

VEWSLETTER

December 2009

The Future of Biophysics **Burroughs Wellcome Fund Symposium**

The Biophysical Society is pleased to announce that the 2010 Annual Meeting will feature a new symposium that will highlight the work of rising young stars whose work is at the interface of the physical and life sciences. The 2010 speakers, listed below, were selected by the Program Committee for their work in areas that demonstrate the incredible potential of future scientific research. Funding for the symposium is provided by the Burroughs Wellcome Fund, which has a long history of providing support to scientists early in their careers.

> Margaret Gardel, University of Chicago Ryohei Yasuda, Duke University Jonas Korlach, Pacific Biosciences, California Pierre-Jean Corringer, Pasteur Institute, Paris

The Future of Biophysics Symposium, chaired by the 2010 Program Committee Chair Taekjip Ha, will be held in San Francisco on Monday, February 22, 10:45AM-12:45PM.

2011 Program Committee Begins Planning



The 2011 Program Committee, chaired by Jamie Williamson of Scripps Research Institute, has already started

developing the program for the 2011 meeting, which

will be held in Baltimore, Maryland, March 5-9, 2011. Williamson will present the program for approval to Council when it meets in San Francisco in February.

The 2011 Program Committee members are Steven Box-Iamie Williamson er, Stanford University; Michael Cahalan, University of California, Irvine; *Nynke Dekker*, Delft University of Technology; *Ken Dill*, University of California, San Francisco; Steven Gross, University of California, Irvine; Taekjip Ha, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign; Douglas Rees, CalTech; Frances Separovic, University of Melbourne; and Clare Waterman, National Institutes of Health.

Annual Meeting Deadlines

Early Registration January 4, 2010

Late Abstracts January 8, 2010

General Housing January 22, 2010

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Biophysicist in **Profile** Irène Revenko

"My career is somewhat unusual," says Irène Revenko, Application Scientist for Asylum Research in Santa Barbara, California. "I work for a company that manufactures very specific types of microscopes, and my degrees did not prepare me for this type of career."

Revenko believes that she was born for science. She remembers being "deeply intrigued and interested" by fourth-grade educational videos on biology. By the time she was in high school, she recognized that a math and science path would open doors for her future education in her native France. "Students who do well in science can pretty much apply for any school" she explains.

She chose Claude Bernard University, Lyon, to study to become a medical biologist, but decided along the way that she also wanted to do research. "Biology is great, but I also like technology." A professor introduced her to newly emerging Atomic Force Microscopy (AFM). From that time forward, AFM was central to her study and work.

Fabienne Rajas, now Permanent Researcher for Inserm, recalls, "I met Irène at the beginning of her career in cell biology, when she joined our lab in Lyon in 1992. She was a hard worker, always enthusiastic, and always with a smile. She was working on collagen structure and started using the atomic force microscope. Now she is a world specialist of this sophisticated technology."

Throughout her 16 years of study for two undergraduate degrees, an MS, an MD, and a PhD, Revenko gave little thought to working in industry. Her goals were to teach in a university, do research, and work in a hospital. During the course of her education, she did do research, worked in hospitals while doing medical internship and clinical pathology, and taught cell biology, molecular biology and genetics at a private school. Yet, when she completed her PhD thesis, "Applications of Atomic Force Microscopy in Biology," industry offered her the opportunity that best satisfied her personal needs and professional aspirations.

Revenko has since turned down a "dream" university teaching job. She still finds that amazing, but she has no regrets. "People who work in academia sometimes consider industrial people as the 'bad guys' who just want to make money," she observes. "But in the right company, you can still have a lot of freedom to use all your creativity and perform important service."

Revenko acknowledges that working in industry requires making some sacrifices, such as the prestige of working in academia. "You no longer hold the honored title of 'professor,' and you lose the rewards and energy of teaching young, motivated students. But you can find other rewards. You also give up university politics, difficult students, a lot of time writing grants and worrying about funding, and not having enough time to both do research and teach well."

In her position, Revenko still teaches a lot. She likes educating people from different scientific and cultural backgrounds and using her experience in AFM

and biology to help them utilize AFM in their own research.

Csilla Gergely, biophysics professor at Montpellier University, values the service Revenko provided when her lab acquired the MFP-3D AFM from Asylum Research. "Irène came to our institute to teach us how to utilize this instrument for biological applications. She went well beyond expected training duty, continuing to guide us later from California. Irène's availability, fast response, professionalism, and expertise are exceptional." Three years later, they are more than client and service provider; they are friends.

"Teaching forces me to stay up to date all the time in biology, in all microscopy techniques and nanotechnologies in general," says Revenko. To keep from getting lost in the abundance of information available, she chooses Biophysical Society resources as her primary reference center. "This [BJ] is the journal I read in priority, the meeting I will go to if I have to choose." Talks and posters at the BPS meeting provide crucial information about what researchers are doing in the field, so she can stay in a cuttingedge position to help people who call her.

Exhibiting at the Biophysical Society Annual Meeting gives her company the opportunity to educate attendees about the latest improvements in technology and techniques. Biophysicists of this scientific level are likely users of the instruments sold by the company.

Asylum Research recently announced that Revenko will be sent to France for a year to strengthen support for French-speaking users of atomic force/scanning probe microscopy (AFM/SPM). Rajas is delighted. Over the years, she and Revenko have maintained the friendship begun while they were lab colleagues and also shared a passion for scuba diving. "The last diving we did together was the day after Irène's wedding. I'm very impatient to spend some time with her and her family!"

Revenko is married to *Roger Proksch*, cofounder and now President of Asylum Research. They met when both were in the same lab as postdocs at the University of California,

Santa Barbara. He was a physicist and she a biologist, so they approached problems differently. "When using AFM to observe DNA molecules," Revenko says, "I worked to get high-resolution images of my sample, and he was totally focused on how the microscope probe was behaving while scanning the sample! That's when I realized how scientists from different backgrounds are so complementary and how they need to learn each other's languages to be able to communicate and have a fruitful collaboration."

"Irène is insightful, focused, and immense-

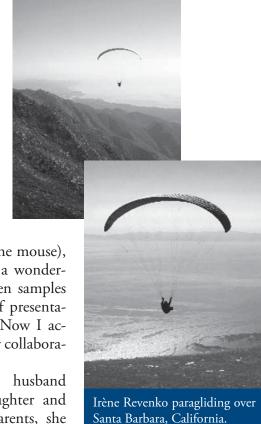
ly practical," Proksch says. Once when they needed collagen samples for high-resolution microscopy research, he had paged through supply catalogs networked with colleagues, looking for a sample. "Meanwhile, in the space of about three minutes, Irène had found a mouse that our cat, Minou, had killed,

performed surgery (on the mouse), and presented me with a wonderful set of 'native' collagen samples we used in a number of presentations and publications. Now I acknowledge Minou as our collaborator, too."

Revenko and her husband have a 12-year-old daughter and a 9-year-old son. As parents, she says, they try to teach them mainly

two things: to be respectful of others and to think critically.

In addition to spending time with her family, Revenko relaxes by running regularly, reading biographies, and practicing extreme sports such as paragliding. Proksch says that she is as intense a competitor as she is in the lab, placing second and third in the paragliding nationals the last two times she competed. She also teaches paragliding.



54th Annual Meeting

February 20–24, 2010 San Francisco, California

Career Workshops

Moving on from Your Postdoctoral Position: Negotiating the Transition Sunday, February 21, 1:00–2:30 PM

This popular session, hosted by the Early Careers Committee, will provide advice on how to find a permanent position after your postdoctoral training. Panel members will include representatives from academia and industry.

Graduate Student to Postdoc: Negotiating the Transition Monday, February 22, 1:00–2:30 PM

After great success last year, the Early Careers Committee brings back this panel in which current postdocs will compare their experiences in choosing a postdoctoral position and take questions from the audience about the process of moving from graduate student to postdoc.

Career Roundtable Luncheon Sunday, February 21, 12:00-2:00 PM

This roundtable career luncheon, hosted by CPOW, is aimed at helping attendees, particularly those early in their careers, navigate the complex waters of a faculty-level research career. Popular topics include conflict resolution, how to establish a successful collaboration, where to look for alternative research funding, and how to select a good group of mentors for career development. Approximately one dozen established investigators with expertise in one or more of the discussion areas and a keen desire to mentor participate in this event. The luncheon begins with each table holding a roundtable discussion on a given topic. It ends with a representative from each table summarizing the responses to their particular topic, providing a forum for all participants to learn from each roundtable discussion. Pre-registration is required and fee includes a box lunch. Registration form may be found at www.biophysics.org.

Career Workshops (continued)

Postdoc to Faculty Q & A: Transitions Forum and Luncheon Tuesday, February 23, 12:00-2:00 PM

CPOW is sponsoring a 'Question and Answer' luncheon designed for those finishing their postdocs and actively applying for academic faculty positions. New faculty and recently tenured faculty in basic science and/or medical school departments will lead the discussion, as well as experienced senior level faculty who have served as chairs of departments and/or of faculty search committees. Topics for discussion will include how to prepare the curriculum vitae, the interview process, how to negotiate the job offer, and advice for new faculty as they balance research with their departmental obligations. Pre-registration is required and fee includes a box lunch. Registration form may be found at www.biophysics.org.

If I Knew Then What I Know Now: Panel Discussion Monday, February 22, 2:30-3:30 PM



Dorothy Beckett



Jack Kaplan



Merritt Maduke



Dan Minor

This session, sponsored by CPOW, will present a panel of tenured faculty who will discuss their path to success and the issues they encountered.

Speakers Dorothy Beckett, University of Maryland, College Park Jack Kaplan, University of Illinois, Chicago Merritt Maduke, Stanford University Dan Minor, University of California, San Francisco

Annual Meeting Sponsors

The Biophysical Society would like to thank the sponsors listed below for their generous support of our Annual Meeting. The list includes sponsors as of October 15, 2009.

> **Burroughs Wellcome Fund Asylum Research** Photon Technology International Mad City Labs, Inc.

Satellite Meeting

Drug Discovery for Ion Channels X Friday, February 19, 2010 Pre-registration deadline: Friday, January 15, 2010

Sponsored by MDS Analytical Technologies, Sophion Bioscience, Cellectricon, Inc., Chan Test Corporation, and Nanion Technologies, GMBH.

Ion channels are an important class of therapeutic drug targets, and mutations in ion channel genes are found to be responsible for an increasing number of diseases. While conventional electrophysiological techniques permit the most detailed and direct study of ion channel function, they are limited due to the manual nature of the method and their low throughput. Because of this, ion channels remain an underrepresented target class for drug discovery. But the advent of automated electrophysiological systems with higher throughput has begun to revolutionize ion channel drug discovery. This symposium focuses on the emerging technology of automated electrophysiology and how it is changing the face of ion channel drug discovery. Speakers from industry and academia will discuss the development and potential of these new technologies, present experimental results obtained using these systems and discuss the impact these technologies are having on ion channel drug discovery. For more information and to register, please visit www.biophysics.org.

Keynote Lecture

Ehud Isacoff, University of California, Berkeley Additional program information to be announced.

Assistant Professor Position in Experimental Biophysics The George Washington University

The Physics Department at The George Washington University invites applications for a tenure-track position as assistant professor in experimental biophysics starting in the Fall of 2010. Current biophysics research topics in the Department include experimental efforts focusing on measurement and modification of cells by scanning probe microscopy and theoretical efforts centering on structural modeling of biomolecules and statistical and computational study of bionetworks and biocomplexity. Basic Qualifications: Applicants must have a Ph.D. in physics, biophysics, or a closely related discipline, a published research record in experimental biophysics, and a demonstrated potential to teach effectively at both undergraduate and graduate levels. Preferred Qualifications: Preference will be given to an individual whose research complements our current experimental biophysics program, promotes collaborations with our current theoretical efforts, and strengthens our cross-campus interdisciplinary education and research initiatives in quantitative systems biology. More information about the Department can be found at http://www.phys.gwu.edu. **Application Procedure**: To be considered, applicants should forward an application package (curriculum vitae, research plan, teaching statement), and arrange to have at least three letters of reference sent to Prof. Chen Zeng, Chair of the Search Committee, Physics Department, The George Washington University, 725 21st Street NW, Washington, DC 20052. Electronic submission (as pdf files) is encouraged, at the email address ebp@gwu.edu. Review of applications will begin on January 4, 2010 and continue until the position is filled. Only complete applications will be considered. The George Washington University is an equal-opportunity/affirmative-action employer.



New Biophysics Books

from



Structure and Function of Intrinsically Disordered Proteins

Peter Tompa

Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Budapest

Catalog no. C7892, November 2009 c. 359 pp., ISBN: 978-1-4200-7892-3 \$99.95 / £63.99 \$79.96 / £51.19

FLIM Microscopy in Biology and Medicine

Edited by

Ammasi Periasamy

University of Virginia, Charlottesville, USA

Robert M. Clegg

University of Illinois, Urbana, USA

Catalog no. C7890, July 2009 472 pp., ISBN: 978-1-4200-7890-9 \$99.95 / £63.99 **\$79.96** / **£51.19**

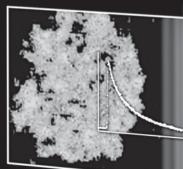
Engineering Genetic Circuits

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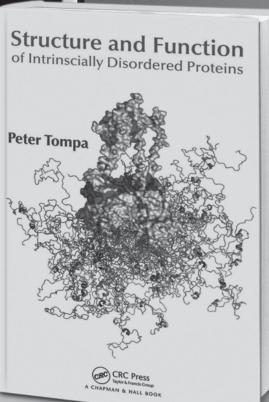
University of Utah, Salt Lake City, USA

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Biophysical Society 54th Annual Meeting

—San Francisco, California, February 20-24, 2010—



Graduate & Postdoc Institution Fair

Sunday, February 21, 2010 1:00–3:00 PM

Institutional Registration

Come participate in the Graduate & Postdoc Institution Fair at the Biophysical Society 54th Annual Meeting. Highlight your leading graduate training programs and fellowship opportunities in Biophysics!

Don't miss this opportunity to reach the largest gathering of undergraduate students and postocs interested in perusing careers in biophysics in the world.

At this fair be prepared to:

- * Meet undergraduate students & postdocs eager to learn about graduate training programs and fellowship opportunities in biophysics
- Convey to students why biophysics is one of the hottest fields in research science
- * Explain how a career in biophysics can lead to fulfilling careers in academia, industry, medical centers, and government **Registration form located on back**.

Registration from is located on back.

The event, sponsored by the Education Committee, aims to introduce undergraduates and provide postdocs with an opportunity to seek in programs & careers in biophysics.

For more information, visit http://www.biophysics.org/2010 meeting

See you in San Francisco!!!

Biophysical Society, 9650 Rockville Pike, Bethesda, MD 20814

Society Donors

The Society gratefully acknowledges the 2009 members who made donations to the Society programs. The names of all the donors are listed below. Donations allow for the growth each year in Student and International Travel Grants, Public Affairs, Awards, and other outreach activities that could not otherwise be undertaken.

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Public Affairs

New Ag Institute Launched

The United States Department of Agriculture launched a new research institute on October 1: the National Institute of Food and Agri-NIFA, which replaces the culture (NIFA). former Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service (CSREE), will be responsible for USDA's extramural research grants program. Roger Beachy, former president of the Donal Danforth Plant Science Center in St. Louis, is serving as the Director. NIFA was established by the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008. Congress has recognized the new Institute with a total of \$1.3 billion (\$808 million of that is for research) for fiscal year (FY) 2010, 10% more than CSREE received in 2009. The goal is for USDA to develop a strong extramural research program base on competitive awards. Congressionally direct projects, sometimes referred to as earmarks, funded by NIFA decreased 10% between 2008 and 2009. Fifteen percent of the NIFA's budget currently goes towards earmarked projects.

2009 Stimulus Spending Report

Preliminary data on how the NIH has spent stimulus funding provided by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) is available on the NIH website. According to the document posted on October 26, nearly 60% of ARRA funds are supporting "new science," while nearly 40% are "accelerating the science of existing projects." The report also estimates that "approximately 50,000 jobs will be created or retained," though "the number of jobs will fluctuate over time as projects are initiated, become fully operational and reach completion." Approximately 31% of the awards made with stimulus funds in FY

2009 (3,895 awards totaling \$1.43 billion) are for previously reviewed applications that were unpaid prior to ARRA; 11.2% (1,436 awards totaling \$1.15 billion) support new ARRA competing projects; and 44.5% (5,687 awards totaling \$1.51 billion) are administrative supplements. The full report is available at: http://report.nih.gov/PDF/Preliminary_NIH_ARRA_FY2009_Funding.pdf.

Federal Appropriations Update

The House and Senate have approved a measure that extends the current continuing resolution through December 18, while Congress completes work on the remaining FY 2010 appropriations bills. The continuing resolution temporarily keeps NIH, NSF, and other parts of the federal government operating at FY 2009 funding levels. Lawmakers attached the new Continuing Resolution (CR) to the conference agreement for the FY 2010 Interior-Environment appropriations bill (H.R. 2996).

As of November 2, Congress had sent five spending bills to the President, and two bills were in House-Senate negotiations. The Senate had yet to consider the five other bills, including the FY 2010 Labor-HHS-Education appropriations bill (H.R. 3293) that would fund NIH. According to press reports, the Democratic leadership is considering combining the remaining spending bills into one package to speed passage.

NHLBI Director Nabel to Step Down

NIH National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute Director Betsy Nabel, MD, announced on October 22 that she plans to leave NIH to become President and CEO of Brigham and Women's/Faulkner Hospitals in Boston, effective January 1, 2010. A successor had not been named as of November 2.

Negotiating the Transition— Spotlight Industry

Prepared by *Damien Samways* and *Susy Kohout*

This is the second article reporting on the 2009 Early Careers Committee panel held at the Biophysical Society meeting in Boston entitled Negotiating the Transition: Differences Between Academia and Industry. The first article, which appeared in the September newsletter, summarized questions raised by the audience and answered by two industry panelists. This article focuses on the questions for the academic panelists and their responses.

The two academic panelists were *Isabelle Marcotte*, Assistant Professor, Department of Chemistry, Université du Québec à Montréal, Canada, and *Aldrin Gomes*, Assistant Professor, Department of Neurobiology, Physiology & Behavior, University of California, Davis.

Q. What factors are important to consider when deciding between an academic or industry career?

Both panelists agreed that working in a field they enjoyed made all the difference in their careers. Clearly, grant writing is an important, as well as time-consuming, responsibility for academic research. However, adequate start-up funds give new investigators time to establish their laboratories before needing further research support.

Q. How easy is it to transition from industry into academia?

Industry and academia have different working environments and many elements of training are not common to both career paths. Gen-

erally, the longer you stay on one of these career paths, the more difficult it can be to transition to the other. That said, a highly successful scientist on one career path can sometimes use this as leverage to make such a transition easier.

Q. How much bench work versus other responsibilities can one expect in an academic path?

One of the panelists spends little time at the bench now. In the beginning, however, a large portion of this panelist's time was needed in the lab, setting up equipment and training the incoming lab members. Having established the laboratory, more of this panelist's time is spent writing grants, managing the research projects and lab personnel, teaching, and networking. Finding people to trust with the everyday running of the lab, such as training, is important.

The other panelist has a different routine. Writing is also a major responsibility, but this panelist endeavors to spend two hours in the lab every day. Time management is key to accomplishing that goal. Good time management allows the freedom to mix and match one's daily schedule while still completing all one's responsibilities.

Q. When applying for an academic position, how can one know what is a "good fit" (i.e., is this particular department appropriate for my skills)?

Before applying, research both the institution and the department to help determine whether the position is appropriate or not. If the advertisement for the position does not provide enough details, don't be afraid to make inquiries by email.

It is also important to consider that departments are often merging, or have implemented cross-discipline initiatives focusing on particular research goals. These places are often looking for high-quality candidates who will think outside the box. A broad scientific

base should be considered an asset, not a liability.

If teaching is a consideration, make sure to inquire about the teaching load and how teaching is expected to fit into your responsibilities along with your research. Also, determine what courses you are comfo rable teaching and apply to those departments.

Q. During the job search process, how does one prepare for the interview?

There are many aspects to the interview process. Your research presentation needs to be geared toward a broad audience. "Chalk talks" are not as common as they used to be, and you should ask whether this is expected.

Research those professors you are going to meet and search for some common ground. Pointing out common ground between your research and their will make your position stronger in research. Personality and enthusiasm are also important factors. Those interviewing you will become your coworkers, so their ability to work with you will make a difference in their decisions.

One of three panelists transitioned into a tenure-track professor position through a research scientist position and believes that those intermediate positions eased the transition into a professor position. Coming in with an independent funding source, such as a K99 award, is also a terrific advantage in the current climate. Applying for independence transition awards is highly encouraged, although they are highly competitive.





Endowed Chair in Biophysics

The Department of Physics and Astronomy at Texas Christian University invites applications for the Moncrief Endowed Chair in the area of biophysics at the Associate or Full Professor level. The successful candidate will be expected to teach undergraduate and graduate physics courses, advice PhD candidates, and conduct an independent, vigorous, and funded research program. We expect that the Chair holder will lead the future growth of the Department in the area of biophysics. Special consideration will be given to candidates specializing in nano-biophysics. Current related research areas in the Department include nanosize material science, spectroscopy, and theoretical physics.

Applicants should have a PhD degree in Physics, a strong record of achievement in biophysics research, a consistent record of external support, and a commitment to excellence in undergraduate and graduate teaching and outreach. Interested applicants should send their curriculum vitae, a list of publications, a research statement, a statement on teaching philosophy, and complete contact information of at least three professional references electronically to m.yates@tcu.edu.

Review of applications will begin soon after January 1 and will continue until the position is filled. TCU is an equal opportunity employer. Women and minorities are strongly encouraged to apply.

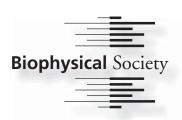
TCU Box 298840, Fort Worth, TX 76129

Biophysical Society Job Board

Do you have a job opening at your institution or company? Are you looking for a job in biophysics?

Visit the Job Board on the Biophysical Society website at www.biophysics.org. Members receive reduced rates for posting jobs online as well as the capability to search over 500 résumés from job seekers with a background in biophysics. Job candidates can post résumés online at no cost and search for jobs related to their fields of study.

For questions or assistance with posting jobs or résumés on the Society Job Board please contact Alisha Yocum at 301-634-7789 or by email at ayocum@biophysics.org.



Summer Course in Biophysics:

Case Studies in the Physics of Life

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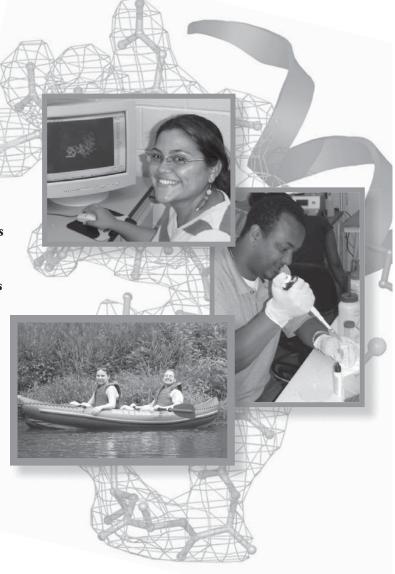
- Studying quantitative science: chemistry, physics, biochemistry, computer science
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- Travel Gant
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Must be a minority undergraduate student residing in the U.S. or citizen of U.S., or Canadian Aboriginal undergraduate student.

For more information and to apply, go to: http://www.biophysics.org/2010SummerCourse/tabid/898/Default.aspx



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Biophysical Society Newsletter—December 2009

Upcoming Events

January 9–10, 2010 Protein Folding Dynamics, Gordon Research Seminar Ventura, California http://www.grc.org/meetings.aspx?year=2010

January 10–15, 2010 Keystone Symposia on Molecular and Cellular Biology Snowbird, Utah http://www.keystonesymposia.org/10A5

April 5–8, 2010 4th Joint Symposium on Computational Medical Physics Houston, Texas http://www.new.ans.org/meetings/c_3 April 15–18, 2010
53rd Annual Meeting of the Canadian Society of
Biochemistry, Molecular and Cellular Biology
Alberta, Canada
http://www.csbmcb.ca/meetings/53rd_Annual_Meeting.aspx

June 18–20, 2010

The 4th International Conference on Bioinformatics and Biomedical Engineering (iCBBE)

Chengdu, China

http://www.icbbe.org/2010/Home.aspx