C. and Patricia H. Frost Endowed Chair for Cancer Research and Education. He also leads the Mays Cancer Center’s Cancer Development Program and is the MD, PhD Program’s Associate Program Director. For his outstanding contributions to the field of cancer molecular biology, he was chosen as an AAAS Fellow in 2015. His current research focuses on the characterization of novel oncogenes and tumor suppressors, endocrine therapy resistance, the development of novel cancer therapeutics for breast, ovarian, endometrial, and gynecological malignancies, as well as estrogen signaling in these diseases. His work aims to use laboratory-based discoveries to create new therapies for the treatment of women’s cancers. His research is funded by grants from the Department of Defense, the National Cancer Institute, and the VA Merit Award.
Guillermo Vela, MS
CEO and Co-Founder, NeuScience; Career Advisory Council Member, UT Health San Antonio
Topic: Entrepreneurship - Start-Ups

Guillermo is the CEO and co-founder of NeuScience, a cancer therapeutics company using artificial intelligence to accelerate drug discovery in solid tumor cancers. NeuScience's investors include the Rise of the Rest fund led AOL founder and billionaire tech investor, Steve Case, and is backed by industry leaders such as Jeff Bezos, Eric Schmidt, Meg Whitman, Tori Burch, and David Rubenstein among others. He is also Co-Founder of Et al BioCapital, a fund dedicated to investing in public biopharma companies, and also serves as Principal Consultant with Biotexsci Consulting helping clients with pandemic preparedness using best practice and evidence-based solutions for business development. Previously, Guillermo was founding CEO of Nebulab, a scientific data management technology startup, and 1 of 10 companies from 1000+ global applicants selected by the prestigious Techstars Accelerator 2015 Cloud Program. He is also a former brain cancer and stem cell researcher from the Department of Neurosurgery and Oncology at Johns Hopkins, where he worked under the mentorship of world-renown neurosurgeon, Dr. Alfredo Quiñones-Hinojosa. Guillermo was advisor to the winning category startup of the NIH's 2015 Neuro Startup competition, Hecate OncoSolutions, has been an invited speaker to numerous events centered around science and technology. Guillermo received his BA degree in Latin American Studies, and his MS degree in Biotechnology from the Johns Hopkins University. Guillermo was born in Mexico City, but is a native of Laredo, TX.