

SBUR Trainee Symposium

***Thursday, November 4th, 2021
2-4:30pm (CT)***

- ***Career Panel Discussion: 2-3:30pm***
- ***Preparing a fellowship application: Common pitfalls & potential solutions: 3:30-4:30pm***

Guest Speakers



Dr. Cimona Hinton, PhD, is a Full Professor in the Department of Biological Sciences and the Center for Cancer Research and Therapeutic Development, and Director of the Research Infrastructure Core, all at Clark Atlanta University (CAU). Her major areas of interest are cannabinoid receptor signaling, oxidative stress, GPCR coupling and the mechanics of cell movement, all in the prostate. Her work has been supported by the United Negro College Fund, the AAAS, and the NSF and awards from NIH. She completed a standing member rotation of the Cancer Prevention Study Section at the (NIH) and serves as an External Advisory Board Member of the Delaware-IDeA Networks of Biomedical

Research Excellence (INBRE) Program, and a Commissioning Editor for WIREs Mechanism of Disease. Finally, Dr. Hinton was named to the prestigious list of 1000 Inspiring Black Scientists in 2020. Her work is currently supported by the State of Georgia through a collaboration with Georgia Cancer Center, and an anonymous donor award for cannabis-based research in October 2021. Dr. Hinton strongly supports trainee scholarship and advancement through the academy.



Dr. Cindy Lebron, PhD, is currently a Director of Field Medical Affairs at Seagen, a global biotechnology company dedicated to developing revolutionary therapies. She manages a team of seven regionally based Oncology Medical Science Liaisons within the US. Cynthia earned her PhD from the University of South Florida in 2007 in Cancer Biology in collaboration with Moffitt Cancer Center. Shortly after completing her graduate work, she began and completed a 3-year postdoctoral fellowship at Johns Hopkins School of Medicine in the Head and Neck Cancer Department. She was recruited by Amgen, the largest US biotechnology company in 2010 as an Oncology Medical Science Liaison. In 2015, she joined Seagen as a Senior Oncology Medical Science Liaison and later was promoted to manage and lead her own team in 2017. She currently

resides in Land O Lakes, FL.



Dr. James Brooks, PhD, has for the past 24 years worked as a clinician-scientist with a translational research objective of identifying and validating disease biomarkers in urology. While much of his work has been in oncology, increasingly he has migrated to benign urology, including benign prostatic hyperplasia and obstructive nephropathy. His work has spanned genomics, molecular biology, clinical trials, and health research and policy. Dr. Brooks has been funded continuously by the NIH, including a recently awarded U54 O'Brien Center which he leads. Dr. Brooks has mentored many trainees under these projects and has served as mentor to junior faculty on several training grants. From 2013-2019, Dr. Brooks served as Associate Dean of Academic Affairs in the Stanford University School of Medicine where he was primarily responsible for appointments and promotions in the research-intensive lines. He currently serves as mentoring champion, Chief of Urologic Oncology and Vice-Chair in the Department of Urology at Stanford.



Dr. Sarah Amend, PhD, is an Assistant Professor of Urology and Oncology at the Brady Urological Institute at Johns Hopkins School of Medicine. Dr. Amend earned her bachelor's degree at NC State University where her undergraduate research was focused in plant pathology. She did her Ph.D. research at Washington University in St. Louis with Kathy Weilbaecher with her thesis focused on the contributions of the bone microenvironment to cancer metastasis. She completed postdoctoral training in the lab of Ken Pienta where her work focused on the initiation events of the metastatic cascade. Dr. Amend's research program focuses on cancer lethality, including metastasis and therapy resistance, with specific interest in understanding the critical role of the polyan euploid cancer cell (PACC) state in driving lethal disease. In particular, she uses evolutionary ecology paradigms to investigate – and eventually to therapeutically target - the formation and influences that lead to the generation of cells that eventually actuate therapeutic resistance and disease recurrence. Dr. Amend is passionate about understanding cancer through the lens of evolutionary ecology by collaborative interdisciplinary research and for advocating for women in science and research.



Dr. Meghan Rice, PhD, is a Translational Pharmacology Scientist at Revolution Medicines (Redwood City, CA) since May 2020. Her current work focuses on the development of oncology therapeutics to target RAS(ON) mutant genotypes. Dr. Rice is a former SBUR trainee, completing doctoral studies with Dr. Kerry Burnstein (University of Miami), and postdoctoral training with Dr. Tanya Stoyanova (Stanford University) where she focused largely on identifying molecular targets and treatments of prostate cancer.



Dr. Matthew Smith, PhD, started his career in public health, earning an MSPH while holding positions at the Florida Department of Health and later with the CDC. He then went on to pursue a PhD in molecular medicine, focusing on transcriptional regulation in natural killer cells at USF college of Medicine. His post-doctoral work explored kinase inhibitor resistance and predictive biomarkers in lung cancer, working at Moffitt Cancer Center under the supervision of a physician scientist. After spending several years as a research scientist, Matt accepted a medical science liaison (MSL) position in 2019 with Genentech. He is currently a Sr. MSL responsible for thoracic, genitourinary and cutaneous oncology in Florida and Puerto Rico. He is married with two elementary school-aged children and resides in the Tampa Bay area.

Preparing a fellowship application: Common pitfalls & potential solutions



Dr. Travis Jerde, PhD, is an Associate Professor of Pharmacology & Toxicology, Microbiology and Immunology, and Urology at Indiana University School of Medicine, Indianapolis, IN. Dr. Jerde received his PhD in Pharmaceutical Sciences from the University of Wisconsin under the co-mentorship of Drs. William Mellon and Stephen Nakada. He then went on to do his postdoctoral work in the laboratory of Dr. Wade Bushman at the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine. He began his first faculty appointment in 2010 the Departments of Pharmacology, Toxicology and Urology at Indiana University School of Medicine where he has risen through the ranks and remains. Dr. Jerde is the Director of Graduate Studies for Indiana University Programs in Pharmacology and Toxicology, Chair of the Indiana University School of Medicine Graduate Curriculum, and a Founder and Coordinator of the Indiana Basic Urological Research (IBUR) Program (Indiana and Purdue Universities). Dr. Jerde also currently

serves as SBUR's Secretary. His lab studies how inflammation within tissue microenvironments promotes disease, including BPH, prostate cancer, and bladder cancer.



Amina Zoubeidi, Ph.D.

Canada Research Chair (Tier 1)
Professor at the Dept. of Urologic Sciences
Faculty of Medicine, University of British Columbia
Senior Scientist, Vancouver Prostate Centre



Leigh Ellis, Ph.D.

Positions: Scientific Director, Center for Urologic Research Excellence
Associate Professor, Samuel Oschin Comprehensive Cancer Institute at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center
Degree(s): Ph.D. in Medical Science

Research Interests: Genitourinary cancers, aggressive variant prostate cancer, lineage plasticity, genetics, epigenetics, immunity, novel therapy strategies

Research Summary:

The Ellis laboratory interests include the characterization of comprehensive molecular signatures, survival pathways to apply towards novel therapeutic strategies for patients with aggressive/lethal prostate cancer. Our specific focus is to discover how a prostate cancer cell controls the expression of genes (a mechanism called epigenetics) to drive metastasis and resistance to current therapies used to treat prostate cancer patients. Most recently, our research has demonstrated how the epigenetic regulator, EZH2, controls prostate cell fidelity and evasion of immune detection. Inhibition of EZH2 resulted in reprogrammed prostate cancers and its tumor microenvironment to re-sensitize to androgen deprivation therapy and check-point immunotherapy. Such preclinical findings enable for the translation and initiation of first in human clinical trials. Excitingly, we are finding that our results from prostate cancer studies are also relevant in other cancers including bladder, kidney and lung cancers, meaning the potential of our research and clinical translation to significantly impact multiple disease sites.



Dr. Jill Fehrenbacher received a B.S. from the University of Southern Indiana in 1999 and a Ph.D. from Indiana University in 2005. She completed her postdoctoral fellowship in the Department of Endodontics at the University of Texas Health Science Center in San Antonio. In 2010, she joined Indiana University as an Assistant Professor with a primary appointment in the Department of Pharmacology and Toxicology and as a member of the Stark Neurosciences Research Institute.