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GSBMS Dean's Report

NYMC Publications

Spring 2023

Dean's Report- Spring 2023

Marina K. Holz

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Dear Members of the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences Community:

Spring is my favorite time of year – it is the culmination of the year’s work, surrounded by the beauty of nature. Here, at the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences (GSBMS), we will celebrate the conclusion of another successful academic year. Our extraordinary students, in addition to their classroom and laboratory activities, organized a successful 34th Annual Graduate Student Research



Forum and engaged in volunteer activities in the community. I would like to especially thank the faculty and staff of the Graduate School for supporting our students’ academic and para-curricular activities, and making themselves available to our students with advice and guidance. There are many milestones ahead. At our commencement, hooding and awards ceremony, we will celebrate the achievements of our M.S and Ph.D. graduates. The importance of

training our future researchers, scientists and health-science professionals has never been more evident than it is now, and we will continue in our efforts, undeterred.

Sincerely,

Marina K. Holz, Ph.D.
Dean of the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences
Interim Chair of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology
Professor of Cell Biology and Anatomy

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Dean Holz presents talk at ASBMB annual meeting



Marina K. Holz, Ph.D., dean of the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences, professor of cell biology and anatomy, interim chair of the Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology and director of Women's Institute for Science Entrepreneurship, presented a talk at the session, "Intentional leadership and BMB education" at Discover BMB, the annual meeting of the [American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology](#). At this meeting, researchers in the molecular life sciences meet to share their latest findings through presentations, workshops and poster exhibits. The latest findings in the molecular life sciences are shared by researchers from across the globe with leaders in academia and industry.



The 34th Annual Graduate Student Research Forum

The 34th Annual Graduate Student Research Forum is a celebration of the exciting and substantial research conducted by the master's and Ph.D. students at the GSBMS. The Forum took place on March 14 in the Medical Education Center featuring keynote speaker Susan J. Baserga, M.D., Ph.D., William

H. Fleming, M.D., professor of molecular biophysics and biochemistry at Yale University School of Medicine, with Victor Garcia, Ph.D. '16, assistant professor of pharmacology, serving as alumni moderator and master of ceremonies. The forum, coordinated by the Graduate Student Association, provides students the opportunity to present and share their research, engage with the NYMC community through oral presentations and a poster session.

"The forum is a celebration of the scientific accomplishments conducted here at the College," said Marina K. Holz, Ph.D., dean of the GSBMS, professor of cell biology and anatomy, interim chair of the Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology and director of Women's Institute for Science Entrepreneurship. "Our students collaboratively engage in many scientific investigations that range from unraveling physiological responses of cells and organisms to understanding novel strategies to combat human diseases. The collective work presented at the forum represents months and years of painstaking research and study conducted in a coordinated fashion with the student's mentor, his/her colleagues, as well as the technical staff within their respective laboratories and departments." [Read the full article on the 34th Annual Graduate Student Research Forum](#) and [view the photo gallery](#).

Dr. Edward Messina presents gifts to the GSBMS

Student Travel and Scholarship Funds Established

We are honored to recognize **Edward J. Messina, Ph.D. '73**, professor emeritus of physiology, for his recent generous gifts to the GSBMS. His first gift has established the Edward J. Messina, Ph.D. Student Travel Fund which will enrich the education of our Ph.D. students by supporting their attendance at

scientific conferences, enhancing their professional development through exposure to current research in their fields while providing them with the opportunity to disseminate their work, showcasing the vital ongoing research being conducted in the laboratories of NYMC on the national and international stage.

The second gift establishes the Edward J. Messina, Ph.D. Scholarship Fund. This annual fund will contribute to supporting the education of future GSBMS students. We would like to offer our sincere thanks to Dr. Messina for his ongoing support for the NYMC's GSBMS. "I am tremendously grateful that Dr. Messina continues to be such an important presence at GSBMS, by supporting our students and serving as a role model to the next generation of scientists", said Marina Holz, Ph.D., dean of the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences, professor of cell biology and anatomy and interim chair of the Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology. [Read the full story on Dr. Messina.](#)



Department of Pathology, Microbiology and Immunology Hosts Inaugural Research Symposium



Event Showcased Research of Students, Residents and Trainees

The Department of Pathology, Microbiology and Immunology hosted its first Research Symposium on December 8. The day-long symposium featured oral presentations and poster presentations by students, residents and trainees on a range of topics, including peanut allergies, traumatic

stress, thyroid cancer and the presence of SARS-CoV-2 in ticks. Chandra Shekhar Bakshi, D.V.M., Ph.D., professor of pathology, microbiology and immunology, delivered the keynote address. [Read the full story on the Research Symposium.](#)

Sachin Gupte, M.D., Ph.D., Awarded \$2.7 Million NIH Grant to Develop Treatments for Vascular Disease

Research Will Focus On Pulmonary Arterial Hypertension (PAH), PAH-induced Heart Failure And Metabolic Syndrome-associated Coronary Artery Disease

Sachin Gupte, M.D., Ph.D., professor of pharmacology, received a \$2,773,836, four-year grant from the National Institutes of Health to develop new personalized treatments to reduce vascular disease.

“Vascular diseases continue to be a major cause of death in the U.S. and



worldwide,” said Dr. Gupte. “The goal of our research is to develop new therapies for three human diseases – pulmonary arterial hypertension (PAH), PAH-induced heart failure and metabolic syndrome-associated coronary artery disease.” [Read the full story on Dr. Gupte’s award.](#)



Days of Giving Raises \$480,000 for Student Scholarships

The NYMC community rose to the occasion for the sixth annual Days of Giving, and raised \$480,000 for student scholarships. The goodwill of 45 ambassadors and 327 gifts from 315 donors hailing from 27 states, along with matching gifts from a generous group of donors will impact the lives of students in the SOM, SHSP

and GSBMS. “This year’s Days of Giving campaign was a tremendous fundraising success with increased participation from faculty, staff, alumni and students. The unprecedented number of student callers helped solidify our efforts as alumni happily chatted with young medical students and reminisced about their time at NYMC,” said Bess J. Chazhur, M.S., chief development officer and executive director of alumni relations. “We are deeply grateful to all those who participated in this special 48-hour campaign.” [Donations for Days of Giving may still be made to support student scholarships.](#)

Mitchell S. Cairo M.D., Awarded Research Grant by St. Baldrick's Foundation

Award Will Be Used To Develop Immunotherapeutic Agents To Enhance The Function Of Natural Killer Cells To Destroy Burkitt Lymphoma

Mitchell S. Cairo, M.D., professor of pediatrics, medicine, pathology, microbiology and immunology and cell biology and anatomy, and associate chair of the Department of Pediatrics, was awarded a \$100,000 research grant by the [St. Baldrick's Foundation's Jack's Pack – We Still Have His Back Hero Fund](#) to develop immunotherapeutic agents to enhance the function of natural killer cells to destroy Burkitt lymphoma. [Read the full story on Dr. Cairo's award.](#)



American Society of Cell Biology



Annual Meeting

Marina K. Holz, Ph.D., dean of the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences, professor of cell biology and anatomy, and interim chair of the Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, chaired a mini-symposium session, "Metabolism at the Lysosomes and Mitochondria" at the annual meeting of the [American Society of Cell Biology](#) on December 4 in Washington, D.C..

Exciting Renovations in the Basic Sciences Building

New laboratories and office space underway

Scientific laboratories are complex facilities with many components and are a product of meticulous planning, design and configuration. For several months, active construction crews have been a daily presence in the Basic Sciences Building conducting the complicated process of renovating sections of every department, starting with packing

up and moving furniture, supplies and delicate equipment, to demolition, installation of new plumbing, electrical and internet wiring, ventilation systems and myriad other important details. We are now beginning to see the new laboratory spaces taking shape alongside new offices for faculty and staff. Although at times this work may have been somewhat disruptive, the engineers, electricians, painters and other construction crews have made every effort to take into consideration the continuing active work of our researchers, faculty, students, and staff. All are looking forward to the numerous improvements in the workspace and seeing the expanded laboratory facilities that will be home to future research and discoveries coming to life.



FACULTY FEATURE



Jian Li Ph.D. Assistant Professor of Cell Biology and Anatomy

In July 2022, the GSBMS welcomed new faculty member, [Jian Li, Ph.D.](#), as assistant professor of cell biology and anatomy. “I look forward to working with colleagues at NYMC who share similar research interests in proteostasis, aging and cancer. I am also excited about teaching and mentoring graduate and medical students. I inherited the teaching philosophy from my Ph.D. mentor that ‘If you give a man a fish, you feed him for a

day. If you teach a man to fish, you feed him for a lifetime.’ I enjoy the stimulating discussions with students which often trigger new ideas.” [Read the full article on Dr. Li.](#)

Ph.D. STUDENT FEATURE

Addressing the GSBMS Class of 2023 at Commencement, Elizabeth A. Berry is Committed to Understanding Neurodegenerative Diseases

Elizabeth A. Berry, who recently defended her Ph.D. in the Department of Cell Biology in the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences (GSBMS), is addressing her class at commencement on Monday, May 22. She participated in various research projects throughout many departments in the GSBMS and is enthusiastic about being a role model for girls interested in STEM careers and a director of a research group that aims to understand neurodegenerative diseases. [Read the full interview with Ms. Berry.](#)



M.S. STUDENT FEATURE



From Combat to Medical School

Rico Pesce, MTM, Master of Science in Basic Medical Sciences (AMP) Class of 2023

Rico Pesce, GSBMS Class of 2023, aspired to become a physician since he was a certified nurse assistant in a skilled nursing facility over a decade ago. He became a medic for the 75th Ranger Regiment in the United States Army and served on five combat deployments to

Afghanistan over seven years. After his service, he completed his undergraduate education at Columbia University, where he studied computer science. During the initial wave of the pandemic and his last undergraduate summer, Pesce harnessed his military medical skills to work as a COVID tracheostomy care provider for New York-Presbyterian in New York City. [Read the full story on Mr. Pesce.](#)

ALUMNI FEATURE



GSBMS Degree leads to Touro College of Dental Medicine

Alexander Constantine, M.S. '21, Microbiology and Immunology, Touro College of Dental Medicine, Class of 2025

Alexander Constantine, M.S. '21 is a current second year dental student at TCDM. His passion for dentistry was clear since his early days: "My dad is a dentist

and I always looked up to him. When I was 10 years old, we had a class

assignment where we named our heroes. Other students chose Derek Jeter and Angelina Jolie, but I chose my dad. It would be my greatest success to provide care to patients in the same manner that he does.” With hard work, determination, and a propensity for knowledge, Constantine set out on his dental path, cultivating his interests in the varied fields of the sciences. [Read the full story on Mr. Constantine.](#)

The 164th Commencement Ceremony



invitation only.

Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences Awards and Hooding Ceremony

40 Sunshine Cottage Road, Valhalla, NY
10595

Monday, May 22, 2023

2:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Sunshine Tent

The GSBMS is making preparations and looking forward to the upcoming commencement celebrations! Activities will take place on campus and are by

GSBMS FACTS



159 students



64% female
36% male



96 faculty members



\$1,255 per credit

DIVERSITY



34% of students self-reported as part of a group currently underrepresented in science.

ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

- M.S. Interdisciplinary Biomedical Sciences (2-year and accelerated)
- M.S. and Ph.D. in Biochemistry and Molecular Biology
- M.S. and Ph.D. in Cell Biology
- M.S. and Ph.D. in Microbiology and Immunology
- M.S. and Ph.D. in Pathology
- M.S. and Ph.D. in Pharmacology
- M.S. and Ph.D. in Physiology
- Biomedical Science and Management (B.S.M.)
– Professional Science M.S. Program
- M.S. in Clinical Laboratory Sciences
- Dual degree: M.D./Ph.D.

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