

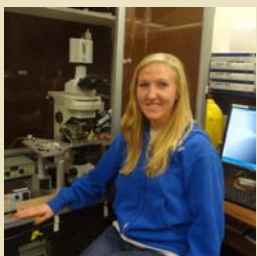
Lowell, Mary

From: mary.lowell@uky.edu on behalf of Pharmacology & Nutritional Sciences
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Sent: Friday, February 28, 2014 10:34 AM
To: Lowell, Mary
Subject: Pharmacology & Nutritional Sciences Newsletter

March 2014



Department of PHARMACOLOGY & NUTRITIONAL SCIENCES



Melanie Pleiss received the PhRMA Foundation Pre-Doctoral Fellowship in Pharmacology/Toxicology, a two-year award that provides recipients with an annual stipend of \$20,000 to support the research activities of a doctoral program. Melanie also received the UK Graduate School Travel Award to attend the 2013 Neuro-science conference in San Diego, CA in November where she presented her research, "Alzheimer's Disease: neuro-inflammation and immune mechanisms."

Merger creates "one-of-a-kind" unit

On January 31, 2014 the University of Kentucky Board of Trustees unanimously approved the merger of the Graduate Center for Nutritional Sciences and the Department of Molecular and Biomedical Pharmacology to create the Department of Pharmacology and Nutritional Sciences. The new department is, in the words of its first chair, Lisa A Cassis, PhD, "A unique unit, the only one of its kind in US academic institutions, with research and graduate training programs in Pharmacology and Nutritional Sciences within one basic science department."

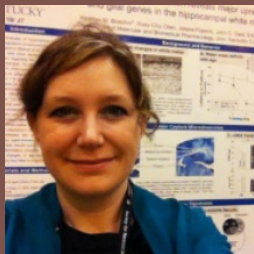
Dr. Cassis further expressed her confidence in the efficacy of the merger, "Pharmacology, as a discipline, is an area of biomedical sciences that will almost surely grow in importance as the biomedical research community, government and pharmaceutical industry strive to utilize new scientific advances to develop therapies for the health and welfare of an aging society. Similarly, nutritional sciences is a research area of increasing importance as a large majority of chronic diseases that adversely influence the health of the US population have a nutritional basis in disease prevention, development and therapy. We have merged these pivotal research and training programs into a single, multidisciplinary and collaborative environment that focuses on the development of nutritionally-based concepts and pharmacologic entities for the treatment of chronic diseases."



Joseph Layne in Dr. Nancy Webb's lab successfully defended his dissertation on Nov 11, 2013: "Novel insights into the function and regulation of group X secretory phospholipase A2."



Clinical Nutrition students **Maja Redzic** and Evan Cassity were awarded a Solutions for Sustainability Grant for their project: "Promoting Healthy Lifestyles." The grant is sponsored by Dr. Arnim Wiek from the School of Sustainability at Arizona State University.



Heather Buechel in Dr. Eric Blalock's lab, successfully defended her dissertation on December 3, 2013: "Changes in sleep architecture and cognition with age and psychosocial stress: a study in Fischer 344 rats."

Nancy Webb named director of new division



As part of the merger, Nancy Webb, PhD, was tapped for director of the new Division of Nutritional Sciences. Nancy received her BA in Biology at the University of Virginia and her PhD in Microbiology and Immunology at the University of Kentucky. Dr. Webb joined UK faculty in January 1999, in the Department of Internal Medicine, Division of Endocrinology and Molecular Medicine. She became a tenured professor in July 2009. Her research focuses on inflammation, lipoprotein metabolism, and cardiovascular disease. Dr. Webb has been an active member of the UK Graduate Center for Nutritional sciences, serving as a mentor for trainees and new investigators and directing the Molecular Applications in Nutrition course. She has several leadership roles in the American Heart Association, currently serving as chair of the Research Committee of the AHA Great Rivers Affiliate and chair of the Women's Leadership Committee for the Council on Arteriosclerosis, Thrombosis and Vascular Biology. She is a member of the Executive Board for the Great Rivers Affiliate of the AHA. Dr. Webb has been continuously funded by the NIH since 2001, and in January 2014 received a VA Merit Award titled "HDL Remodeling in Metabolic Syndrome."

Elizabeth Head and team receives Mary Carter Award



The University of Kentucky's Down Syndrome and Aging Research team, led by physicians Elizabeth Head and Frederick Schmitt, was selected for the 2014 Mary Carter Award. Down Syndrome of Louisville initiated the award to honor contributions, actions and achievements that improve the quality of life or promote a positive image for persons with Down syndrome.

The Down Syndrome Aging Study is a five-year federally funded project launched in 2010 at the UK. Its purpose is to support research that follows adults with Down syndrome as they age to understand the challenges they might face.

In November 2013, Dr. Head presented her research at the Third Annual Markesbery Symposium on Aging and Dementia held at UK.

Heather Buechel, at the time a doctoral candidate in the Department of Molecular Biomedical Pharmacology, received an outstanding poster award at the November Markesbery Symposium. Dr. Buechel earned her PhD in December 2013.



Cetewayo Rashid
in Dr. Kevin Pearson's lab successfully defended his dissertation on November 12, 2013: "An investigation of perinatal polychlorinated biphenyl exposure on glucose homeostasis and body composition."

Rina Plattner spoke at international cancer research conference



Rina Plattner, PhD, was a guest presenter at the 9th International Congress of the NDP Kinase/Nm23 /awd Gene Family. The theme of the conference, held in Boston in late July 2013, was "A new frontier in cell and biology." Dr. Plattner presented her research on "c-Abl and Arg induce cathepsin-mediated lysosomal degradation of the NM23-H1 metastasis suppressor in invasive cancer."

Lisa Cassis shepherds one of UK's largest grants



University of Kentucky has been awarded one of the largest health grants ever made to the institution: an \$11.3 million National Institutes of Health grant supporting research focusing on issues of obesity and cardiovascular disease. [Dr. Cassis, chair of Pharmacology and Nutritional Sciences, was interviewed](#)

[about her efforts.](#)

Please send news items to [Mary Lowell](#)

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

De Beer MC, Wroblewski JM, Noffsinger VP, Rateri DL, Howatt DA, Balakrishnan A, Ji A, Shridas P, Thompson JC, van der Westhuyzen DR, Tannock LR, Daugherty A, Webb NR, De Beer FC. "Deficiency of endogenous acute phase serum amyloid a does not affect atherosclerotic lesions in apolipoprotein e-deficient mice." *Arterioscler Thromb Vasc Biol.* 2014 Feb;34(2):255-61.

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