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GSBMS Dean's Report

NYMC Publications

Fall 2023

Dean's Report- Fall 2023

Marina K. Holz

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GSBMS DEAN'S REPORT

Fall 2023



Welcome

This fall, GSBMS Dean **Marina K. Holz, Ph.D., M.P.H. '23**, welcomed returning and new master's and doctoral students to campus for the 2023-2024 academic year at several orientation sessions and by sharing this video. [View Dean Holz's welcome video.](#)

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NYMC Celebrates Opening of Newly Renovated BSB Laboratories

The evening of October 17 was an occasion to proudly showcase the new laboratory renovations in the BSB with a ribbon-cutting ceremony and tours of leadership, faculty, staff, students and local community. [Read the full story on the lab renovations and view the photo gallery and video.](#)



GSBMS Hosts Biennial Ph.D. Lab Coat Ceremony



Families, faculty and students proudly assembled in the John W. Nevins, M.D. '44, Auditorium as the GSBMS hosted its biennial Lab Coat Ceremony for Ph.D. candidates. The ceremony highlighted second-and third-year Ph.D. candidates and new M.D./Ph.D. students who gleefully donned their lab coats, surrounded by their loved ones and mentors who joined in to celebrate this significant moment.

[Read the full story](#) and view the [photos](#).

Graduate Student Association Selects New Leadership

The Graduate Student Association (GSA) is a longstanding and important feature of the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences with a mission to "solidify a mutually beneficial relationship between the graduate student body and college community." The GSA provides support for student organizations promotes social and-academic activities and provides a place to discuss students' concerns and ideas, giving the graduate students a voice on important issues within the college. The GSA is also the driving force behind the Graduate Student Research Forum, an annual celebration of the exciting research being conducted by M.S. and Ph.D. students, featuring a poster session, research presentations and awards.



This year's elected board members include from left to right: **Steven Yousef**, secretary; **Tim Cervera**, treasurer; **Neha Ali**, chair of community building; **Rahim Hirani**, vice president; **Christopher Lu**, president; **Madison Spears**, chair of GSRF; and GSRF ambassadors, **Sundus Rahman**, **Nicole Pioli**, and **Aaron Wilson**. (Missing from photo: Andrew Galeota, vice chair, and Anne Frances Garaña, GSRF ambassador.)

Christopher Lu, new GSA president, states, "I chose to serve as the president this year, aiming to build upon the foundation set by our previous GSA board members who have graduated. With classes resuming in-person, the campus has been livelier than ever, and we are looking forward to creating more social networking events, gatherings and informational sessions. Some events that students can look out for are our monthly potlucks and gatherings, resumé workshops, guest speaker sessions and the Graduate Student Research Forum. We will also continue working with different charities, such as the 5K charity run for Feeding Westchester and Ronald McDonald House Meals that Heals! Our goal as the GSA is to create a welcoming and supportive environment for the graduate students whilst facilitating their growth and development throughout the academic year."

Scholarship Awards for GSBMS Students



WISE Scholarships Awarded

The newly founded **Women's Institute for Science Entrepreneurship (WISE)**, established through a federal grant, offers unique opportunities to women college students to leverage their education in STEM fields to explore new scientific concepts and launch new businesses. Marina K. Holz, Ph.D., M.P.H. '23, GSBMS dean, has awarded five WISE scholarships to M.S. students who show dedicated interest in women-centered entrepreneurship in the field of biomedical sciences. The WISE Scholarship winners are

Sharine Adams, Fedan Avrumova, Anne-Frances Garana, Kamyra Shah and Rachel Wousu-Takji.

GSBMS Scholarship Awards

The GSBMS Scholarship is funded through the generosity of friends and alumni of the GSBMS, and most notably through the Dr. Edward J. Messina Scholarship Fund. GSBMS Scholarship awards have been provided to the following M.S. students: Jade Flores, Fatima Lemus Figueroa, Taylor Macri, Sara Muharremi and Aaron Wilson.

Congratulations to all!

WISE Program Launches the WISE-STAR Summer Program



In Summer 2023, the Women's Institute for Science Entrepreneurship (WISE) program launched its first summer undergraduate program in collaboration with the Summer Trainees in Academic Research (STAR) program. The WISE-STAR program enrolled six undergraduate students from Lander College of Women of Touro University. The six participants were Aviva Fogel in the lab of Govindaiah Vinukonda, M.Sc., Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Pediatrics-Newborn Medicine and Cell Biology & Anatomy; Hadassah Gabay in the lab of Dazhong Xu, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Pathology, Microbiology and Immunology Vice Chair of Research; Musya Gorkin in the lab of Victor Garcia, Ph.D. '15, assistant professor of pharmacology; **Leah Gutman** (pictured on the left) in the lab of Julie Di Martino, Ph.D., assistant professor of cell biology and anatomy; **Rachel Kasztl** (pictured on the right) in the lab of Xiu-Min Li, M.D., M.S., professor of pathology, microbiology & immunology and otolaryngology; and Bella Landau in the lab of Sudhir Jain, Ph.D., assistant professor of pathology, microbiology & immunology.

Accelerated Master's Program Conditional Admission Agreement with NYMC School of Medicine Proves Great Success

In November 2022, the GSBMS and the NYMC SOM established a Conditional Acceptance Agreement with the Accelerated Interdisciplinary Biomedical Sciences Master's Program (AMP). AMP students who met required metrics, had the opportunity to sign the Conditional Acceptance Agreement for admission to the SOM. Having satisfied the requirements of the agreement, a large cohort of AMP students were subsequently welcomed into the NYMC SOM Class of 2027.

On the heels of their success, more than half of current AMP students have entered into the agreement this year and are on their way to interview with the SOM for admission into the Class of 2028. The success of this agreement is testament to the strong ties between our



programs and the strength of the AMP in preparing students for the rigors of the medical school program.

New GSBMS Departmental Grants and Awards



Cell Biology and Anatomy Dr. Sangmi Chung Awarded \$7.1 Million in Grants to Support Schizophrenia Research

Sangmi Chung, Ph.D., professor of cell biology and anatomy, psychiatry and behavioral sciences and of neurology has been awarded two grants totaling \$7.1 million over five years from the National Institutes of Health's Institute of Mental Health to support her research into schizophrenia. [Read the full story on Dr. Chung's Award.](#)

Pharmacology Michal Laniado Schwartzman, Ph.D., Awarded \$2.2 Million NIH Grant Exploring Underlying Mechanisms of Obesity-driven Cardiovascular and Metabolic Diseases

Michal Laniado Schwartzman, Ph.D. professor and chair of pharmacology, professor of medicine, and associate professor of ophthalmology, has been awarded a \$2,268,684 four-year grant from the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute. The overall goal of this proposal is aimed at identifying cellular mechanisms that link activation of the G-protein coupled receptor 75 (GPR75) to obesity-driven metabolic and cardiovascular complications. [Read the full article on the Dr. Schwartzman.](#)





Pharmacology Dr. Daohong Lin Awarded \$2 Million Grant to Support Vital Kidney Regulating

Daohong Lin, Ph.D., assistant professor of pharmacology has been awarded a grant totaling \$2,050,000. The project, entitled "Regulation of Kir4.1/Kir5.1 and renal K excretion," is focused on exploring the role of the renal potassium channel in handling K homeostasis. [Read the full story on Dr. Lin](#)

Sowing Seed Strains and Fighting the Flu

For twenty years, government agencies and global vaccine taskforces have supported **Doris J. Bucher, Ph.D.**, associate professor of pathology, microbiology and immunology whose team takes traces of each year's infection and engineers them into robust vaccines. [Read the full story on Dr. Bucher.](#)



Name Change for a Game Change



The Graduate School of Basic Medical Sciences became the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences, in a name change approved by the College's Board of Trustees. The new title provides a more accurate representation of a student body engaged in the academic and research activities that drive today's biomedical research and funding, guided by values of excellence, intellectual curiosity and diversity and inclusion. [Read the full story on GSBMS.](#)

FACULTY FEATURE

Dr. Marcello Rota, Research with "Heart"

Marcello Rota, Ph.D., is an associate professor of the department of physiology, GSBMS mammalian physiology course co-director and principal investigator of a basic cardiovascular science laboratory. Known for his affable personality and warm smile, Dr. Rota has dedicated his career to the study of the complexities of the bearing heart.

Dr. Rota's proficiency in the creation of rodent models of myocardial injury and assessment of cardiac remodeling and function has allowed him to evaluate the regenerative properties of stem cells and consequences of promoting cardiac repair. [Read the full article on Dr. Rota.](#)



STUDENT FEATURE



Christopher Lu, Master of Biomedical Science, Class of 2024

Christopher Lu is a current second year-student in the Masters of Biomedical Science Program, whose professional goal is to become a psychiatrist. He is the current president of the Graduate Student Association (GSA), a student organization which provides support and information to graduate students while providing them with opportunities to give back to the local community.

Christopher Lu was born in Boston and raised in Taipei, Taiwan. He graduated from Boston University with a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology. Throughout college, Christopher Lu worked with the Social Learning Lab at Boston University, and assisted Dr. Angela Fan, from National Yang-Ming Medical University Taiwan, as co-author on her Lancet publications on burnout rate and specialty shortages in China, and Chinese medical students' and residents' perspectives on medical education for professional role formation.

Christopher Lu's favorite aspects of being a student at NYMC are hosting potlucks and fundraisers with GSA members, and the overall welcoming environment at NYMC. "Graduate and medical students are always supportive, and faculty go above and beyond to ensure students understand the material."

NYMC Celebrates the Class of 2023 at 164th Commencement

Exercises

The NYMC community buzzed with excitement and anticipation as the Class of 2023 celebrated their dedication to medicine, biomedical science and the health sciences and looked onward to the journey that lies ahead of them. Behind Sunshine Cottage families, friends and faculty gathered to commemorate the graduates for their time at the College, on May 22, 23 and 24. With the beaming sun and rich greenery of the NYMC campus, the graduates glowed as they solidified their commitment to their respective professions. The **three ceremonies** - the GSBMS on May 22, the SOM on May 23 and the SHSP on May 24-conferred 389 degrees to the Class of 2023, including 207 M.D. degrees; 41 D.P.T. degrees; 9 Ph.D. degrees; 76 M.S. degrees; 49 M.P.H. degrees; and 7 Dr.P.H. degrees.



GSBMS Commencement 2023

The celebratory week commenced with Jan Geliebter, Ph.D., professor of pathology, microbiology and immunology and associate professor of otolaryngology, bearing the ceremonial mace, which dons the portrait of NYMC founder William Cullen Bryant. Grand Marshal Victor G. Garcia, Ph.D. '16, assistant professor of pharmacology, led the program and commencement awards. Academic excellence and achievement awards were presented by Marina K. Holz, Ph.D., M.P.H. '23, dean of GSBMS.

Student speaker, Elizabeth Berry, Ph.D. '23, left her fellow classmates with advice to enjoy the journey no matter the destination, as she recalled arriving to NYMC pursuing her master's and leaving with her doctorate.

"As we graduate today, we embark on the next chapter of our lives. Some of us will go on to obtain another degree," said Dr. Berry. "Some will work at universities and colleges, hospitals and go into industry – the possibilities are endless. And yet no matter where we end up, we all leave NYMC better prepared to contribute to discovering new science, better methods of patient care, science policy, communication, etc."

Edward C. Halperin, M.D., M.A., chancellor, chief executive officer and interim dean of the SOM, introduced the GSBMS commencement speaker Jeffrey M. Friedman, M.D., Ph.D., Marilyn M. Simpson Professor, The Rockefeller University investigator at the Howard Hughes Medical Institute and director of the Starr Foundation Center for Human Genetics, who spoke about overcoming obstacles that can be defining moment.

"I consider it highly likely that you will at some point along the way face some significant adversity," said Dr. Friedman. "How well you do in life will have as much to do with how you manage that adversity and power your way through it as any of the other talents you bring forward into your careers."

Dr. Halperin followed with conferring the degrees of the GSBMS students and Dr. Holz happily presented the diplomas to the graduates.

[Read the full story](#), view the [photos](#) and [highlights video](#).

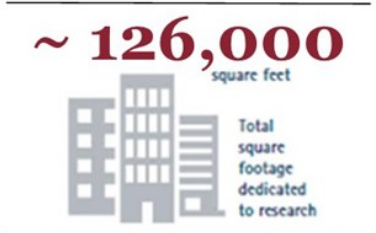
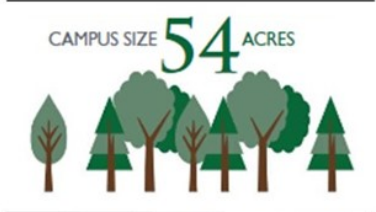
GSBMS Facts and Figures

185 STUDENTS
(As of Fall 2023)

Academic Programs:

- M.S. Interdisciplinary Biomedical Sciences (General 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 (BSM) Master's in six disciplines
- M.S. in Clinical Laboratory Sciences
- Dual degree program — M.D./Ph.D. with the NYMC School of Medicine

\$1,280
TUITION PER CREDIT



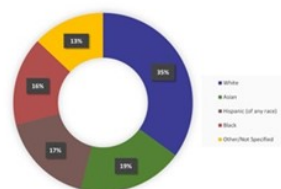
96 FACULTY MEMBERS

65% FEMALE
35% MALE

GSBMS Diversity Numbers:

- 34% of GSBMS students self-reported as part of a group currently underrepresented in the sciences

GSBMS students self-reported as members of the following groups:



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