

The BGSA Newsletter

OCTOBER 2006

Biochemistry Graduate Student Association
Dept. of Biochemistry & Molecular Biology
at the University of Georgia, Athens

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Upcoming Event Friday Oct. 13th:

A non-denominational, non-discriminatory Autumn Festival with Candy and Costumes: (dare we say it?) Halloween Party

The Biochemistry and Genetics departments welcome you to our first ever Halloween Costume Second Friday... **The THIRTEENTH Extravaganza.**

Bring your family and friends for an exciting theme party complete with candy, food, drinks, and a ghoulish or two.

All are encouraged to dress as the scariest version of your most/least favorite professor. Or come as a less frightening, more traditional vampire, zombie, or humpbacked creature.

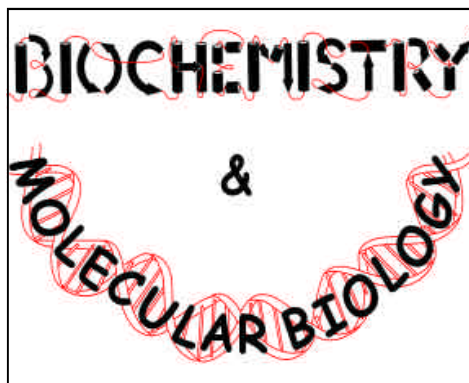


**5:30pm Friday October 13th,
Life Science Commons Room**

2006 – 2007 BGSA-SPONSORED SOCIAL EVENTS:

- Aug. 25, 2006: Fall BCMB Party
- Sept. 8, 2006: Trivia Night*
- Oct. 13, 2006: Halloween Costume Party***
- Nov. 8, 2006: Raffle Night*
- Dec. 15, 2006: Holiday BCMB Party
- Feb. 8, 2007: Casino & Game Night*
- Mar. 9, 2007: Movie & Pizza Night*
- Apr. 27, 2007: Spring BCMB Party

* JOINT WITH GENETICS
NOTE: DATES SUBJECT TO CHANGE



Remember: BCMB BGSA T-shirts are available in an assortment of colors (white and gray) and sizes. Please email bgsa@bmb.uga.edu for details. Only \$10!

Biochemistry Graduate Student Association Dept. of Biochemistry & Molecular Biology

President: Geneva DeMars
Vice President: Keriayn Smith
Secretaries: Kathy Lengel & Melani Atmodjo
Faculty Liaison: Stephanie Bridger
New Student Liaison: Hope Blackstone
Social Chairs: Steve Porter & Heather Strachan
Humanity Chair: Sonya Clarkson
Fundraising Chair: Jon Demick

Contact us: bgsa@bmb.uga.edu

Rivers Alive 2006! Community Service Event

On Saturday, September 30th, the BGSA participated in **Rivers Alive!**, an annual state-wide project aimed at keeping Georgia's waterways clean. We met at Dudley Park, on the Oconee River just east of downtown. Though we all came out in our BGSA T-shirts, we also received a **free Rivers Alive! T-shirt** just for showing up. A breakfast of biscuits and granola was supplied by **Mama's Boy**.

All the volunteers split up into several groups and the BGSA traveled to our clean-up site at **Cook's Trail near Sandy Creek Nature Center**. We spent an hour and a half walking along the trail looking for trash, but fortunately the citizens of Athens keep this particular trail very clean and we only found a few empty beer cans and soda bottles. So we spent our morning talking and taking a leisurely stroll along a beautiful trail, **no hard labor or getting dirty!** Other groups found more interesting trash, such as car tires, a stand lamp, a drill bit, and an abandoned dirt bike.

We returned to Dudley Park where we received a free lunch from **Five Star Day** and were entertained by a local Athens band. All in all, even though it started a bit early for us, it was a fantastic experience and one we hope to repeat next year with **more participation from the rest of the department!**

If working outside is not your idea of a fun way to get involved in the community, please let us know what kinds of activities you would like to participate in by contacting the BGSA at bgsa@bmb.uga.edu. Our **next planned community service event is a food drive throughout the month of November**. We'll let you know more as the time approaches.



Faculty Meeting Report

In the most recent faculty meeting held September 11, 2006, Dr. Przybyla presented information on a proposed umbrella program for the cellular and molecular life sciences. Our current framework for graduate recruitment does not reflect existing collective strengths at UGA. This program would serve as a portal of entry for students interested in interdisciplinary studies, and allow first year graduate students an opportunity to rotate in laboratories across campus before deciding which degree program to enter. This program is still in the early stages of development and consideration amongst the life science departments.

Graduate students, please feel free to contact us as bgsa@bmb.uga.edu with any questions or concerns you would like presented at upcoming faculty meetings.

8060 Seminar Series

All graduate students:

The Seminar Committee, consisting of Drs. Tiemeyer, Urbauer, Wells and BGSA representative Kathy Lengel, and Dr. Hajduk are currently discussing the proposal of significant changes to our 8060 seminar series. The committee wishes to see the series as more of a "course": one with defined topics and structure. Speakers with related research will visit our department during the span of each topic (ranging from one month to six weeks), and accompanying journal clubs for each building are proposed to provide a solid foundation for the chosen topics.

The committee is looking for your feedback concerning these proposed changes: contact us at bgsa@bmb.uga.edu and we will pass along your thoughts.

Student Spotlight

Congratulations for Santiago Lima for recently passing his oral examinations!

Santiago's research, under the tutelage of Dr. Robert S. Phillips, is aimed towards characterizing the steady state, pre-steady state, and structural properties of several pyridoxal-5'-phosphate dependent enzymes. One of these, kynureninase, is involved in the etiology of a number of neurodegenerative diseases. He is also working on a recently identified tryptophan synthase beta subunit homolog for which they have discovered a novel substrate. Outside of the lab, this past year he received an ASBMB travel award to present some of his work at the ASBMB centennial celebration conference, and co-authored a paper with his sister which was published in the August 2006 issue of PNAS.

