

NEWS FLASH

THE QUARTER HELIX IS NOW KNOWN AS SPIN!

In order to bring our readers pertinent news and updates in a more timely manner, we have agreed to convert to a monthly newsletter in place of our quarterly format. This means farewell to The Quarter Helix and its five-year running as the AFCRI's news source. We hope you will enjoy the successor, SPIN: Science, People, and Institute News. Named in honor of the centrifuge that spins your samples, the SPIN is an electronic newsletter, and should bring you up to speed far sooner than its predecessor.

\$10 AU BON PAIN GIFT CARDS!

Five readers who can respond with the correct answers to our monthly AFCRI trivia questions will receive a \$10 gift certificate to Au Bon Pain.

1. Which extracellular signaling pathway did Eric Witze find allows melanoma cells to alter their polarity?
2. What company recruited Gwen Binder?
3. Where is Jim Dilenno's office

Email your response to:
spinnews@exchange.upenn.edu
Drawings take place one week after publication.

UPS SUPPLIES STOCKED IN 516

UPS supplies have been set up for common use near the 516 office suite, in a wooden cabinet beside the RICOH copier. Please feel free to go here for express envelopes (with and without label windows), labels (including dry ice), and more. Please be mindful when using supplies to keep them orderly.

DR. ERIC WITZE JOINS AFCRI/CBIO FACULTY

Please join us in welcoming Eric S. Witze, PhD, the newest Cancer Biology faculty member. Surprisingly, Dr. Witze's interests were initially centered more on sports than science. While growing up in the San Francisco Bay Area with his stay-at-home mother, engineering father, and two brothers, he enjoyed baseball, soccer, drawing, and painting. Eric had no idea at the time what he wanted to be when he "grew up" and he really can't believe he's landed in academia all these years later.



Dr. Witze delved into the realm of scientific research while attending the University of California in Santa Barbara, where he majored in biology. After graduation, he worked at several biotech companies before deciding to return to the UCSB to pursue his graduate studies. There he worked with Dr. Joel Rothman in the study of programmed cell death in the nematode *C. elegans*.

Before coming to Penn, Dr. Witze was a postdoctoral researcher in the lab of Dr. Natalie Ahn in the Department of Biochemistry at the University of Colorado, Boulder and the Howard Hughes Medical Institute. In the Ahn lab, he studied how noncanonical Wnt signaling regulates cell behavior in melanoma.

As Dr. Witze settles into his new lab space, he looks forward to studying how cancer cells establish cell polarity, or basically make one end of the cell distinct from the other end of the cell. This is accomplished by imaging the melanoma cells live on a microscope while observing the localization of fluorescently-labeled

proteins over time. He's found that an extracellular signaling pathway called Wnt, that was previously shown to be upregulated in late stage melanoma, allows melanoma cells to alter their polarity, and move in a specific direction. Dr. Witze plans to investigate in greater detail how melanoma cells control this process, and also if it plays a role in promoting metastasis.

Dr. Witze and his wife, Heather, moved to Pennsylvania soon after the birth of their daughter, Fiona, who is now nine months old. They have settled in Wayne in a 110-year-old house that appealed to them because of the large yard with big trees that can accommodate their three dogs, Stella, Lola, and Jojo. The couple look forward to when Fiona is old enough to mow the lawn and rake the leaves.

Dr. Witze's newly-hired research assistant, Ginger Lemon, comes from just outside of Philadelphia in Upper Perk. Ginger attended the University of Pennsylvania and obtained her undergraduate degree in biology with a minor in classical studies in May of 2010. She had previously worked in the lab of Mary Mullins on the twelfth floor of BRB II/III, and she is delighted to be able to stay at Penn continuing her research. In addition to science, Ginger likes roller skating, sewing, and watching old movies, and enjoys spending time with her five-year-old son, Nathaniel.

We look forward to greeting more researchers as they join the new Witze lab and watching their contributions to the ever-growing AFCRI.

SAVE THE DATE

Tuesday, 2/22 - 12:00 pm, CRB Austrian Auditorium AFCRI/Hem-Onc Seminar Series

Bruce Edgar, PhD, University of Heidelberg, Germany - *Stem cell mediated homeostasis and dysplasia in the Drosophila intestine.*

Thursday, 2/24 - 4:00 pm - Hill Pavilion Rm 132 (Allam Conf. room) Mari Lowe Seminar

Linda M. Hendershot, PhD, St. Jude Children's Research Hospital - *Protein folding in the ER: Life and death decisions.*

Monday, 2/28 - 12:15 pm, John Morgan Class of '62 Cell and Developmental Biology Seminar Series

Barbara J. Graves, PhD, Huntsman Cancer Institute, University of Utah - *Genomic and biochemical insights into the specificity of ETS transcription factors.*

Tuesday, 3/1 - 12:00 pm, CRB Austrian Auditorium AFCRI/Hem-Onc Seminar Series

Linheng Li, PhD, Stowers Institute for Medical Research - *A novel approach in targeting cancer stem cells.*

Wednesday, 3/2 - 12:00 pm - 252 BRB II/III CRRWH Seminar Series

Dmitri Loukinov, PhD, Molecular Pathology Section NIAID/NIH - *CTCF and its testis specific paralog BORIS: Sibling rivalry in cancer.*

Friday, 3/4 - 12:00 pm - John Morgan Class of '62 Immunobiology Program RIP Seminar

Warren S. Pear, MD, PhD, Department of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine - *Title TBA.*

Monday, 3/7 - 12:15 pm, BRB Auditorium Cell and Developmental Biology Seminar Series

Donald W. Cleveland, PhD, University of California, San Diego - *From Charcot to Lou Gehrig: Mechanisms and therapy in ALS.*

Tuesday, 3/8 - 12:00 pm, CRB Austrian Auditorium AFCRI/Hem-Onc Seminar Series

Laurence J.N. Cooper, MD, PhD, University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center - *Good T cells for bad B cells.*

Monday, 3/14 - 12:15 pm, BRB Auditorium Cell and Developmental Biology Seminar Series

Wendy Bickmore, PhD, Western General Hospital, Edinburgh - *Title TBA.*

Tuesday, 3/15 - 12:00 pm, CRB Austrian Auditorium AFCRI/Hem-Onc Seminar Series

Joseph Nevins, PhD, Duke University Medical Center - *Genomic strategies for achieving personalized cancer treatment.*

Wednesday, 3/16 - 12:00 pm - 252 BRB II/III CRRWH Seminar Series

Francisco Pelegri, PhD, MIT, University of Wisconsin at Madison - *Early zebrafish development: Factors required for pronuclear fusion, cell division, and germ plasm recruitment.*

Tuesday, 3/22 - 12:00 pm, CRB Austrian Auditorium AFCRI/Hem-Onc Seminar Series

Charles M. Rudin, MD, PhD, Johns Hopkins Medical Institute - *Novel approaches to small cell lung cancer.*

In addition to these seminars, AFCRI hosts a Student/Postdoc Seminar Series on Fridays at 4:00 pm in the CRB Austrian Auditorium. Afterwards is a happy hour of pizza and beer in room 252 BRB. For more information, please contact Kelly Clark at kelclark@exchange.upenn.edu.

For details on the Immunobiology seminars, contact Jennifer Leight at leightj@exchange.upenn.edu.

For details on the AFCRI/Hem-Onc seminar series, contact Laura Murillo at kernsl@mail.med.upenn.edu (AFCRI) or Regina McDermott (Hem-Onc) at Regina.McDermott@uphs.upenn.edu.

For details on the Center for Research on Reproduction and Women's Health Seminars, contact Donna Adamoli at adamoli@mail.med.upenn.edu or visit the [website](#).

[Click here](#) for details on the Cell and Developmental Biology seminars. Visit the [SOM calendar](#) for more seminars and events.

DR. CARL JUNE ANNOUNCES FAREWELL TO GWEN BINDER-SCHOLL

It is with sadness and yet great joy that I announce that Gwen Binder-Scholl is leaving Penn as of February 25 to become Vice President of Operations Adaptimmune US.

Gwen came to Penn as Director of Operations for the AFCRI Translational Research Program in January 2006. She has had many wonderful accomplishments, including developing and filing the first INDs for HIV and Cancer using lentiviral vector technologies. In addition to her scientific and regulatory expertise, Gwen has helped many scientists and clinicians learn how to implement their research, first in human trials, and to efficiently and safely conduct clinical experiments. In fact it is fair to say that she was so successful that one of our collaborating companies enticed her to run their trials full time.

Adaptimmune has recruited Gwen to develop their portfolio of engineered TCRs. Fortunately for us all, Gwen will stay closely associated with TRP and Penn in her new capacity, as she will be running three protocols with gene modified T cells in cancer and one in HIV that have been developed during her tenure here at Penn. Gwen is highly regarded on campus for her skills and experience, and nationally, the FDA has consulted her frequently for advice on gene transfer therapy.

Please join me in applauding her career at Penn, and to wish her the best in her new position at Adaptimmune. Gwen will retain her contact email at Penn after her departure, and can also be reached at her new post at Gwen.Binder@adaptimmune.com.

STAFF RELOCATIONS

Please note the following support staff have moved to new office space in BRB:

James Dilenno, Manager of Post-Award Grant Operations, has moved from 452 BRB to room 509 BRB

Ellen Solvibile, Grants Manager, Pre-Award, has moved from 516D BRB to room 407 BRB.

Dorothy Hunter, Manager, Research Facilities, has moved from 516B BRB to room 407 BRB

Rachel Losinno, HR Financial Administrative Coordinator, has moved from 509 BRB to 516B BRB.

Tim Johnson, Immunology Graduate Group Coordinator, has moved from 516C BRB to room 452 BRB.

NEW EMPLOYEES

We wish to extend a warm welcome to AFCRI's newest members:

Alexander Bloom is a research specialist who recently joined the Yang lab.

Brijal Desai is a postdoctoral researcher who just joined the Minn lab in January.

James Dilenno (right, top) has been with us for close to a year in his role as Manager of Post-Award Grant Operations. With our recent Business Office reorganization and related changes in how we deliver services, Jim D. is the primary point of contact for the bulk of our approximately \$35m financial portfolio. Jim oversees a staff of two financial administrative coordinators in providing management of our faculty financial portfolios.

Vibhor Gupta joined the Greenberg Lab as a postdoctoral researcher in January.

Tim Johnson is the new graduate group coordinator for the Reiner lab.

Zhaorui Lian joined the Diehl lab as a research specialist.

Rachel Losinno (right, middle) is the new financial administrative coordinator who will be processing payroll and assisting our HR Manager, Andrea Luckey, in a variety of personnel/payroll related issues.

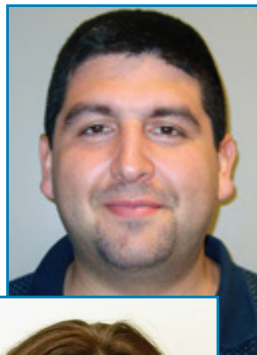
Danielle Loughlin is a new postdoctoral researcher in the Minn lab.

Ted Panczyszyn (right, bottom) is a new financial administrative coordinator in post-award grant operations. Ted will provide support to Jim D. in managing the financial activity associated with our research operations.

Erica Manion is a new research specialist in the Greenberg lab.

Erica Suppa is the Kalos lab's new research specialist.

We have some fantastic staff who may only be with us temporarily, but deserve to be noticed, including a financial administrative coordinator, **Andrea McLee**, rotating students **Apple Long** and **Rinho Kim** (Greenberg lab), **Lara Maggs** (Stanger lab), **Jessica Shea** and **Michelle Nguyen-McCarty** (Simon lab), and **Minal Mehta** (Koretzky lab).



SPIN

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Submit articles, events, and photos for the next issue to SPIN (spinnews@exchange.upenn.edu).
Deadline is Friday, March 14.

