Welcome! Introducing our newly designed Postdoctoral Association newsletter

By The Postdoctoral Leadership Council

As postdocs, it's important for us to maintain a sense of community. Thus, every year the postdoctoral association releases a periodical newsletter to keep our community informed on the latest news and events within our community. We also plan to disseminate career development resources, USC and CHLA campus resources, and highlight various aspects important to postdoc life. This newsletter will serve as the primary means of communication within our community.

What does the PDA do?
The PDA organizes social, professional development and networking events on USC’s various campuses and around the Los Angeles area. The PDA can also serve as a representative of USC’s postdoctoral population within and outside the university. Internally, we maintain collaborative and constructive relationships with the Office of Postdoctoral Affairs, as well as with various Centers that provide useful services for postdocs. Externally, we participate in the activities of the National Postdoctoral Association and cultivate relationships with postdoctoral associations at other institutions.

We are currently looking for postdocs interested in contributing to our newsletter. Please contact: uscpda@usc.edu and tell us what you are interested in doing or whether you would like to be a regular contributor. We value everyone’s involvement in making our community stronger and well-informed. Email us and we will find the right job for you.

New PDA Members

Meet the new postdoctoral association for 2019-2020

NPAW

National Postdoc Appreciation Week kicks off September 16th

Postdoc Symposium

Highlights of our first ever cross campus postdoc symposium, which brought together postdocs from Caltech, UCLA, USC, NASA JPL, and City of Hope.

PDA Events

See what we have planned and give us feedback

Postdoc Benefits

We highlight the benefits available to us as postdocs

Wellness

We provide an overview of the PostDoc Wellness Program

Contact the USC PDA:
uscpda@usc.edu
A Message from PDA Leadership

We are the post-doctoral association of USC and CHLA. We are post-doctorate volunteers that are united together in our desire to help and support the post-doctorate population. We understand the difficulties and problems that come with post-doctorate life. We are all in this together. Our purpose is to Build and Empower our Community

We come from all reaches of the world, bringing with us a wide range of experiences and cultures. Our purpose, as the PDA Leadership, is to bring post-doctorates at USC and CHLA together as a community. We believe that connecting as a community and consolidating our experiences and perspectives is essential for personal and professional growth.

Meet the new Postdoctoral Association Leadership Council

University of Southern California

Dr. Richard Van Krieken, Ph.D
Postdoctoral research scholar at the USC Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center at the Keck School of Medicine

Dr. Anthony J. Carlos, Ph.D.
Postdoctoral research associate and National Cancer Institute CURE fellow at the Keck School of Medicine Norris Cancer Center.

Dr. Sangwon Hyun, Ph.D.
Postdoctoral researcher in statistics in the Marshall School of Business and with the Simons Collaboration on Computational Biogeochemical Modeling of Marine Ecosystems (CBIOMES).

Dr. Terri Stephen, Ph.D.
Postdoctoral research fellow at the Leonard Davis School of Gerontology.

Dr. Ananya Rakshit, Ph.D.
Postdoctoral researcher in Pratt Lab at Department of Chemistry, USC Dornsife College of Letters, Arts and Science.

Children’s Hospital Los Angeles

Dr. Katrina Siemmons, Ph.D.
Postdoctoral research fellow at The Saban Research Institute of Children’s Hospital Los Angeles (CHLA) in the Hematology/Oncology department.

Dr. Jasmine Plows, Ph.D.
Postdoctoral research fellow at the Saban Research Institute of Children’s Hospital Los Angeles (CHLA).
Inaugural Intercampus Postdoctoral Research Symposium: Reaching out to post-docs all across Los Angeles

By Richard Van Krieken, Ph.D.

June 6th - A beautiful day, not a trace of clouds in the sky, sitting at a mild 69°. As a native Torontonian, I would normally be jumping with joy at the start of a beautiful summer, all two weeks of it. But this year, instead of cycling down the lakefront or taste testing at the St. Lawrence market, I was indoors participating in the inaugural Los Angeles Postdoctoral Research Symposium.

Hosted at the California NanoSystems Institute (CNSI), the Los Angeles Postdoctoral Research Symposium was the first of its kind to offer a platform for post-doctorates across all of Los Angeles to gather together and share their research with peers from a deluge of disciplines and backgrounds. By its conclusion, the symposium attracted over 150 attendees with representation from eight institutions across LA (USC, UCLA, Caltech, JPL/NASA, Cedars-Sinai, City of Hope, CHLA, CSUN, and Charles R. Drew University).

The symposium kicked off with welcoming remarks by Dr. Johnny Saldate, chair of the PDA at UCLA, and Dr. April de Stefano, the assistant dean for academic services at the UCLA Graduate Division. The keynote was delivered by Dr. Paul Weiss of UCLA, UC presidential chair, distinguished professor of Chemistry & Biochemistry, and distinguished professor of Materials Science & Engineering. The keynote focused on the difficulties and tribulation faced by him and many of his colleagues in their journeys into becoming researchers, and the tremendous significance networking and collaborating have had on his career.

Of the 150 attendees, only 16 were chosen to give oral talks while 27 were chosen for poster presentations. Drs. Emily Mankin (UCLA), Xinjun Zhang (UCLA), and Riley Connors (Caltech) took first to third place in the oral presentations respectively; whereas Drs. Elizabeth Davis (USC), Andrew Erwin (Caltech), and Alexander Patananan (UCLA) took first to third in the poster sessions. First place winners took home a $200 Amazon gift card, whereas second and third place received $100 and $50 Amazon gift cards respectively.

As the crux of the Los Angeles Symposium was fostering networking opportunities and career development, the symposium hosted career panels and a networking mixer with professionals from academic and non-academic environments. The academic career panel was moderated by Drs. Caroline Charpentier (Caltech) and Amir Behbahani (Caltech) and featured Sarah Mitra Mojarad (USC) and Drs. Jason Alicea (Caltech), Hugo Tapia (Cal State University – Channel Islands), Nathanael Prunet (UCLA), and Siobhan Braybrook (UCLA) focusing on how they pursued their academic careers. The non-academic career panel was moderated by myself and Dr. Alejandro Martorell and featured Drs. Brian McMorran (Ascel Health), Mary Wahl (Microsoft), John Janeski (Aerospace Corporation), Francis Kinderman (Amgen), and Terri-Leigh Stephens (Eli Lilly) focusing on how to find and prepare for non-academic careers. Aside from the career panels, exhibitors from Amgen, Ascel Health, Leica Microsystems, and LA BioMed were represented.

All in all, the inaugural Los Angeles Postdoctoral Research was a great hit and received positive feedback from attendees. If you did not have time to check it out this year, no worries the symposium will be coming back spring of next year! We hope to see you there.

NATIONAL POSTDOC APRECIATION WEEK

September 16th-20th marks the 10th annual National Postdoc Appreciation Week. From 2009, the National Postdoctoral Association has sponsored National Postdoc Appreciation Week (NPAYW) to recognise the astonishing contributions and strides that postdocs have made to U.S. research and discovery. In its initial year, NPAYW garnered support from 70 research institutions across 27 states. Currently, NPAYW has been hosted by over 115 institutions in 37 states, Canada, the United Kingdom, Asia and Oceania, and Germany.

Please join us in celebration NPAYW at USC for the week of September 16th-20th where we will have events planned for post-docs all week long!
Upcoming Events USC and CHLA

**Social Events**

**Coffee Hour**
The PDA is happy to host coffee hour every other month. Come down and join. This is a great chance to meet your fellow post-docs!

**Happy Hour**
The PDA is happy to host happy hour every other month. Unwind and Join us for a drink - your tab is covered. This is another great chance to meet your fellow post-docs!

**Cross-campus Events with Caltech and UCLA**
The PDA will be hosting several cross-campus events with Caltech and UCLA throughout the academic year. This is a great chance to branch out from USC and meet your peers from other institutes.

**Wellness Events**

**Power Hour with Coach Kevin Robinson**
The PDA is happy to announce a 1-hour exercise regimen lead by Coach Kevin Robinson of USC. No fees attached, just show up and Kevin will help you burn off that extra stress!
Upcoming Events USC and CHLA

Career Development Events

Beyond the Ph.D.
Beyond the PhD is an annual conference designed for graduate and post-doctorates to engage with career professionals in a wide spread of fields and areas. More information can be found at: https://sites.usc.edu/beyondphd/.

Los Angeles Postdoctoral Research Symposium
The 2nd annual Los Angeles Postdoctoral Research Symposium will be occurring in spring of 2020. Information on the inaugural symposium may be found at: https://sites.google.com/view/la-postdoc-symposium-2019/home?authuser=0.

International Postdoc Events

Visa Categories and Green Card Info Session
Which visa categories are eligible for dual intent? How long does it take to apply for a green card? What is the best way to prepare for a green card application? The PDA will be hosting an info session with attorneys specializing in immigration and national law to answer all your questions.

Postdoc Appreciation Week Events

National Postdoc Appreciation Week
The 10th annual national postdoc appreciation week is sponsored by the National Postdoctoral Association as a way to show postdocs that all their hard work slaving in the labs are appreciated. The PDA will be hosting events all week long to celebrate the remarkable work our postdocs have shown! Some events we have planned:

- Ice Cream Social
- Taco Tuesday
- Day trip to Catalina Island
- Happy hour
- Picnic with UCLA and Caltech Postdocs

Contact the PDA: uscpda@usc.edu
Reasons to contact us:

- We are looking for new members to join the PDA for 2020-2021. If you want to make a difference in your postdoc community through leadership, join the PDA.
- We are looking for contributors to our newsletter. If you have anything you would like to share with the community, let us know your ideas.
- If you would like to host an event, or if you have an idea for an event you would like to see
Tuition Remission

All postdoctoral scholars on the Postdoctoral Scholar Benefits Plan are entitled to receive up to 20 units of tuition remission for coursework at USC (cannot exceed more than four units in a semester). If the courses that you are taking are related to your job then the tuition remission benefits are exempt from taxes.

Requirements: Postdoctoral Scholars need to: 1) get approval from their faculty mentor and Office of Postdoctoral Affairs, 2) Complete your IDP, 3) Complete the Tuition Remission Form
Steps: Talk to your mentor/supervisor/PI and ask for approval to take a course, Complete your IDP, Complete your Tuition Remission Form, Send your completed IDP and Tuition Remission Form to postdocs@usc.edu by registration deadline

Tuition Remission only covers the cost of tuition, other fees are the responsibility of the Postdoc. These fees include:
- lab and/or access fees, readers and other course materials
- Norman Topping Fee
- USC Student Services Fee
- Optional: Graduate Programming Fee
- Paying for the USC Graduate Programming Fee

Student loan deferral

Postdoctoral Scholars are qualified for student loan deferment.

Requirements:
Enroll in PDF-999

Steps:
Check on your myUSC account to determine if you are currently enrolled into PDF-999

Reduced fare for METRO

Postdoctoral Scholars are eligible to apply for a METRO card at a reduced price ($43/month for the 30-Day pass).

Requirements:
Enroll in PDF-999
Steps:
Email postdocs@usc.edu and ask for proof of enrollment at USC for the Reduced fare for METRO
Take a full-face photo
- Color photo (no black/white)
- No hats or sunglasses
- Upload a digital photo (JPG) or attach a 2”x2” or 1”x1.25” photo to printed application
Provide one of the following
- California ID card
- California Driver’s license
- Passport
Create an account on tap: https://www.taptogo.net/TapRegister
Go to: https://www.taptogo.net/Reduced_Fare#college
Fill out information and complete application.
Receive reduced-fare eligible Tap card in the mail.
You can now purchase reduced fare 30-day pass by visiting a Metro Rail Station or Online

Access to USCConnect/Career Center

Postdoctoral Scholars have access to connectSC and resources including CareerBeam, Goinglobal, Versatile Ph.D., Career Access Resource Library (CARL), Candid Career, Biocareers and more. In addition to being able to attend alumni career events, postdocs also receive four, 50-minute career counseling appointments for the academic year.

Requirements:
Enroll in PDF-999
Steps:
Check on your myUSC account to determine if you are currently enrolled into PDF-999
If you are not enrolled then please email Dan Carino at dcarino@provost.usc.edu

Training and Travel Awards

Postdoctoral Scholars are eligible to apply for Travel and Training Awards (up to $3000) to attend workshops, conferences, or receive training at off-site locations that would enhance their training but cannot be funded through their mentor’s grants.

There are two cycles for awards:
July 1, 2019 to December 31, 2019
Deadline for this cycle has already passed (May 24, 2019)
January 1, 2020 to June 30, 2020
Deadline has not been announced yet

Access to the Gym

Postdoctoral Scholars are eligible for free access to the Lyon Center (1026 W 34th St, Los Angeles, CA 90089) and HSC Fitness Center (2001 N Soto St, Los Angeles, CA, 90032).

Requirements:
Enroll in PDF-999

Steps:
Check on your myUSC account to determine if you are currently enrolled into PDF-999
If you are enrolled then you currently have access to the gm;
Are you a PostDoc researcher who is looking to be more productive and healthier at the same time? If so, the PostDoc Wellness program is exactly for you!

The PostDoc Wellness Program was set up in the spring of 2017 to help researchers to not only improve physical health but to also aid in relieving stress and anxiety that may be related to work. We understand that it may be challenging to find the time or the motivation to improve your health on your own, so this program was created to overcome those obstacles.

The program is essentially divided into 2 parts:

1) FITNESS HOUR WORKOUT
This is a 1 hour, full-body workout that is held at the University Park campus that focuses on cardio training, strength training and flexibility. All levels of fitness are welcome to join, even if you have never worked out before. The workouts are held at various locations on the main campus but are generally done at the Lyon Center, PE building or the USC track. No two workouts will ever be the same. The cost? Free!

2) OFF CAMPUS WEEKEND EVENTS
While there is a fitness component to these events, the main focus is to have fun and to allow the PostDocs to experience different activities in various locations around Los Angeles. Past events have been: Paddleboarding, Bike ride along the beach, hiking various amazing trails and beach volleyball.

OTHER BENEFITS THE WELLNESS PROGRAM OFFERS:
• body composition assessments
• participation incentives such as hydro flasks and Fit Bit watches
• nutrition advice
• team building events such as the PostDoc Olympics

If any of this interests you, we would love for you to join this amazing program. A healthier and improved you starts today!

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:
Kevin Robinson - Trainer for the the wellness program and faculty in the PE department - kevinrob@usc.edu
Sangwon Hyun - Vice President of the PostDoc Wellness Program - robohyun66@gmail.com