Meet Our 2019 Mentors!

Industry Research

Van Luu, Ph.D.
Senior Scientist, Bio-Rad
Over 5 years of experience developing new molecular control products in R&D for the Clinical Diagnostics Division at Bio-Rad Laboratories
- PhD in Immunology from UC Irvine

Abed Alnaif, Ph.D.
Principal Scientist, Bristol-Myers Squib
Quantitative systems pharmacology and immunology research working towards developing mathematical models of immune physiology and pathophysiology
- PhD in Biomedical Engineering from UC Irvine

Lori-Ann Christie, Ph.D.
Director, Allergan
Experienced researcher with extensive background in neurosciences & Ophthalmology
- Former Senior Scientist at Allergan
- PhD in Neurosciences from UC Irvine

Charles Yi, Ph.D.
Scientist, Ambry Genetics
Research & Development in Translational Genomics & Advanced Genomics services
- Former Postdoctoral fellow at Ambry Genetics
- PhD in Developmental & Cell Biology from UC Irvine

Silvia Deiker, Ph.D.
Principal Scientist, UCB
Scientist with multiple years of experience working in structural biology & protein chemistry
- Former project manager at Beryllium Discovery and Scientist at Takeda Pharmaceuticals & Celgene
- Postdoctoral fellowship & PhD from UC Irvine

Keith Luhrs, Ph.D.
Executive Director, Allergan
Experienced drug discovery scientist with successful track record of leading teams across multiple sites to accomplish challenging goals.
- Former scientist at Allergan
- Postdoctoral fellowship & PhD in Mol. Bio & Biochem. from UC Irvine

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**Brian Weist, Ph.D.**
Sr. Scientist, Gilead Sciences
Research scientist with multiple years of industry research experience
- Former Postdoctoral fellow at UC Berkeley
- PhD in Immunology from UC Irvine

**Jonathan Deane, Ph.D.**
Sr. Investigator, Novartis
Leads Cancer therapeutics group focused on developing novel treatments for cancer based on expertise in immunology
- Postdoctoral fellowship from NIH
- PhD from UC Irvine

**Yoshihiro Ishihara, Ph.D.**
Scientist, Vertex Pharma.
Medicinal chemist working towards development of next-gen cystic fibrosis medicines
- Former Senior Staff Scientist at The Scripps Research Institute (SRI)
- PhD in Organic Chemistry from SRI

**Brett Busch, Ph.D.**
Sr. Scientist, Vertex Pharma
Medicinal chemist focusing on the design & synthesis of small molecule drug compounds
- Former medicinal chemist at Exelixis Inc. & X-receptor Therapeutics
- PhD in Organic Chemistry from UC Irvine

**Gaetano Speciale, Ph.D.**
Scientist, BASF Corp.
Enthusiastic & creative scientist. Expert in organic chemistry & molecular biology focusing on assay development & enzymology
- Former Postdoctoral scientist at UC Irvine
- PhD from University of Melbourne, Australia

**Amy Hopkin, Ph.D.**
Sr. Scientist, Allergan
Industry scientist responsible for identification, evaluation and advancement of potential therapeutics from discovery to early development
- Postdoctoral fellowship from UC Irvine
- PhD in Biomedical Sciences from UC Irvine

**Jesus Barajas, Ph.D.**
Postdoctoral Researcher, Agile BioFoundry
Research focused on understanding the natural product biosynthetic pathways, enzymatic machinery & utilizing multidisciplinary methods to access nature’s chemical diversity
- Former Postdoctoral Fellow at Joint BioEnergy Institute
- PhD in Biological Sciences from UC Irvine

**Milton Greenberg, Ph.D.**
President, Vivreon Biosciences
Research/teacher/mentor with passions to solve unmet needs in chronic diseases
- Assistant Instructional Professor in Biology at Chapman University
- PhD from UC Irvine

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**Teaching & Academic Research**

**Arjun Nair, Ph.D.**
Professor of Biology, Santa Ana College
Teaching professor of anatomy & physiology. Excellent mentor for teaching careers
- PhD from UC Irvine

**Sarah Lutz, Ph.D.**
Assistant Professor, Univ. of Illinois @ Chicago
Leading translational neuroimmunology research group & passionate about mentoring next generation of scientists and professionals
- Former Associate Research Scientist at Columbia University
- Postdoc from UC Irvine
- PhD from Albert Einstein College of Medicine

**Minhan Dinh-Mahavongtrakul, Ph.D.**
Assistant Professor, Santa Ana College
Teaching professor of general biology & molecular cell biology with excellent mentoring skills
- Former Biology Instructor at Orange Coast College & Coastline Community College
- PhD from UC Irvine

**Deborah Fraser, Ph.D.**
Associate Professor, California State University-Long Beach
Immunologist by training, currently studying the role of innate immune proteins in atherosclerosis. Excellent mentor for student researchers in Cell Biology, Heart Disease, Molecular Biology
- Former Assistant Researcher at UC Irvine
- PhD in Medical Biochemistry/Immunology from University of Wales, Cardiff

**Field Application Scientist**

**Sharel Figueroed, Ph.D.**
Sr. Field Applications Scientist, Quanterix
Applications training & customer support for antibody immunoassay systems that quantify protein expression and protein-based therapeutics
- Former Staff Scientist at Life Technologies
- Development Scientist at Beckman Coulter
- PhD in biological sciences from UC Irvine

**Ohimai Unoje, Ph.D.**
Field Application Scientist, Menarini Silicon Biosystems
Goal oriented & people-minded biotechnology professional with 6+ years of experience in the life sciences building professional relationships
- Former Sr. Application Scientist (Flow Cytometry) at Beckman Coulter
- PhD from UC Irvine

**Garret Guenther, Ph.D.**
Sr. Global Support Manager, ACEA Biosciences
Global support manager for Flow Cytometry & Application Development Scientist
- Former Scientist at AvantGen
- Postdoctoral fellowship & PhD from UC Irvine

**Daniel Peiffer, Ph.D.**
Executive Sales Specialist, Illumina
Product sales specialist & leader in Next-Generation Sequencing with 13+ years of experience in genomics R&D, product marketing and commercial sales
- Multiple senior level positions (Product Manager, Mrkt. Manager) at Illumina
- PhD in Genetics from UC Irvine

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Terra White, Ph.D.
Medical Writer, Quest Diagnostics
Neurobiologist with 6+ years of experience in scientific research. Medical writer in health care sector working on educational literature, health economics & outcomes research
- Vice President Science Policy Group at UC Irvine
- PhD in Neurobiology from UC Irvine

William Kim, Ph.D.
Sr. Medical Writer/Global Medical Comms., Allergan
Medical writer & editing documents supportive of business & scientific objectives associated with product portfolios in medical dermatology
- Former scientist at Irvine Scientific & Scientist at Fate Therapeutics Inc.
- Postdoctoral fellowship & PhD from UCLA

Natasha Wadlington, Ph.D.
Science/Medical Writer, Freelance
Specializes in STEM communication. Currently, serving as Freelance Medical Writer working on content deliverables & quality assurance consultant
- Associates at Illinois Science Council
- Former Grants Intern & Postdoctoral fellow at University of Chicago
- PhD in Neurobiology from Universirty of Chicago

Nayna Sanathara, Ph.D.
Sr. Medical Writer, Allergan
Pharmacologist experienced in biomedical research aimed at drug discovery
- Former Postdoctoral fellow in pharmacodynamics at Allergan
- PhD in Pharmacology from UC Irvine
- Founder of Brews & Brains

Larisa Gofman, Ph.D.
Scientific Director, Fallon Medica, LLC
Scientific/medical writer with 5+ years of experience in healthcare sector
- Former Sr. Scientific Associate at Precision for Value
- Postdoctoral fellowship from NYU Langone Medical Center
- PhD from Temple University School of Medicine, Philadelphia

Monique Berman, Ph.D.
Bio-Medical Writer/Editor, Freelance
Medical writer/editor involved in clinical study reports/editing/consulting
- Former Director, Diabetes Research/Principal Investigator at UC Irvine
- Director of Immune & Inflammatory Disease Research Institute at Children’s Hospital of OC
- Postdoctoral fellowship from the Scripps Research Institute
- PhD from S.U.N.Y Upstate Medical University

Swati Rawat, Ph.D.
Scientist, Edwards Lifesciences
Innovative & highly skilled biotech/medical professional with multiple years of research & science/medical writing experience
- Former Scientist at Nitto AVecia Pharma & Irvine Pharmaceuticals
- Postdoctoral fellowship from UC Irvine & Tech Transfer Intern
- PhD from Wayne State University School of Medicine

Eric Gold, Ph.D.
Clinical & Regulatory Development Associate, Edwards Lifesciences
Member of the Edwards Lifesciences Leadership Development Program consisting of three 9-month rotations a year (Medical Writer, Regulatory Affairs Specialist, Project Coordinator) in clinical and regulatory Affairs functions
- Intern at Genentech
- PhD in Neurosciences from UC Irvine

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Scientific Consultant

Anja Kammesheidt, Ph.D.
Principal/Owner, AnjaGen Consulting, LLC
Highly experienced molecular biology/genomics professional with extensive knowledge of molecular diagnostics & the genomics service business
- Former CSO, Pathway Genomics & Amby Genetics
- Director of Product Development & Translational Science, Agenda
- Postdoctoral fellowship from UCSD
- PhD from UC Irvine

Duc Phan, Ph.D.
Consultant, Kino Biosciences & UCI
Biomedical science researcher experienced in a high risk rewards research projects & bringing new technologies to meet the challenges
- Former Consultant at Kino Biosciences
- PhD in Molecular Biology & Biochemistry from UC Irvine

Michael Shiue, Ph.D.
President, iNetX Corporation
Scientific consultant with experience in pharmaceutical product discovery & development across a wide range of therapeutic areas and modalities
- Former Principal Scientist at Pfizer & Amgen
- PhD in Pharmaceutical Sciences from University of Southern California

Product Development & Business Strategy

Julius A. Edson, Ph.D.
Business Development Associate, Zymo Research Corp.
Business development to support the identification & development of strategic relationships of new partnering opportunities across industry, academia and the non-profit
- Co-Founder, Responsive Polymer Therapeutics
- PhD in Chemistry from UC Irvine

Prajna Banerjee, Ph.D.
Clinical Biomarker Operations Manager, Genentech
Manages multiple early stage studies from bio-sample and biomarker perspective for various therapeutic areas encompassing asthma, diabetes & neurobiology
- Former product specialist/product manager at Uvify (Start-up)
- Clinical trial specialist at Stanford University Cancer Center
- PhD in Endocrinology from University of Illinois at Chicago

Dianne Hodges, Ph.D.
Director, Global Pharmaceutical Technology (Retd.), Allergan
Former director at Allergan responsible for global support of biologics-commercial and late phase clinical supplies (drug substance & drug product)
- Former Sr. Manager Global Pharmaceutical Technology
- Group leader at Purdue Pharma
- PhD from University of California, San Diego

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Medical Science Liaison

Melissa Geyer, Ph.D.
Medical Science Liaison, CSL Behring
Dynamic PhD with extensive experience in the fields of pharmacogenomics, psychiatry, respiratory and cardiovascular biology
- Former MSL at Mallinckrodt Pharmaceuticals
- MSL at Assurex Health
- PhD in lung vascular biology from Univ. Illinois at Chicago (UIC)

Jeffrey Mosenson, Ph.D.
Medical Science Liaison, Ortho Dermatologics
Experienced at establishing and maintaining educational & research collaborations with Key Opinion Leaders (KOLs) and key organizations. Building product/disease state awareness & advocacy
- Postdoctoral fellowship in vaccine development from UIC
- PhD from Loyola University Chicago

Nathan Wray, Ph.D.
Medical Science Liaison, Collegium Pharmaceuticals
Passionate about communicating complex scientific concepts in pain alleviating drug research to physicians in ensuring ethical drug prescription
- Former Sustainability Consultant at Energy Finance Analytics
- PhD in Neurosciences from UIC

Data Science

Justin Clifford Smith, Ph.D.
AAAS Science & Technology Policy Fellow, U.S. Census Bureau
Physicist turned data scientist working on a newly formed big data team focused on developing a machine learning based tools to improve the accuracy of Census data
- Former Data Analysis Consultant at Tube Science
- Postdoctoral fellowship from UCLA
- PhD in Condensed Matter Physics from UC Irvine

Field Application Scientist

Dan Neverisky, Ph.D.
Product Specialist, Agilent Technologies
Development & training support for new distribution channel for genomics product sales
- Former Accounts Manager, VWR
- PhD from UC Irvine

For more info, please contact, Associate Director, GPS-BIOMED: Harinder.Singh@uci.edu

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Industry Research

Will Chiu, Ph.D.
Scientist, Bio-Rad Laboratories
Scientist with 6+ years of working experience in industry setting, experienced at next-gen sequencing. Currently, serving as Scientist in Quality Systems Division
• Former Scientist at ResearchDx
• Postdoctoral fellowship & PhD in Biological Sciences from UC Irvine

Erinn Parnell, Ph.D.
Sr. Scientist, NeoGenomics Laboratories
Scientist with years of biomedical research experience in biochemistry, mucosal immunology, oncology, cell biology, molecular biology, and virology
• Former postdoctoral fellow at UC Riverside
• PhD in Biological Sciences from UC Irvine

Jennifer Morais, Ph.D.
Staff Scientist, Bio-Rad
11 years of experience working as Scientist to provide useful, high-quality scientific products that advance discovery and improve lives
• PhD in Photochemistry from Boston University

For more info, please contact, Associate Director, GPS-BIOMED; Harinder.Singh@uci.edu

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