Society News

SRNT Trainee Network Spotlight

Trainee Network Advisory Board

Emily L. Zale¹, Olga Rass²

¹Syracuse University, Syracuse, NY 13244, USA; elzale@syr.edu; ²Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, Baltimore, MD 21224, USA; orass1@jhmi.edu

The SRNT Trainee Network Spotlight highlights outstanding trainees in tobacco science, thereby providing visibility and networking opportunities. Please visit the Trainee Network’s website (http://www.srnt.org/mem_only/networks/trainee.cfm) to learn more about trainee webinars, the trainee mixer event at the annual meeting, and joining the network.

Allison Kurti, PhD
Post-Doctoral Trainee
Behavior Analysis/Pharmacology

Dr Kurti completed her PhD in psychology at the University of Florida, Gainesville, in 2014. She is currently a postdoctoral fellow at the University of Vermont. Dr Kurti’s recent accomplishments in tobacco science include publishing the first laboratory-based assessment of a combined exercise plus contingency management approach to reducing cigarette smoking.

Dr Kurti became interested in tobacco science because she found the challenge of developing innovative cessation interventions both intellectually stimulating and personally rewarding. Dr Kurti’s favorite part of being an SRNT member is attending the annual meeting because it provides the opportunity to learn from experts with a diverse training background. Her future training goals include working in tobacco regulatory science, developing novel smoking cessation treatments, and integrating technology with smoking cessation treatments to disseminate effective treatment to high-risk, vulnerable, and historically underserved populations (eg, low SES or rural smokers).

Jon-Patrick Allem, MA
Graduate Student
Public Health

Mr Allem is a graduate student at the Keck School of Medicine of the University of Southern California. He will graduate with his PhD in Health Behavior Research in 2015. Mr Allem’s recent accomplishments in tobacco science include receipt of an NRSA Institutional
Research Training Grant (T32) awarded by the National Cancer Institute and serving as the principal investigator for a pilot study funded by the USC Tobacco Center for Regulatory Science.

Mr Allem became interested in tobacco science after gaining experience on a research study investigating the correlates of smoking and secondhand smoke exposure among Korean Americans. He has since expanded that research to include specific risk factors for cigarette use among underserved populations (eg, Korean, Korean Americans, Hispanic adolescents, and Hispanic emerging adults). His favorite part of being an SRNT member is the forum that SRNT creates to share ideas, ask for advice, and provide career resources. Mr Allem’s training goals include expanding the scope of his research interests in tobacco science. He is currently applying for postdoctoral positions.

**Andy Z. X. Zhu, PhD**

**Post-Doctoral Trainee**

**Pre-Clinical**

Dr Zhu completed his PhD in pharmacology and toxicology at the University of Toronto in 2014, where he is currently a postdoctoral fellow. Dr Zhu’s recent accomplishments in tobacco science include publishing the first study to elucidate the mechanism responsible for the therapeutic use of bupropion in smoking cessation, conducting novel research focused on understanding quitting variability, and improving the efficacy of smoking cessation pharmacotherapies.

Dr Zhu became interested in tobacco science through his exposure to variations in nicotine self-administration in rodents as an undergraduate research assistant. His favorite part of being an SRNT member is attending SRNT meetings because learning about new discoveries on the molecular basis of nicotine addiction inspires new translational hypotheses for his own research. Dr Zhu’s future training goals include using high throughput genetic screening methods to gain a better understanding of the variability associated with smoking behaviors and smoking cessation outcomes and optimizing smoking cessation treatment selection for individual smokers.

**Erin McClure, PhD**

**Early Career Investigator**

**Clinical**

Dr McClure completed her PhD in psychology at the University of Florida, Gainesville, in 2009. She is currently an instructor at the Medical University of South Carolina. Dr McClure’s recent accomplishments in tobacco science include receipt of a mentored scientist career development award (K01) from the National Institute on Drug Abuse to pursue career development and research integrating mobile health technology into the study of adolescent smoking and relapse.

Dr McClure became interested in tobacco science through her fascination with behavior that persists despite its well-known, harmful effects. Her favorite part of being an SRNT member is attending the annual meetings, which provide opportunities for collaborations that shape and improve research questions and establish a strong community for trainees and early career investigators. Dr McClure’s future training goals include developing expertise in mobile health technology, becoming a leader in tobacco science through technology-based treatment development and evaluation, and serving as a mentor to young scientists in nicotine and tobacco research.