

Tsien Named 2010 National Lecturer



Roger Tsien of the University of California, San Diego, will be the National Lecturer at the Biophysical Society's 54th Annual Meeting, which will be held in San Francisco, February 20-24, 2010. The Lecture will be held Monday, February 22. Tsien was a recipient of the 2008 Nobel Prize in Chemistry.



Call for Papers

The Society's 2010 Call for Papers will go out in the beginning of July. Look for your copy in the mail.



Abstract Deadline: October 4

Summer Course in Biophysics Begins

The Biophysical Society *2009 Summer Course in Biophysics: Case Studies in the Physics of Life*, began on May 19, 2009, at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. Twelve students were selected for the intense 11-week course: *Joshua Anthony*, Oakwood College; *Jackson Chief Elk*, University of Montana; *Ashley Clark*, University of North Carolina at Pembroke; *Andrew Marshall*, Oakwood College; *Myraim Martienz*, University of Puerto Rico; *Melony Ochieng*, North Carolina University; *Mrinalini Ramanan*, George Mason University; *Regis James*, Rice University; *Ronnica Sharpe*, Norfolk State University; *Mariko Weber*, James Madison University; *Shaunte Williams*, North Carolina Central University; *Rosalynd Upton*, Princeton University. This is the second year for the course; the Biophysical Society received a grant from the National Institutes of Health to offer the course each summer through 2012.

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Biophysicist in Profile

Ana Maria Gomez

For Ana Maria Gomez, Director of Research at U-637 INSERM, France, becoming a research scientist was a dream-come-true. Born in Toledo, Spain, she was an inquisitive child who needed to know how to fix things that did not work. Attracted to biology and chemistry and educated in a Catholic school, she wanted to use her abilities for the welfare of people—but not as a physician. By age 13, she decided to pursue pharmacology.

She also liked electricity and helped her dad do electrical repairs. Her play included opening batteries (hidden from her parents) and creating chemical reactions. “Early in my life I wanted to do research,” she says, “but at the same time I heard everywhere that it was something very difficult and somehow I thought that it was more of a dream.”

Her parents supported her dream as she studied pharmacology at the Universidad Complutense de Madrid. Her PhD advisor, *Carmen Delgado*, who remains as a tenured scientist in the Department of Pharmacology at UCM’s School of Medicine, offered work with electrophysiology in cardiac hypertrophy. She was excited by the project, as the heart had been her predilection organ in physiology and pharmacology. Delgado recalls, “These were years of hard work mixed with fun and amusement. Ana is a very intelligent person who dedicated herself passionately to scientific research while maintaining her willingness to help others.”

In Delgado’s lab, Gomez learned patch-clamp and membrane electrophysiology. “I liked what I saw the first time I laid eyes on the setup with all those electrical cables.”

During three months spent in a French laboratory with which Delgado collaborated on a human cardiac hypertrophy project, Gomez saw something else she liked: her future husband, *Jean-Pierre Benitah*, who was also working on his PhD.

Gomez and Benitah decided to do their postdocs in the USA. They chose Baltimore, where they could work in separate labs strong in their interest areas, he at the Johns Hopkins University and she at the University of Maryland in the lab of *Jon Lederer*, who is still there, now as Director of the Biotechnology Institute. Gomez was interested in Lederer’s work on transient inward current, a proarrhythmogenic current dependent on intracellular calcium. His own interest was not in pathology or hypertrophy, but she accepted, thinking that she could apply what she learned to hypertrophy when she returned to Europe. Yet Lederer did allow her to do this work in his lab. They identified a defect in excitation-contraction coupling in heart failure, and the results of calcium

sparks in cardiac hypertrophy and heart failure were published in *Science*.

Working in an American lab was difficult at first, because her English language skills were not strong. She enjoyed the melting pot of cultures, though, with lab colleagues from the USA, China, India, Puerto Rico, Japan, and the United Kingdom. Outside the lab, she had to learn how to be safe in a city where crime was high. She did adapt and enjoyed her work, friends and visiting Baltimore and other East Coast tourist sites. "I was a bit sad to leave, because I was very much enjoying the American life and the scientific life in the lab."

With her goal of returning to Europe, Gomez tried for a position at CNRS (National Center for Scientific Research) that she was told would be difficult for a foreigner to attain, as the jobs were decided by an external committee in a national contest in Paris once each year. She won her dream researcher position on her first try and accepting an offer she couldn't refuse, she and her husband moved to Montpellier in southern France.

Gomez set up a lab unique in France for cardiac myocytes, with a confocal microscope synchronized with patch-clamp equipment. She also installed a chamber to record intracellular calcium signaling in the whole living heart, utilizing two-photon microscopy - the first to use this approach to study pathological hearts.

Last year she was awarded a Director of Research position at Inserm, the French counterpart of the US-based National Institutes of Health, again on her first try. She says that collaboration with other scientists across the world using complementary techniques to analyze the same problem helps her avoid becoming narrow-minded in the biophysics field, while also allowing her to enjoy and be enriched by traveling and encountering new cultures. Travel is a rare pleasure, because she doesn't get out of the lab much, but not only because science is a very self-involving job. "Most of us do not consider science a job; it is more of a passion."

Laetitia Pereira, currently doing a postdoc in pharmacology in Donald Bers' lab at the University of California, Davis, School of Medicine, credits Gomez with influencing her career in biophysics. She notes, "Her forthcoming and patient advice on both professional and personal matters was invaluable in guiding me through my PhD."

Once interested mainly in finding out what was different in cardiac disease, Gomez is now more interested in the involved mechanisms. She works in three main project areas: the physiologic and pathologic function of a recently discovered protein, Epac; cardiovascular complications of type-2 diabetes, and determining the mechanisms of sudden death in children and young adults from a rare disease due to mutations in the calcium release channel. She collaborates with a cardiologist with family members with this disease, the first of whom died at age fourteen while playing soccer.

Gomez reminds beginning scientists that progress is sometimes slow, but good work always pays. When success does come, she cautions, "Keep your feet on earth: do not think of yourself as too important, but respect other scientists and learn from them. Sometimes it is easy to be blinded by the glory and forget that we all work for the advancement of science, and so we serve the community."



Gomez and her two-year-old son in the Pyrenees.

Subgroups

Biological Fluorescence

The theme of the next Biological Fluorescence Subgroup symposium, which will be at the 2010 BPS annual meeting in San Francisco, will be *The Use of Fluorescence Methods to Understand Protein—Nucleic Acid Systems*. The speakers include *Silvia Zorrilla*, CSIC, Spain; *Eric Greene*, Columbia University; *Catherine Royer*, CNRS, France; and *Steven Block*, Stanford University.

Additionally, two students who are competing in the Fluorescence Subgroup Poster Competition (SRAA) will be chosen to give 15-minute presentations of their work.

—*Suzanne Scarlata*, Chair

Checked Out the Society Job Board Lately?

Visit the Society Job Board online at www.biophysics.org for the latest postings of jobs in Biophysics. Job seekers can post resumes/cvs for FREE! New jobs posted weekly.

Intrinsically Disordered Proteins

Symposium 2010

The 4th Annual Symposium of the IDP Subgroup will be held in San Francisco on February 20, 2010. The Symposium co-chairs are *Elisar Barbar* of Oregon State University and *Huan-Xiang Zhou* of Florida State University. They have compiled an outstanding program within the theme of *Regulation and Utilization of Disorder in vivo*. The Keynote Speaker will be *Brian Chait* of Rockefeller University.

Additional speakers are *Cheryl Arrowsmith*, University of Toronto; *Andreas Matouschek*, Northwestern University; *Ralf Langen*, University of Southern California; *Yakov Levy*, Weizmann Institute, Israel; *M. Madan Babu*, University of Cambridge, UK; *Huan-Xiang Zhou*, Florida State University; *Ursula Jakob*, University of Michigan; and *Gary Daughdrill*, University of South Florida.

Papers of Interest

Smock RG, Gierasch LM. Sending signals dynamically. *Science*. 2009 Apr 10;324(5924):198-203. PMID: 19359576

Daggett V, Fersht AR. Folding and binding: moving into uncharted territory. *Curr Opin Struct Biol*. 2009 Feb;19(1):1-2. PMID: 19217770

Eliezer D. Biophysical characterization of intrinsically disordered proteins. *Curr Opin Struct Biol*. 2009 Feb;19(1):23-30. PMID: 19162471

Wright PE, Dyson HJ. Linking Folding and binding. *Curr Opin Struct Biol*. 2009 Feb;19(1):31-8. PMID: 19157855

—*Trevor P. Creamer*, Secretary/Treasurer

Members in the News



Daniel T. Chiu of the University of Washington and Society member since 2004 received the 2009 Pittsburgh Conference Achievement Award from the Pittsburgh Conference and the Society for Analytical Chem-

ists of Pittsburgh.

Society Members Elected to the NAS

Eight members of the Biophysical Society were recently elected to the National Academy of Sciences. They were *Lorena S. Beese* of the Duke University Medical Center and Society member since 1983; *Dennis Dougherty George* of the California Institute of Technology and Society member since 1998; *Juli J. Feigon* of the University of California, Los Angeles, and Society member since 1980; *Thomas Hughes* of the University of Texas, Austin, and Society member since 2004; *Rakesh Jain* of the Massachusetts General Hospital, Harvard Medical School, and Society member since 1999; *Michael L. Klein* of the University of Pennsylvania and Society member since 2004; *Dinshaw Patel* of the Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center and Society member since 2008; *Yu Xie* of the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor and Society member since 2000.

Grants and Opportunities

Name: Science of Science and Innovation Policy (SciSIP)

Objective: To support research designed to advance the scientific basis of science and innovation policy. Research funded by the program thus develops, improves and expands models, analytical tools, data and metrics that can be applied in the science policy decision making process.

Who may apply: Researchers from all of the social, behavioral and economic sciences as well as those working in domain-specific applications such as chemistry, biology, physics, or nanotechnology.

Submission deadline: September 9, 2009

Web link: http://www.nsf.gov/funding/pgm_summ.jsp?pims_id=501084

Name: The NSF ADVANCE Program at Rice University is sponsoring a workshop for women minorities and early career scientists.

Title: Negotiating the Ideal Faculty Position: A Workshop for Female PhDs & Postdocs

Date: October 2009

What is included: Airfare, hotel accommodations, and meals provided at no cost to workshop participants.

Deadlines: Registration opens May 18, 2009

Application deadline July 31, 2009

Selected participants will be notified by August 21, 2009

Contact information: <http://advance.rice.edu/negotiatingtheidealfacultyposition/>

How to Manage Time, a Lab, and Other Faculty Duties

The Biophysical Society's CPOW committee hosted a panel discussion, *How to Manage Time, A Lab, and Other Faculty Duties*, at the Society's 53rd Annual Meeting in Boston. During the session, senior scientists and BPS members *Suzanne Scarlata*, *David Piston*, and *Kathleen Hall* shared their experiences and insights on how to effectively juggle the demands of a faculty position. A summary of that discussion is included here to share with those BPS members unable to attend the session.

How much time should a junior faculty member devote to teaching?

Piston: This varies with the institute. It is important to have senior members in your department, whom you trust, who can advise you on teaching expectations.

Hall: You have to know what the value system is at your institution.

Scarlata: At my university, the expectation is that 1/3 of your time be devoted to teaching, 1/3 to research, and 1/3 to service. Make use of growing information on the web to help update your lectures, which may be outside your area of expertise. At many institutions, new faculty members do not teach in their first year to protect research time.



Suzanna Scarlata

What was your biggest mistake as junior faculty?

Scarlata: Learn to say, "No"! When she was

starting out, Scarlata often felt obliged to run experiments in her specialty for senior faculty as a service.

Hall: As female faculty, Hall felt that she was the token representative on every committee. For example, she reviewed grants for the NIH as an Assistant Professor. She cautions that this was not an effective strategy, "Do not do this, protect your time!" Avoid activities that may seem to flatter you, but do you no favors.

Piston: He regrets that as junior faculty he spent precious hours writing his own software to save a few hundred dollars. He now appreciates that time is money and strongly cautions against pinching pennies for supplies or equipment when 80-90% of a budget goes towards people's salaries. "Time is one commodity that you cannot buy back!"

Harel Weinstein: President of the Society Harel Weinstein, while not part of the panel, suggested that junior faculty do say yes to some things: for example, pursue good collaborations at your own institution. Weinstein also advises junior faculty to spend their start-up money! Do so wisely and purposefully, but do not save the money at the expense of productivity. To sum up, "Time is the most precious commodity."



Harel Weinstein

How do you conduct research at a small teaching institution?

Apply for R15/AREA grants, which are special grants given to small institutions that receive limited NIH funds. Other sources of funding could include HHMI, NSF and IGERT grants. Collaborate with a lab at a larger institution that has everything set up. Go there in the summer, or a day/week if close by, or

send your student to this lab to train and obtain data.

How much time do undergraduates take up in your lab?

Undergraduates are best in large labs that have senior graduate students or postdoctoral students who can take them under their wing and train them.

What is your management style? Is it uniquely your own or is it influenced by your advisors?

Piston: His management style has become more formal or codified over the years. He found that while some people can be left on their own, others need more structured sessions of mentoring. Each person needs to be treated differently.



David Piston

Hall: One's management style continually evolves. If it does not work, change it! Consider taking a class in management or read some publications on the subject.

Weinstein: You can never go "on automatic." Continually re-evaluate where you stand in terms of your position, your assets, and the changing environment. One also needs to be able to deal with colleagues. Find a good

mentor or interact with a group of people. Remember, that you are also a mentor to someone else.

As your lab grows, how do you maintain close contact with primary data?

Piston: He advises being a reviewer of your own data. Be alert for what does not make sense or does not fit. The further you go away from your own data, the more important it is that you act as the first reviewer of a potential publication.

Scarлата: She likes to spend a few hours on each student's project, spending time at the microscope and looking firsthand at the images.

Hall: She advises being in the lab enough to know what works. Importantly, the lab environment should encourage people to report on what does not work. She has a "wall of data" in her lab where raw data can be posted for everyone to see and comment. This is a very effective method of getting input from the lab, and peer pressure ensures that everyone takes this seriously. She suggests being creative with your ideas and looking at lab notebooks frequently.



Kathleen Hall

Future Biophysical Society Annual Meetings

55th Annual Meeting
February 27–March 3, 2011
Baltimore, Maryland

56th Annual Meeting
March 25–29, 2012
San Diego, California

57th Annual Meeting
February 2–6, 2013
Philadelphia, PA

58th Annual Meeting
San Francisco, California
February 15–19, 2014

Public Affairs

Obama Addresses NAS

President Obama gave his first policy speech on science at the Annual Meeting of the National Academies of Sciences on April 27. The President used the speech to outline his plans to reinvigorate the American scientific enterprise through a bold commitment to basic and applied research, innovation, and education.

“At such a difficult moment, there are those who say we cannot afford to invest in science . . .

In his speech he said, “At such a difficult moment, there are those who say we cannot afford to invest in science, that support for research is somehow a luxury

at moments defined by necessities. I fundamentally disagree. Science is more essential for our prosperity, our security, our health, our environment, and our quality of life than it has ever been before.”

The President called for the US to surpass its record investment in research and development, set in 1964 at the height of the space race, to exceed three percent of GDP. This goal would be met with both public and private investment.

. . . we can harness the historic convergence between life sciences and physical sciences that’s underway today . . .

Regarding the federal contribution to that goal, Obama stated his commitment for the federal government to finish the 10-year doubling of the National Science Foundation, the DOE Office of Science, and the National Institutes of Standards and Technology outlined in the America Competes Act. Between 2009

and 2016, the Administration’s enacted and proposed budgets would add \$42.6 billion to the 2008 budgets for these basic research agencies, with a special emphasis on encouraging high-risk, high-return research and supporting researchers at the beginning of their careers.

The President heavily emphasized clean energy initiatives in the speech. Specifically, he announced the launch of the \$400 million Advanced Research Projects Agency-Energy (ARPA-E) at the Department of Energy, grants to 46 Energy Frontier Research Centers, as well as a joint education outreach initiative by the Department of Energy and the National Science Foundation to encourage students to pursue careers in science, engineering, and entrepreneurship related to clean energy.

Regarding biomedical research, the President stated his commitment to increasing funding for the National Institutes of Health, including \$6 billion to support cancer research, and also noted that advances in the physical sciences have resulted in enormous progress in medicine: “Because of recent progress—not just in biology, genetics and medicine, but also in physics, chemistry, computer science, and engineering—we have the potential to make enormous progress against diseases in the coming decades.”

Later in this speech when talking about the role that the President’s Council of Advisors on Science and Technology will play, he again drew attention to the convergence of the life and physical sciences, “In biomedicine, just to give you an example of what PCAST can do, we can harness the historic convergence between life sciences and physical sciences that’s underway today; undertaking public projects—in the spirit of the Human Genome Project—to create data and capabilities that fuel discoveries in tens of thousands of laboratories; and identifying and overcoming scientific and bureaucratic barriers to rapidly translating scientific breakthroughs into diagnostics and therapeutics that serve patients.” The Biophysical Society has advocated for funding for research

at the interface of the life sciences, the physical sciences, and the computational sciences through its Bridging the Sciences initiative.

The other main area the President touched on during his speech was science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) education. He announced a tripling of National Science Foundation graduate research fellowships, a state-level initiative encouraging states to make STEM education a priority, and a promise to personally promote STEM education through public service announcements. Obama also challenged the Academy members to contribute personally to the effort to improve STEM education by, for example, mentoring teachers and students at disadvantaged schools. To read the full text of his speech, please visit: [Remarks by the President at the National Academy of Sciences Annual Meeting](#)

Holdren Addresses AAAS Forum

Office of Science and Technology Policy Director John Holdren spoke at a AAAS event on April 30. Holdren's address was optimistic about the outlook for science in the Obama Administration.

Holdren, who also serves as the Assistant to the President for Science and Technology and a co-chair of the President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology, gave an overview of the two major responsibilities of the Office of Science and Technology Policy: to provide "independent, objective advice for the President and Vice President about S&T germane to all policy issues," and "analysis, recommendations, and coordination . . . on R&D budgets and related policies."

Holdren identified five major applied challenges, including S&T for the economy, public health, energy, environment, and national and homeland security. The "foundations of success" to meet these challenges include the U.S. capability for fundamental research, STEM

The "foundations of success" to meet these challenges include the US capability for fundamental research, STEM education, information and communications technology, space capabilities, and supporting policies in areas such as intellectual property, scientific integrity, and visas.

education, information and communications technology, space capabilities, and supporting policies in areas such as intellectual property, scientific integrity, and visas.

Holdren also spoke of President Obama's commitment to focusing 3% of the GDP on furthering science research. In response to questions from the audience, Holdren indicated that the Administration will work to avoid the boom and bust funding cycle that has characterized previous science agency budgeting.

For a summary of his speech and his slides: http://www.aaas.org/news/releases/2009/0430stpf_holdren.shtml.

New Faces at Department of Energy

On May 21, the Senate approved the nomination of Steven E. Koonin to be the Under Secretary for Science at the Department of Energy. President Obama has also nominated William Brinkman to be the Director of the DOE Office of Science. Brinkman, now a Senior Research Physicist at Princeton University, will appear before the senate in coming weeks.

During the Bush Administration, Ray Orbach served as both the Under Secretary for Science and the Director of the Office of Science. The Under Secretary position was a new position created during Orbach's tenure as Director.

Also at the Department of Energy, Edmund Synakowski has been appointed the new Associate Director of the Office of Science for the Office of Fusion Energy Sciences, effective June 7, 2009. Synakowski has served as the Fusion Energy Program (FEP) Leader at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory (LLNL) since January 2006 and, more recently, as the Deputy Division Leader At-Large of the LLNL Physics Division. Within the FEP, he led a broad portfolio of experimental and theoretical research in magnetic fusion energy science, fusion-related high energy density physics, fusion technology, and beam research.

NIH Committee Evaluating Consolidating Institutes

On April 27 and 28, the Scientific Management Review Board (SMRB) of the NIH met for the first time. The SMRB was authorized by the NIH Reform Act of 2006 and signed into law by the President in January 2007. The purpose of the Scientific Management Review Board is to advise Health and Human Services (HHS) and NIH officials on the use of new organizational authorities granted them in the Reform Act. One of the main topics that the SMRB was asked to address during this meeting was whether or not the SMRB should take up the question of a potential merger of the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA) with the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA). The Board unanimously decided that the merger was worthy of further study. A series of meetings involving all stakeholders, including the scientific community, will be set up in the near future. Based on input from those meetings, the

SMRB would then provide a recommendation to the Health and Human Services Director Kathleen Sebelius and NIH Acting Director Raynard Kington.

Science Goes to Capitol Hill



Chairman of the House Appropriations Committee Congressman David Obey (D-WI), pictured above (left), accepted the George E. Brown Award for outstanding leadership in support of federal research and development at the Science, Engineering and Technology Congressional Visit Day (SET CVD) on Capitol Hill. On April 28-29, SET CVD welcomed more than 200 scientists, engineers and business leaders. *Dorothy Beckett* and *Suzanne Scarlata* participated in the event on behalf of the Biophysical Society. In meetings with congressional staff and elected representatives they spoke of the significance of sustained increases in federally-funded science and received favorable responses for the continued federal support of scientific research.

Biophysical Journal

Highlighted Papers

Below is a list of highlighted papers that appeared in the May 20th issue of the Biophysical Journal. Associate Editors of the Journal select papers from each issue to be highlighted on the website. Visit www.biophysj.org to view these and the latest highlighted papers. Highlighted Papers are free to all viewers until the next issue releases.



Two Distinct Conformations of A β Aggregates on the Surface of Living PC12 Cells

David A. Bateman and Avijit Chakrabartty



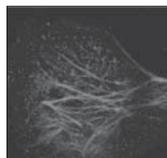
Micro-PTV Measurement of the Fluid Shear Stress Acting on Adherent Leukocytes In Vivo

John E. Pickard and Klaus Ley



Traction Stresses and Translational Distortion of the Nucleus During Fibroblast Migration on a Physiologically Relevant ECM Mimic

Zhi Pan, Kaustabh Ghosh, Yajie Liu, Richard A.F. Clark, and Miriam H. Rafailovich



Velocity, Processivity, and Individual Steps of Single Myosin V Molecules in Live Cells

Paolo Pierobon, Sarra Achouri, Sébastien Courty, Alexander R. Dunn, James A. Spudich, Maxime Dahan, and Giovanni Cappello

2009 National Lecture Now Available Online



Dorothee Kern of Brandeis University was the 2009 Society's National Lecturer. To watch her lecture, *Proteins in Action: Dynamics during Catalysis and Signaling*, visit www.biophysics.org.

New Abstract Category

Beginning with the 2010 Annual Meeting, abstracts will be accepted for poster presentations in the area of Biophysics Education. Submissions should describe novel developments in areas such as curriculum, learning aids, clarification of basic concepts, and laboratory exercises. Abstracts submitted under this category will not count towards the one-abstract-per-member limit.



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Biophysical Society Newsletter—June 2009

Upcoming Events

July 12–16, 2009

54th Annual Meeting of the Health Physics Society
Minneapolis, Minnesota, United States
<http://www.hps.org>

July 20–1 August 2009

DNA2009—DNA and Chromosomes: Physical and Biological Approaches
Cargese, Corsica, France
<http://www-dna2009.cea.fr/>

July 26–29, 2009

WACBE—009 4th World Congress on Bioengineering
Hong Kong, China
<http://myweb.polyu.edu.hk/~07900373r/default.htm>

July 26–30 July, 2009

51st Annual Meeting of the American Association of Physicists in Medicine
Anaheim, CA, United States
<http://aapm.org/meetings/>

August 2–6, 2009

Biomimetics and Bioinspiration
San Diego, California, United States
<http://spie.org/optics-photonics.xml>