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GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

COVID-19 Testing and Vaccinations

Testing. Graduate students who live on campus or come to campus each week must be tested. You may enroll in [Penn Cares Testing](#) or in [COVID SAFE](#) – but you should not be enrolled in both simultaneously. If you are working in a lab in CHOP, Wistar, or another affiliate and are NOT entering Penn/PSOM buildings, you should follow those entities' testing protocols and do NOT need to enroll in University testing.

Red PennOpen Pass? If you signed up for Penn Cares testing but are not scheduled for a weekly test, you may get a red PennOpen pass. You will need to schedule your weekly test in order to be given a green pass. If you are no longer coming to campus weekly or have switched to COVID SAFE, please email Judy Jackson, jajackso@penntesting.upenn.edu to arrange to be un-enrolled from Penn Cares. Please refer to Perelman School of Medicine email of 1/25/21 4:24pm for more details about testing.

Vaccinations. Penn does not yet have a general scheduling process for vaccinations. Medical students are being scheduled for vaccinations through UPHS. PhD students who work in labs

connected to clinical facilities, such as CHOP, VET, or UPHS, **may** be scheduled for vaccinations through those entities. Students who are working SARS-CoV-2 in BSL3 labs or processing specimens from COVID patients may be prioritized for vaccination through Penn Medicine regardless of lab location (contact your PI and/or departmental BA, or Judy Jackson in BGS if in a non-PSOM lab). Subsequent prioritization groups will follow state guidelines and will occur as quickly as possible, depending upon availability of vaccine doses, which remains fluid and difficult to predict. We will continue to share updates as we receive them from our University and Health System colleagues. We ask that our students be patient and understanding as we navigate this process as a community. The institutions are doing their best to vaccinate the exposed and vulnerable first. Ultimately, we want to vaccinate everyone, so [if you are offered the opportunity to get vaccinated and want to do so, we ask that you get vaccinated](#). Every individual who is vaccinated is one less person who can spread the disease. This will allow more efficient distribution to the whole community if we don't have to circle back for people who deferred. We thank you for all your efforts to keep our community safe during these challenging times.

Pass/Fail Petition

BGS is allowing students to petition to have unlimited pass/fail grading options should their personal circumstances present the need. The types of petitions that will be considered for approval based on circumstances presented by the pandemic include:

- Students with additional family responsibilities due to the pandemic
- Students who are ill or caring for ill family members
- Students with limited access to internet or necessary technology for remote participation
- Students unable to participate in required synchronous sessions (due to time zone differences, etc.)
- Students experiencing housing insecurity

The petition form is located at https://upenn.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_2rZtqqI6T143Q9L and will be available until **March 19**, the grade type change deadline.

Reminder: Accessing Your W2 Forms

For help accessing your W2 via Workday, please see the following instructions: <https://www.med.upenn.edu/bgs/assets/user-content/finance-forms/accessing-w2.pdf>

Counseling and Wellness

[Counseling and Psychological Services](#) has a variety of virtual options and some in-person options. Call 215-898-7021 anytime (24/7) to make an appointment or talk with a licensed counselor.

On campus appointments are available 9am-5pm Monday-Friday. Virtual appointments are available Mon-Thurs, 9am-6pm, Fri, 9am-5pm, and Saturday, 10am-2pm. Press 2 to make an in-person or virtual appointment.

You may also use [Let's Talk](#) virtual hours: <https://caps.wellness.upenn.edu/ltplochours/>

Use 215-898-7021, press 2, to schedule a Let's Talk session.

Dr. Tiffany Brown is the embedded CAPS counselor for BGS. You may schedule appointments with her directly [nicobr@upenn.edu] or by calling 215-898-7021 (press 2). You may also arrange to work with other CAPS counselors by calling the main CAPS number.

For peer support networking, please feel free to reach out to one of the BGS student volunteers of [Peer Support Network](#).

Penn Graduate Leadership Awards: Nominations Open through March 1

Please nominate graduating students for University's two leadership awards for graduate and professional students: The President's & Provost's Honor for Developing New Initiatives in Graduate & Professional Student Life and the Dr. Andy Binns Award for Outstanding Service to Graduate & Professional Student Life.

December 2020, May 2021, and August 2021 graduates are eligible for these awards. The deadline to nominate students is March 1. Nominations are accepted from students, faculty and staff. Self-nominations are accepted. Read more about the award criteria and how to nominate students at <https://gsc.upenn.edu/graduate-life/grad-life-awards>.

Penn's Projects for Progress

Deadline: 5PM EST on March 1, 2021. (*Application goes live on February 15, 2021*)

The Office of Social Equity & Community is pleased to announce the launch of Penn Projects for Progress, a fund and initiative established by President Amy Gutmann. The fund will support proposals designed to promote inclusion by focusing on one or more of the following:

- Eradicating or reducing systemic racism
- Achieving educational equity
- Reducing health disparities based on race, gender, sexual orientation, and/or social determinants of health.

Projects must demonstrate how they will make a direct impact in Philadelphia, whether at Penn in particular or more broadly anywhere in the city. The projects will be conceived by teams of Penn students (undergraduate, graduate, and professional), staff, and faculty – [learn more here](#) and see our FAQ for details on eligibility.

Project Meow Accepting Donations

Project Meow builds winter shelters for the stray cats of West Philadelphia. More than 500 shelters were constructed last season! They are once again accepting donations of large styrofoam boxes (Illumina boxes are ideal). See flyer [here](#); contact [Anne Froehling](#) (215)-485-6121 to arrange pick up outside the building.

UPCOMING EVENTS

IGG Diversity Committee - Black History Month Film Series

In celebration of Black History Month, the IGG Diversity Committee will be hosting a weekly film series at 7:30 pm EST on Tuesdays (February 9th, 16th, and 23rd). See flyer for movie [details](#).

The films chosen highlight several periods of Black History in America and the viewings will be followed by discussion. The zoom link for the event can be found below.

Link: [here](#)

Meeting ID: 938 9186 8830

Passcode: 109402

Pan-Asian American Community House (PAACH) – Upcoming Events

The Pan-Asian American Community House (PAACH) at Penn would like to share the following upcoming programs:

- **Workshop/Training: What is Mental Health? Redefining Asian Un/Wellness at Penn ft. Dr. Mimi Khuc**
 - Feb. 24, 7 – 8 PM | [RSVP](#)
- **Workshop/Training: Difficult Conversations Around Race & Gaslighting ft. Dr. Ramani**
 - Mar. 18, 8 – 9:30 PM | [RSVP](#)

The last two events are affiliated with the program series supported by the [Task Force on Support to Asian and Asian American Students and Scholars](#) (TAASS).

PennGGHE and Genetics Symposium on February 24 and 25, 2021

Register: <https://globalgenomics.med.upenn.edu/symposium.html>

On behalf of Drs. Daniel Rader and Sarah Tishkoff, the Center for Global Genomics & Health Equity and the Department of Genetics at the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine are jointly hosting a virtual symposium entitled, "*Importance and Challenges of Increasing Ethnic Diversity in Human Genomics Research*".

The two-day virtual symposium includes invited speakers of diverse backgrounds discussing their research and experiences in increasing diversity in human genomics and the ethical issues to be considered. The symposium will be held on Wednesday, February 24 and Thursday, February 25, 2021 from 12:00PM to 4:00PM(EST). The topics of discussion for the two-day virtual symposium are:

Day 1: *“Importance and Value of Increasing Ethnic Diversity in Human Genomics Research”*

Day 2: *“Challenges with Conducting Genomic Studies in Minority Populations”*

The symposium is free and faculty, postdocs, students, and staff are all welcome to attend. See flyer [here](#).

Discussion with Leonard Hayflick, PhD, 2020 Distinguished Graduate Award Recipient | March 1st

Date: 03/01/2021

Time: 3:00 PM to 4:00 PM EST

Location: Virtual Event via BlueJeans Events

Leonard Hayflick, C’51, G’53, GR’56, a native Philadelphian, is currently Professor of Anatomy at the University of California, San Francisco. In 1962, as a member of the Wistar Institute and an assistant professor at the University of Pennsylvania Medical School, he discovered that cultured normal human cells had a limited ability to divide, overturning a 60-year-old dogma that all cells are potentially immortal. He interpreted his discovery to be aging at the cell level, which launched the modern era of aging research by redirecting its cause to intracellular events. He also discovered that only cancer cells are immortal, which redirected research to how mortal normal human cells become immortal cancer cells.

[Learn more and register.](#)

Penn Society for Psychedelic Science Seminar Series

March 2, March 16, and April 13 at 4 PM

This semester, the Penn Society for Psychedelic Science is hosting a [seminar series](#) showcasing the broad range of research – from molecules, to brains, to societies – that is *New and Noteworthy in Psychedelic Science*. Join us roughly every other Tuesday at 4pm.

Join us in future weeks to hear from Dr. David Olson, Joshua Falcon, and Dr. Ruben Laukkonen! Finally, we would love to thank BGSA for sponsoring this series and MindCORE for hosting us on their CrowdCast server. Register for [David Olson](#), [Joshua Falcon](#), and [Ruben Laukkonen](#) at these links!

THESIS DEFENSES

Feb. 22, 10 AM (<https://bluejeans.com/555392827>): **Courtney Hong (PGG)**, “Investigating the Downstream Effectors of the CCM Pathway: A Role for ADAMTS Proteases and Versican Cleavage.” Contact [Sarah Squire](#).

Feb. 22, 1 PM (<https://bluejeans.com/384218883>): **Niambi Brewer (CAMB)**, “Gnas Inactivation in Heterotopic Ossification.” Contact [Meagan Schofer](#).

Feb. 23, 10 AM (<https://bluejeans.com/511792056>): **Robert Warneford-Thomson (BMB)**, “Investigation of RNA-protein interactions in PRC2 function and development of a high-throughput SARS-CoV-2 testing platform.” Contact [Kelli McKenna](#).

PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENTS

CAMB

Feb. 25, 12 – 1 PM: **GTV Trainee Seminar: Chris Choe (Musunuru lab), Kelly Fagan (Davidson lab), and Kimberly Veliz (Gill lab) presenting.** Contact [Anna Kline](#) for the virtual link.

Feb. 26, 12 – 1 PM: **DSRB Program Lunch: Anti Racism Book Discussion.** Contact [Meagan Schofer](#) for the virtual link.

Feb. 26, 12:15 – 1:30 PM: **CPM Research in Progress: Stephen Coscia (Holzbaur lab), Jessica Phan (Lee lab), and Folasade Sofela (Sehgal lab) presenting.** Contact [Kathy O'Connor-Cooley](#) for the virtual link.

NGG

CALENDARS

[NGG and GLIA](#)

[MINS](#)

[BGSA](#)

CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Events this Week

- Feb. 24, 1:40 – 3:40 PM: **Making Sense of the Science: A Workshop on Effective Science Writing.** Join the CEMB, GAPSA, and the Graduate Student Center as we welcome Dr. Judith Swan, Associate Director for Writing in Science and Engineering at Princeton University, for a workshop on effective scientific writing. Dr. Swan has taught writing to scientists for over 25

years to industry and academic institutions. In this workshop, you will learn how to write about your research clearly and concisely for your readers.

Register now for this limited-space event: <http://bit.ly/effectivesciencewriting2021>

Future Events

- **Zotero Workshops:** Learn about the many features of Zotero, a free citation management software. Learn more and register at gsc.upenn.edu/events.
 - **Zotero Citation Features** - Monday, March 1, 4:00 - 4:45 PM ET
 - **Advanced Zotero** - Monday, March 29, 4:00 - 4:45 PM ET
Cosponsored by Penn Libraries and the Grad Center
- Mar. 2, 2 – 4 PM: **Creating Connections with the Alan Alda Center.** The [Alda Center's](#) Creating Connections program is a two-hour live, online workshop designed to help scientists and researchers learn to engage and inspire diverse audiences through effective communication, with a particular focus on virtual interactions. Participants will learn how to balance being prepared with responding in the moment to address questions. The program emphasizes universal communication strategies, including avoiding jargon, and technical skills for creating engagement online, including camera angles and sound levels. Learn more and register at gsc.upenn.edu/events
Cosponsored by GAPSA, Penn Libraries, and the Grad Center
- Mar. 1, 12 – 1 PM ([Register](#)): **Penn I-Corps Info Session.** Penn I-Corps is looking for entrepreneurs to apply to their spring training! Participants will learn how to test their ideas with potential customers and receive grants up to \$2,000 for their startup. Learn more about the I-Corps program [here](#); the final application deadline for the Spring is **February 24, 2021**.
- Mar. 19, 12 – 5 PM: **Save the Date! Science, Data, and Tech Virtual Career Fair.** Registration for students and postdocs will open at **7:00PM EST on March 9, 2021**. Carefully review [this page](#) and the several steps required to update and/or set up your Handshake account properly so that you may participate.

Penn I-Corps Program

Deadline: February 24, 2021

The Penn I-Corps Program teaches entrepreneurs how to test and validate their startup ideas by performing customer interviews; participants walk away with feedback from at least 20 potential customers. As such, it helps you develop a product/market fit strategy for your ideas. I-Corps is free to participants, and accepted teams receive grants of up to \$2,000 for their startup. This short course meets five times over six weeks, starting on March 19. The program is restricted to Penn affiliated students, staff, researchers, or faculty with Penn-generated ideas and technologies originating in academic research.

Penn I-Corps can qualify you for participation in National NSF I-corps (\$50k), which in turn entitles you to apply for an NSF PFI-TT (Partnerships for Innovation- Technology Translation) grant (\$250k) and correlates with a high ratio of success in SBIR grant applications (~\$1M).

Learn more [here](#).

3-Minute Thesis

Deadline: March 15, 2021

Penn 3MT is a university-sponsored competitive speaking competition designed to showcase graduate student research in three-minute talks to a general audience. This is a terrific opportunity for graduate students engaged in substantive original research to develop communication skills and share their work with faculty, students, and staff from across the University.

In addition to bragging rights, prizes will be awarded to the top three winners and an audience choice winner. To enter, students must submit a video of their three-minute talk to Penn 3MT. From those submissions, finalists will be chosen to compete in the campus wide online competition.

Learn more and submit your video: https://bit.ly/3_MT

Cosponsored by GAPSA, Penn Libraries, Career Services, CURF, and the Grad Center

NIDCD's Research Supplements to Promote Diversity in Health-Related Research

The NIH National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders (NIDCD) recently announced Research Supplements to Promote Diversity in Health-Related Research. See the full announcement [here](#).

Job Openings

- [FitzGerald Lab Opportunities – Graduate Students & Postdocs](#)
- [Postdoctoral Position at Columbia University – Department of Genetics and Development](#)
- [Industry Scientist Opportunities – Aro Biotherapeutics](#)
- [Seres Therapeutics seeking Scientist, Analytical Development](#)
- [Opportunity at SUNY for those interested in a career at a PUI](#)
- [Associate Principal Investigator at NBACC \(Virology team\)](#)
- [New Jersey Public Health and Environmental Laboratories – Postdoc Fellowship Opportunities](#)
- [Immunotherapy Listing – Postdoctoral Research Fellow at Duke University](#)
- [Archive of other Job Listings](#)

Request to join the [BGS Alumni and Current Students LinkedIn](#) to stay updated on job opportunities.

RESOURCES

[BGS Career Development Calendar](#)

[BGS Career Development Site](#)

[BGS Career Twitter](#)

[BGS Alumni & Current Students LinkedIn](#)

[Black Women in Computational Biology Network](#)

[Penn Career Services - Ph.D./Postdoc Careers Page](#)

[Handshake](#)

[Request a sponsored Membership to the New York Academy of Sciences](#)

STUDENT GROUP EVENTS/RESOURCES

Looking for a peer mentor? Connect with the Peer Support Network!

The **Peer Support Network** (PSN) is offering one-on-one peer mentoring sessions!

Created in response to the pandemic, PSN aims to support students of all levels as they adjust to graduate school and navigate difficult situations. PSN recognizes that each BGS student faces unique challenges and that sometimes, talking with a peer can be a helpful first step in working through those challenges. PSN volunteers, consisting of fellow BGS students and alumni, are available to provide students with peer mentorship, a listening ear, and advice for coping with grad school-related challenges.

To connect with a PSN peer mentor and register for PSN services, please complete the following [form](#).

Interested in volunteering with PSN? Please visit our [website](#) to sign up and learn more about volunteer expectations.

Wishing everyone well!

The PSN team

Email: bgspeernetwork@gmail.com

Website: <https://www.med.upenn.edu/bgs/psn.html>

[Peer Support Network \(PSN\)](#)

[Slack for BGS Students](#)

[Roommate Ads – Google Doc](#)

[BGSA Website](#)

[Grad Center at Penn](#)

[Family Center at Penn](#)

[Ask Isaac: Your Personal IS Guru](#)

[Request a sponsored Membership to the New York Academy of Sciences](#)

[Request a University-sponsored MATLAB license](#)

For information about upcoming events or to advertise in next week's bulletin, contact [Rebecca Lopez](#).