

2022 PATHWAYS TO CAREERS IN SCIENCE

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2022



BEHAVIOR, BIOLOGY,
and CHEMISTRY
*Translational Research
in Addiction*



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Department of Pharmacology
Office of the Vice President for Research



TOPICS

PATHWAYS TO CAREERS IN SCIENCE

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 25, 2022

3:00 PM TO 5:00 PM (FIVE, 20 MINUTE SESSIONS)

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2022 Discussion Leaders' Bios



Tracey Baas, PhD

Innovations Manager, Texas Biomedical Research Institute

Topic: Career Transitions

Dr. Tracey Baas is Innovation Manager at Texas Biomedical Research Institute and also Manager for the Vaccine Development Center of San Antonio (VDCoSA). She actively supports career exploration and has worked in organic chemistry laboratories, a virology laboratory, a scientific publishing company, and private and public graduate education, and was for some time an Assistant Dean in the Graduate School at UTSA. During her eight years at Nature Publishing Group, she contributed ~100 Op-Ed as a Senior Editor, which can be found at Springer Link. Some of her pet projects have been organizing a Summit in Boston on Innovation in Drug Discovery and Development for Science-Business Exchange (SciBX), developing a course "Leadership and Management for Scientists," and leading her favorite workshop Writing Tune-Up for Scientists.



Travis Block, PhD

Principal Scientist, StemBioSys, Inc.

Topic: Consulting

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, and returned to San Antonio to earn a PhD in Biomedical Engineering from the joint graduate program at University of Texas San Antonio & 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, and 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 the Board of Cartox Inc. He is passionate about science communication.

Linkedin: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/tjacksonblock/>

Twitter: [@TravisBlock2](https://twitter.com/TravisBlock2)

Website: www.travisjblock.com



Rachell Booth, PhD

Professor, Department of Biochemistry, University of the Incarnate Word

Topic: Primarily Undergraduate Institutions (PUI)

Dr. Booth is currently a Professor of Biochemistry in the School of Mathematics, Science and Engineering at the University of the Incarnate Word. She is currently a co-PI for an NSF S-STEM Program and was a MPI on the NIH-funded South Texas Doctoral Bridge Program (partnership between UT Health San Antonio and Texas State University San Marcos) while she was on the faculty at Texas State. She also serves on the ASBMB Student Chapters' Council as a Regional Director. She received her BS in Chemistry from Southeastern Louisiana University in 1996, a PhD in Biochemistry from the University of Southern Mississippi in 2001, and was an American Heart Association (AHA) Postdoctoral Fellow in Physiology at UT Health San Antonio.



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Christine Burke, PhD, MBA

Director, Commercialization, University of Texas 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 University of California San Francisco, and has an MBA from the University of Texas at San Antonio.

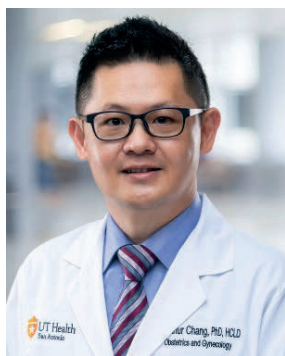


Ricardo Carrion, Jr., PhD

Professor; Director of Maximum Containment Contract Research; Co-Lead, Disease Intervention and Prevention, Texas Biomedical Research Institute (Texas Biomed)
Topic: Research Intensive Institutions (RII)

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 Ebola virus disease, Marburg virus disease and Lassa Fever thus providing a novel small NHP model for evaluating countermeasures to these diseases. He has characterized a number of 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, Assisted Reproductive Technologies (ART) Labs; Professor, Department of OB/GYN/Division of Reproductive Endocrinology & Infertility, UT Health San Antonio
Topic: Clinical Research

Dr. Arthur Chang is Professor in 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. 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.



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Beth Eby, CLU®, ChFC®

Principal, Eby Financial
Topic: Effective Networking

Principal of the San Antonio financial services firm, Eby Financial, Beth Eby works with individual clients to grow and protect wealth and achieve financial goals. She has a 15 year history of service to clients in healthcare. Beth was a founder of The Health Cell, a group that brings professionals together across the healthcare and bioscience industry in San Antonio. Active in a number of civic organizations, she is a frequent speaker on the topic of networking, and she credits community engagement for both business success and an interesting life.



Bridget Ford, PhD

Assistant Professor, Department of Biology, University of the Incarnate Word
Topic: Primarily Undergraduate Institutions (PUI)

Dr. Bridget Ford is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Biology at the University of the Incarnate Word (UIW). She obtained her BS in Biological Sciences with a minor in Chemistry from St. Mary's University in San Antonio. She then went on to earn her PhD in Molecular Medicine from UT Health San Antonio in 2012. She completed Postdoctoral Fellowship training at the United States Army Institute of Surgical Research (USAISR) 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 of her trainees is to apply what they learn in the classroom 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) and Co-Director, TechNovum Accelerator, UT Health San Antonio
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 to pursue a new career opportunity at Kinetic Concepts Inc., 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 a MS in Management of Technology from University of Texas San Antonio and a Master's in Health Administration from Texas State University.



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Andrea Giuffrida, PhD

Vice President for Strategic Industry Ventures, UT Health San Antonio

Topic: Science Policy/Advocacy

Andrea Giuffrida, PhD is the Vice President for strategic industry ventures and a professor of pharmacology at UT Health San Antonio. He develops strategies to grow entrepreneurship in academic settings, implements innovative programs to foster faculty and student success and interacts with funding networks and entities seeking to invest in life science technologies.

He oversees budgetary, personnel, and operations of the UT Health SA office of technology commercialization and the TechNovum Accelerator. He serves as the university liaison for matters related to higher education policy and academia-industry partnerships, and connects UT Health SA ventures with business communities to facilitate biomedical product development, consulting, testing, licensing, and other industry-facing services.

As a scientist, Dr. Giuffrida has provided important breakthroughs to the neuropharmacology of the cannabinoid system and its role in neurodegenerative and psychomotor disorders. He is a member of the editorial board of International Journal of Neuropsychopharmacology, and of the Executive Leadership Group of the Association of Academic Health Centers (AAHC). Dr. Giuffrida is the vice chair of the Texas Healthcare & Bioscience Institute, a policy voice for the life sciences and biotechnology industry in the state of Texas, and serves on the board of directors of BioMedSA.

Dr. Giuffrida also served as an AAAS Science & Technology Policy Fellow in the Office of Science Policy and in the Office of the Director of the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS) at the National Institutes of Health.



James "Jim" Hall, PhD

Professor, Biology, College of Arts and Sciences, Our Lady of the Lake University

Topic: Primarily Undergraduate Institutions (PUI)

Dr. James "Jim" Hall earned a BS in Chemistry/Biology at Angelo State University in 1979 and a PhD in Pharmacology at UT Health San Antonio in 1984. He is in his 38th year as a biology professor at Our Lady of the Lake University 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 NIH-funded IRACDA Postdoctoral research/teaching training program with UT Health Science Center.



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Kenneth M. Hargreaves, DDS, PhD

Professor & Chair, Department of Endodontics, UT Health San Antonio, School of Dentistry

Topic: Research Intensive Institutions (RII)

Ken Hargreaves received his DDS from Georgetown University, his PhD in physiology from the Uniformed Services University, and his certificate in Endodontics from the University of Minnesota. He is professor and Chair of the Department of Endodontics in the Dental School and is cross-appointed as a professor in the Departments of Pharmacology, Physiology and Surgery at UT Health in San Antonio. Dr. Hargreaves is part of a 7 faculty member team science group focused on pain research ranging from molecular studies to behavioral studies to electrophysiological studies to clinical trials. Dr. Hargreaves has published more than 200 articles, trained 13 PhD students and 22 Postdoctoral fellows and serves as editor of the Journal of Endodontics. He has received NIH MERIT Award, two IADR Distinguished Scientist Awards, the UT Health San Antonio President's Distinguished Senior Scholar Award and the ADA Research Gold Medal Award.



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 Postdoctoral fellowships refined her training as an Integrative Physiologist. She was on the faculty at UT Health San Antonio for many years. 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.



Jean Jiang, PhD

Professor and Zachry Distinguished University Chair, Department of Biochemistry & Structural Biology; Associate Director, Biomedical Engineering Joint Program (UTSA/UT Health SA)

Topic: Research Intensive Institutions (RII)

Dr. Jean Jiang is Professor and the Holder of Zachry Distinguished University Chair in Cancer Research. She has been a faculty member at UT Health San Antonio since 1997. Her major research projects focus on connexin channels, and cell signaling mechanism in various tissues and cells and development of therapeutics in treating several diseases. Dr. Jiang has published over 160 papers and has multiple patents published and issued. Her research has been funded by multiple federal and private funding agencies.



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Scott Jones, PhD

Vice President, Scientific Affairs and Research & Development, BioBridge Global, San Antonio, Texas

Topic: Industry

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 Postdoctoral work at The Texas center for Infectious Disease where he was the Director of the TB-RFLP Laboratory. He has worked at BioBridge Global since 1999. He has expertise in blood screening of whole blood and source plasma donations. He has developed NAT assays for HIV-1, HCV, Parvo-B19, HAV and HEV. Current focus is on developing assays for the cell and cell based therapeutics. 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.



Jennifer R. Lloyd, MBA

Senior Director, University Communications, St. Mary's University, San Antonio, TX

Topic: Science Communication

Jennifer R. Lloyd is the Senior Director of University Communications at St. Mary's University, overseeing news and information, media relations and social media efforts. She is also Executive Editor for the University's award-winning alumni magazines, Gold & Blue magazine, and the Gold & Blue Law Edition. She is also the founder of Thought Bubble Studio, a consultancy to help executives, entrepreneurs and researchers develop their personal brands through thought leadership services and coaching. Earlier in her career, she 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. She earned her BA in Communication from the University of Washington, her MA in Journalism from the University of Texas at Austin, and her MBA from St. Mary's University.



Philip T. LoVerde, PhD

Professor, Department of Biochemistry & Structural Biology, Pathology and Laboratory Medicine, UT Health San Antonio

Topic: Effective Networking

Dr. Philip T. LoVerde is a Professor at the UT Health San Antonio and an award-winning mentor. He was recipient of the UT Health San Antonio's Outstanding Postdoc Mentor Award in 2020. 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>



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Luis Martinez-Sobrido, PhD

Professor, Department of Infectious Disease and Pathogenesis, Texas Biomedical Research Institute; Adjunct Professor, Department of Microbiology, Immunology and Molecular Genetics, UT Health San Antonio; Adjunct Professor, Department of Microbiology and Immunology at University of Rochester, New York
Topic: Drug and Device Development

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 University of Texas Health Science Center San Antonio (UT-Health SA), and Adjunct Professor in the Department of Microbiology and Immunology at University of Rochester, New York. 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.

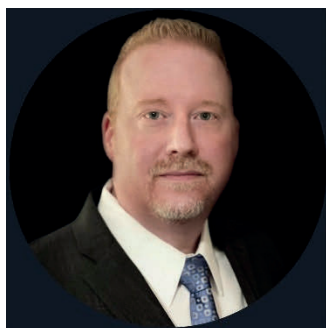


Stanton McHardy, PhD

Associate Professor, Department of Chemistry; Director, Center for Innovative Drug Discovery, University of Texas at San Antonio
Topic: Drug and Device Development

Dr. Stan McHardy is the director of the Center for Innovative Drug Discovery and Associate Professor in the Department of Chemistry. After receiving his PhD in organic chemistry at the University of Utah in 1996, Dr. McHardy was a Postdoctoral research fellow at Pfizer. Dr. McHardy has over 25 years' experience in the pharmaceutical R&D and academic areas of neuroscience, cancer and infectious disease drug discovery, medicinal chemistry and synthesis and process chemistry.

From 1996 to 2006, Stan worked in the department of Neuroscience Medicinal Chemistry at Pfizer Global Research in Groton, CT where he led project teams toward the discovery of several clinical drug candidates in the areas of addiction, schizophrenia, Alzheimer's and ADHD and managed multi-discovery project teams as Associate Director of Neuroscience Medicinal Chemistry.



Jay Morris, PhD

Medical Science Liaison – GI, Castle Biosciences, Inc.
Topic: Industry

Dr. Jay Morris began his postdoctoral training at the Medical University of South Carolina after finishing his PhD in molecular and environmental plant science there. After his completed postdoc training, he moved to UT Health San Antonio as research assistant professor in the Department of Molecular Medicine focusing on cancer chemo-prevention modalities in several cancers. He is currently a Medical Science Liaison (MSL) for a biotech company focusing on diagnostic and prognostic assays for numerous types of cancers. He is usually on the road about half of his work time traveling to conferences, research meetings, and other company programs across the western US. In the non-work hours, he enjoys getting away from the house and exploring various far off nature habitats.



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Mary Pat Moyer, PhD, CTBS, NAE

Founder, CEO and Chief Science Officer, INCELL Corporation LLC

Topic: Drug and Device Development

Dr. Mary Pat Moyer, the Founder, CEO and Chief Science Officer of INCELL (1993), was elected to the National Academy of Engineering (2019) for her accomplishments in bioengineering. Her career spans over 50 years as an academic scientist, entrepreneur, and passionate community activist for life sciences research, business, and education. With a 1981 microbiology PhD (molecular virology emphasis) from the University of Texas at Austin, she joined the Surgery Department, at UT Health San Antonio, as the first woman faculty member. A Professor of Surgery, Microbiology and Molecular Medicine she led the Department of Surgery's Research Division, directed the Center for Human Cell Biotechnology, NIH-sponsored UT Cancer Center's Cell and Tissue Bioprocessing, and the BSL3 microbiology facility. She has extensive expertise in regenerative medicine, cancer, immune therapies, human cell culture, stem and progenitor cells, virology, formulation and biomanufacturing. With over 250 publications, she has mentored hundreds of trainees, consulted and served on boards of for-profit and non-profit entities and governmental agencies. Her numerous awards include selection as an American Academy of Microbiology fellow, the AAUW Breaking the Glass Ceiling Award, Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year, international Athena Award, "Women of Voice and Vision" award, and one of the "Top Ten Texas CEOs in Life Sciences".



Melanie Paquette-McNerlin, PhD

Consultant Medical Science Liaison, Neuroscience, Eli Lilly and Company

Topic: Industry

Melanie Paquette-McNerlin grew up in Maine, then completed a BA in Psychology with a minor in French at Brandeis University in Waltham, MA followed by MA and PhD degrees in Behavioral Neuroscience from Arizona State University in Tempe, AZ. She was a postdoctoral fellow in Behavioral Neuroscience at Oregon Health & Sciences University (OHSU) in Portland, OR. She worked as a research faculty (non-tenure track) in Neurology at OHSU, then in Pharmacology at the UT Health San Antonio where her research involved the 6-OHDA rat model of Parkinson's disease. Melanie also worked part-time as a Science Editor for several years while conducting research. In 2010, she joined Lilly USA (part of Eli Lilly & Company) as a Neuroscience Medical Science Liaison (MSL) Consultant, covering neurodegeneration and pain. She lives with her husband and 3-year-old daughter in Helotes, TX.



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Jose Salinas, PhD

Science Lead, Engineering, Technology, and Automation CRT; Capability Area Manager, Medical Robotics and Autonomous Systems (MedRAS) Program, U.S. Army Institute of Surgical Research

Topic: Military Health Research

Dr. Salinas is the Science Lead of the Engineering, Technology, and Automation group at the US Army Institute of Surgical Research, Fort Sam Houston, TX and the Capability Area Manager for the Medical Robotics and Autonomous Systems (MedRAS) capability area. In his research role, he is currently focusing on development of new clinical decision support technologies, artificial intelligence, and automation solutions to improve outcomes of military combat casualties during multi-domain operations. This includes the development of novel information technology and engineering products that provide users with new approaches to communicate and automate trauma diagnoses and treatments that are normally performed through manual means. Other projects include research and development efforts that use information technology concepts for enhanced medical situational awareness in the deployed setting. Dr. Salinas also manages multiple research efforts in advanced digital signal processing algorithms for enhanced diagnosis of combat casualties including the use of advanced machine learning techniques for improved physiologic models and prediction of trauma injuries. His current program supports research projects at the US Army Telemedicine and Advanced Technology Research Center and the US Army Institute of Surgical Research in addition to multiple extramural efforts with universities, government laboratories, and medical devices manufacturers.



Mikaela Sifuentes, PhD

Medical Writer, 3M, Medical Solutions Division

Topic: Science Communication

Dr. Sifuentes is currently a Medical Writer at 3M for product information, clinical research, and case reports. She coordinates with clinicians to ensure that real-world uses of Acelyty devices can be shared with the larger medical community. Dr. Sifuentes is a PhD in Neuroscience graduate of UT Health San Antonio, where she continues to explore the mechanism of protection of thyroid hormone during stroke. Dr. Sifuentes has been recognized for the quality of her work by a Translational Science (TST-TL1) Scholarship and a Predoctoral Fellowship funded by the American Heart Association (AHA).



Brian Stout, PhD

Professor, Department of Biology, Northwest Vista College

Topic: Primarily Undergraduate Institutions (PUI)

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.



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Joanne Turner, PhD

Vice President for Research, Texas Biomedical Research Institute (Texas Biomed)

Topic: Research Administration

Joanne Turner, PhD, is the Executive Vice President for Research at Texas Biomedical Research Institute. As Executive Vice President for Research, Dr. Turner is leading institutional change in the areas of scientific program development and compliance. Through strategic planning she is leading the development of 4 institutional cores, and enhancing research operations support. As a professor performing research on tuberculosis (TB), Dr. Turner studies the changes that take place in the immune system during the natural aging process and how those changes can influence both innate and adaptive immune function when infected with *M. tuberculosis*. The primary focus of Dr. Turner's aging research is the association of inflammation with susceptibility to develop TB which is funded through a program project grant. Dr. Turner received her PhD in Immunology from the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. She was appointed VP for Research with Texas Biomed in 2017, having previously served as a Professor and Biosafety Level (BSL) 3 Program Director at The Ohio State University in Columbus, OH. She also served as the Executive Director of the San Antonio Vaccine Development Center, a collaborative program between Texas Biomed, the University of Texas at San Antonio, UT Health San Antonio and Southwest Research Institute.



Ratna Vadlamudi, PhD

Professor & Vice Chair for Research, Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology; Tom C. and Patricia H. Frost Endowed Chair; CoLeader, CDP program, Mays Cancer Center; Associate Program Director, South Texas MSTP (MD/PhD) program, UT Health San Antonio

Topic: Drug and Device Development

Dr. Vadlamudi is a Professor & Vice Chair for Research in the Department of Ob/Gyn and Associate Program Director of the MD/PhD program at UT Health San Antonio. Dr. Vadlamudi also serves as a Co-leader of Cancer Development Program at Mays Cancer Center. Dr. Vadlamudi, received his PhD in Molecular Biology from the University of Wyoming and completed Postdoctoral training at Harvard Medical School/DFCI and at UT MD Anderson Cancer Center. Dr. Vadlamudi, served as faculty at UT MD Anderson Cancer Center, Louisiana State University Medical School before joining UT Health San Antonio in 2006. He was elected as AAAS Fellow in 2015 for his outstanding contributions to the area of Molecular Biology of Cancer. Dr. Vadlamudi's research focused on women cancers is funded by NIH, DOD, VA grants. He has over 21 years of experience in training undergraduate, pre-doctoral students, and Postdoctoral fellows.



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Guillermo Vela, MS

CEO and Co-Founder, NeuScience

Topic: Entrepreneurship

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.



Rafael Veraza, PhD, MPH

Director of Translational Science, Vascular Perfusion Solutions, Inc., The Canavan Center, San Antonio, Texas

Topic: Industry

Dr. Veraza is a translational scientist focused on commercialization of biotechnology, innovative medical devices, and healthcare innovation. His area of expertise is in the field of translational science and research and biotechnology development projects, bridging pre-clinical studies to clinical applications for patients. Currently, he works in the area of organ and tissue preservation to improve organ transplant outcomes. He has over ten years of experience working with academic research institutions, private companies, and international organizations such as the CDC, UNICEF, the WHO, GPEI-EPI, and The Rotary Foundation. He holds a PhD degree in Translational Science from the joint translational science PhD program between UT Health San Antonio, UT Austin, and UTSA. Currently, he is the director of Translational Science at Vascular Perfusion Solutions, Inc. that is developing organ preservation technology for organ transplants.



Corinde E. Wiers, PhD

Assistant Professor, Department of Psychiatry, Center for Studies on Addiction, Perelman School of Medicine, University of Pennsylvania

Topic: Career Transitions

Corinde E. Wiers, PhD is Assistant Professor of Psychiatry and Radiology at the Perelman School of Medicine. She received her PhD in Psychology from the Berlin School of Mind and Brain and Freie Universität Berlin and completed a Postdoctoral Fellowship at the NIH/NIAAA in Bethesda MD under mentorship of Dr. Nora Volkow. Her research focuses on neurobiological underpinnings of substance use disorders using PET and MRI. She currently investigates the effects of metabolic ketosis on brain energetics, alcohol withdrawal and consumption in alcohol use disorder. At the 14th Behavior, Biology and Chemistry (BBC) Conference, Dr. Wiers will present on iron metabolism in Alcohol Use Disorder (AUD).