As the fall 2016 term and calendar year come to a close, I want to wish you good health and happiness in the New Year from the School of Health and Natural Sciences (SHNS). This issue of our SHNS newsletter highlights the activities and events from fall 2016. As you’ll see from the stories inside, all of our programs have been busy!

As we move into the start of the Spring semester, excitement is building over the January opening of our new state-of-the-art Health Professions Clinical Simulation and Learning Lab. This lab includes computerized mannequins to assist students in physical assessment and communication skills; a mock apartment, health assessment and skills space, a movement lab, and new classrooms. The simulators mimic real-life human physiology and provide health care profession students the opportunity to practice clinical skills in real life scenarios within a safe environment where mistakes can be made. Our deep gratitude and appreciation is extended to our “Friends of Nursing” who provided generous support for advanced media capabilities within the lab.

This new lab in addition to our science lab opening last fall, our recent exercise science lab and our health professions clinical simulation lab that opened last spring in the Bronx, moves SHNS to the next level. These innovative environments provide the opportunity to further enrich student learning, foster scientific and clinical reasoning, and enhance hands-on, practical skills. We look forward to inviting the college community to the grand opening. Please watch for the announcement this spring.

We are starting a new section in our newsletter highlighting an alumni. We hope you enjoy reading about Scott Guevin who graduated from our Physical Therapy Program. We would love to hear from more of our alumni about their successes.

Enjoy reading the newsletter.

**Joan Toglia** Ph.D., OTR, FAOTA  
Dean, School of Health and Natural Sciences
Alumni News: The Twice-Risen Star of Scott Guevin, BS ‘00, PT ‘00

In his mid-20s, armed with a business degree and a job as a financial analyst at a prestigious Manhattan consulting firm, Scott Guevin, BS ’00, PT ’00, DPT, MBA, was, in the words of a Wall Street colleague, “on a fast track to make tons of money.” Yet within weeks of that conversation, Guevin had enrolled in a full-time physical therapy program at Mercy College. “I’m good with numbers and I liked finance,” Guevin said of that time in his life. “But something was missing. I had no direct impact on people’s lives.”

His passion for helping people led him to volunteer at a hospital, which immediately felt like a good fit. When at last he took the leap, resigning from his financial services firm to attend Mercy’s School of Health Sciences, the decision came as a surprise to some. “One of the senior partners actively tried to discourage me,” Guevin recalled. “He told me, ‘You’re making a huge mistake!’ There were times I wondered if he was right. But now I’m doing what I love, and I’ve never regretted a single moment.”

Today Guevin is chief executive officer at Penn State Hershey Rehabilitation Hospital (PSH-Rehab) in central Pennsylvania. This state-of-the-art, 250,000-sq. ft. teaching hospital, affiliated with Penn State Hershey Medical Center, looks more like an upscale hotel than a clinic. Ranked in the top three percent of rehabilitation hospitals surveyed in the nation, PSH-Rehab has won awards for its programs in pediatric rehabilitation, brain and spinal cord injury, and stroke and neurological disorders, and maintains a host of other programs under one roof. During Guevin’s tenure, the hospital has doubled in size, adding a new residency program and a new skilled nursing facility for transitional care that is ranked among the region’s finest.

It may seem like a meteoric rise, but Guevin’s decision to switch careers meant starting at the bottom. While attending Mercy’s rigorous PT program, he worked in his father’s construction business. By 2000 he had earned a Bachelor of Science in Health Science and a Master of Science in Physical Therapy, achieving a 4.0 GPA in each discipline. Mercy’s Physical Therapy Program Director and Associate Professor Nannette Hyland, MST, PhD, taught him for three semesters. In a cohort of “all go-getters,” Hyland recalls Guevin as “a standout—very professional and focused, with a positive, motivating effect on his classmates. He was a natural leader just by his example.” Guevin’s business degree did not go to waste. Inevitably his penchant for finance blended with his passion for healing and his star began to rise once more. Within three years of changing fields, Guevin’s succession of jobs had begun to result in even greater responsibility, prestige and scope: from physical therapist to Director of Rehabilitation to Vice President of Operations—and, in 2012, CEO.

From where he sits now at the helm of PSH-Rehab, Guevin has taken an interest in the new clinical labs under construction at Mercy’s Main Hall. The $10 million renovation project will provide high tech labs for the College’s nursing and physical therapy students. “I’ve earned six degrees at three different institutions, and I can say without reservation that my Mercy professors were exceptional,” he said. “They never stopped challenging me, so I never stopped learning. I count them among the best, most supportive teachers I ever had.” What makes him happiest in his current role? “Watching patients leave. After seeing someone brought in on a stretcher, seeing them walk out of those revolving doors on their own—it’s the highlight of my day,” he said.

Protecting the Planet from Climate Change

SHNS students, staff and faculty joined Congresswoman Nita Lowey and local environmental leaders on December 12 to discuss the anniversary of the Paris Agreement - an agreement to protect the planet from climate change - and to urge President-elect Donald Trump to uphold the agreement. Students learn about the effects of greenhouse gases in courses like environmental science. The U.S. along with over 200 countries signed the original agreement.
Annual Biomedical Research Conference for Minority Students

In November, Dr. Davida Smyth and her students attended the Annual Biomedical Research Conference for Minority Students in Tampa Florida. Smyth was an invited judge and three of her students presented posters and one gave an oral presentation. Bien Porconi from clinical laboratory science was awarded a student travel award to attend the conference and present her poster. Natalie Vegas from veterinary technology was chosen to give an oral presentation. Both Natalie Tumidajski (health sciences) and Dominick Mancini (veterinary technology) presented posters. All four students had taken Smyth’s microbiology of urban spaces course in the spring and worked for the summer in her lab to develop their own research projects.

Department of Natural Science Lecture Series

The Department of Natural Sciences continued to invite prestigious speakers to the College to speak to students and faculty about their research and work in the sciences. On October 18, Associate Professor and Chair of the Department of Biological Sciences and Geology at Queensborough Community College - CUNY Dr. M Trujillo presented to students on "Microbiology of the Soil, a Tool for Basic and Applied Research." Associate Professor and Chair of the Department of Biology of Hunter College Dr. Derick Brazil, presented a seminar on Wednesday November 16 entitled "Of Molds and Men: Using Dictyostelium Discoideum" to learn about cancer metastasis. On December 6, Associate Professor of Microbiology and Immunology at New York Medical College Dr. Doris Bucher, shared her research and expertise with our students in a talk on "Flu Vaccine: Past, Present and Future" as part of our Health on the Hudson series.

Students and Faculty Present at the MACUB Conference

Several students and faculty presented their research at the 49th Annual Fall Conference of the Metropolitan Association of College and University Biologists (MACUB) held in Old Westbury, NY on Saturday, October 29.

Margo McGrath, Wilkinson Macon, Natalia Plawiak, Natalie Vegas, and Bien Porconi, all undergraduate students, presented their research along with support from Dr. Renee Haskew-Layton, Dr. Geetha Surendran, and Dr. Davida Smyth.

ConGRANTulations:

Dr. Nancy Beverly from Natural Sciences was a member of a collaborative group of eight colleges and universities, who received a $1.7 million dollar grant from the National Science Foundation entitled Community Sourcing Introductory Physics for the Life Sciences. The group will develop the Introductory Physics for Life Science (IPLS) Portal to enhance the education life science students by providing engaging and effective IPLS instructional materials and helping IPLS instructors use these materials.

Professor Patrick Davitt received a grant award of $12,000 from Generation UCAN to carry out a research study, “Effects of a single serving slow absorption carbohydrate source on fuel utilization and cognitive function in response to a sustained submaximal endurance run”.

The Communication Disorders Program worked with Phil Keefe and Katy Coppinger from the Advancement Office to secure support for the purchase of a new audiology suite (sound booth) for the Speech and Hearing Center: $25,000 from TD Charitable Foundation (TD Bank) and $10,000 from the Thomas and Agnes Carvel Foundation.

Dr. Davida Smyth was awarded a grant from the Department of Defense. The “Mercy Initiative for Undergraduate Research and Education in Genomics” awarded $142,771.75 to purchase the components of a genomics system—an Ion S5—and associated equipment and training.

Dr. Joan Toglia and Dr. Kathleen Golisz received a $19,500 grant from the Arc of Westchester Foundation to establish two student fellowships to support development of a health assessment and a technology assessment for their clients.
Global Gateway Experience - Heifer Farm, Rutland MA

Seven students traveled with Dr. Irina Ellison to the Heifer Farm in Rutland, MA in November, to learn about the role of sustainability in promoting global health. Students engaged in a variety of experiential activities including team building exercises, sustainable farming practices and educational sessions on global rural poverty. Funding was provided through a Faculty Senate micro-grant. School of Health and Natural Sciences student, Jose Reyes wrote about his experience.

One of the most striking, and eye-opening experiences of my life was visiting Heifer Farm in Rutland, Massachusetts. I was presented the opportunity to go twice, thanks to Dr. Ellison. Both times that I have gone, the experience was an incredible one. There are many reasons as to why the farm is such a great place to visit. The main take away that many people experience when visiting the farm, is the knowledge and understanding of the Global Village. In the Global Village, you learn about the disparities in other countries through replica homes within that country. This really gives you a perspective as to what life in that country is like, as well as how it compares to yours at home. In the Global Village, we were also challenged to make our own meals from a very meager pantry, often limited to three or four ingredients. This alone drives such a powerful message home when putting yourself in the mindset that this is a struggle people deal with every day.

Another captivating part of the farm, is all of the farm animals. Their beauty and innocence is well worth the drive up. Being able to pet a goat that so willingly comes up to you to be pet is simply stress relieving. Seeing the animals in the farm and feeding them builds such a sense of motivation to wake up the next morning and feed them again. All of this is felt immediately. Another thing the animals bring to the table is the babies that are born. The first time went well; a total of three baby goats were born. The second time I went, three little piglets were born, as well as a nest of baby chicks – something that not many people can say they have experienced.

My favorite part of the entire trip was the community building. It is crazy how we can all be students of the same college, but not know each other in the way that we should. From the moment we arrived at the farm, we began doing activities that brought us closer and closer, pushing the limits of our comfort zones. Once we got past all the awkwardness, we were much more comfortable with one another, and bonded tremendously. We went from being strangers, to having such an appreciation for each other by learning so much from one another within the group. There were so many positives that came from this trip, and caused me to keep going back. There are so many things about the farm that are therapeutic, and I truly believe that so much about the farm is good for the soul. Heifer farm is a great organization that teaches so much to the public. The farm teaches individuals skills, and knowledge used in other countries, which is great for college students, and others to experience.

Student Receives Scholarship to Attend National Conference

Jessica Flanagan, a student in the Graduate Occupational Therapy Program, was awarded a scholarship to attend the 5th annual Johns Hopkins Critical Care Rehabilitation Conference. Flanagan is one of only four Occupational Therapy students to be awarded this scholarship in 2016. Flanagan is a United States Marine Corps veteran of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom. She is an enthusiastic student currently completing her full time fieldwork and looking forward to her degree conferral in February 2017. Flanagan stated, "It was a great experience to speak with seasoned clinicians and listen to their opinions on hospital-based healthcare as opposed to various other clinical environments they may have worked in previously. Additionally, I had the opportunity to speak with physical therapy, occupational therapy and speech-language-pathology students from other states, allowing me to appreciate the common motivation of becoming a licensed clinician in our respected field. I am very grateful to have been chosen to apply for this and beyond pleased that I was able to attend."
Broadening Participation in STEM through a Mole Day

The American Chemical Society (ACS) declared the week of October 16-22, 2016 as National Chemistry week. Student Dailyn Despradel, Dr. Pamela Markovich, College staff member Angie Tse, and Dr. Madhavan Narayanan organized and celebrated Mole Day on October 21 with the Mercy College community. The group presented a poster explaining to the visitors the concept and the enormity of a “mole” a unit of measurement of chemical substances. 170 students, faculty and staff visited to participate in the “Guess the moles of candy” competition.

Despradel played a crucial role in organizing, spreading the word and getting visitors engaged. Fun freebies in the form of Mole Day wristbands, cupcakes, cookies and candies were given to visitors. In addition, 10 students signed up for the new ACS affiliated student chemistry club. Thanks goes out to all the faculty and staff who encouraged their students to visit and participate in Mole day. It was a true collaborative effort and a fantastic experience interacting with the Mercy community and speaking to them about the “mole.” The activity was supported by a Faculty Senate micro-grant.

Art in the Lab “Breathe”

On November 12, students, faculty and community members gathered in the Visions of Science Lab for the pulmonary edition of Art in the Lab. This free workshop is part of the ongoing series of workshops that promote organic collaborations between artists and scientists, students and professionals, through engagement in active laboratory experience and creation of art inspired by interaction with scientific collections. Featured guest speaker, Dr. Anne Sutherland, the Medical Intensive Care Unit Director at University Hospital, and Assistant Professor of Medicine at Rutgers – NJMS, discussed and presented a variety of clinical imaging techniques, including real-time pulmonary ultrasound on a live model, to inspire an afternoon of low key drawings and investigations.

Great American Smokeout!

Health Science Capstone students led Mercy College in the American Cancer Society’s Great American Smokeout on November 17, a nation-wide 24 hour challenge to quit smoking and promote healthy behaviors. Participants were given cessation information and support as well as “commit to quit” kits. Participants were also able to view smoker’s lungs under the microscope as well as learn about alternative forms of tobacco exposure such as hookah and e-cigarettes.

Undergraduate Internships Provide Career Direction

Gabrielle Rosario, a junior at Mercy College studying health sciences with a specialization in pre-occupational therapy, completed an undergraduate internship at Sensory Stepping Stones, located in Mount Kisco, NY under the Career and Professional Development Office. She assisted the social work team with teaching coping skills to children who struggled to process their emotions and distractions. Gabrielle and Irvine, the therapy dog at the practice, helped children speak about their feelings. Rosario also helped children incorporate sensory strategies taught by their occupational therapist Audrey Curley, a Mercy College OT alumna. Throughout her experience, Rosario gained knowledge about therapy techniques and earned the respect of parents and families for her dedication to the position. She also learned to take on a leadership role in the team by training other interns. Rosario believes her time at the center gave her a sense of purpose in the lives of others. She is interested in occupational therapy and hopes to pursue her graduate degree in the OT Program upon completion of her Bachelor of Science in Health Sciences.
Transgender Communication Group

The transgender communication therapy group, run by Dr. Shari Berkowitz, has been an empowering service for individuals who seek improvement in their communication styles. The group focuses on improving the intonation (melody of speech), resonance (the quality of the sounds) and pitch (the highness or lowness of the voice.) Each session is interactive between the clinicians, supervisors and group members, each offering input, evidenced based guidance and feedback.

The sessions are structured in halves: the first half targets the social aspects of communication in a group setting. This includes practicing the target voice and pitch in day-to-day functional conversation and helping to generalize the strategies learned. The group setting is also ideal to practice nonverbal communications that are gender specific, such as coughing, sneezing, arm movements, body posture, and gestures.

The second half of the session is broken up into individual therapy, where more personalized goals and activities are targeted. The clinicians start the semester off by recording a speech sample to analyze and find your optimal pitch level that is gender specific and safe for your vocal mechanisms. The individual therapy is a setting that allows each member to work on raising their pitch to a gender-appropriate range, with one-on-one guidance.

Previous group members have reported the course to improve their knowledge of their voice on a scientific level, as well as improving their confidence in everyday situations. Some have indicated that the course has opened their awareness to not only the way they communicate but also how people communicate around them!

Dr. Renu Varughese Fulbright Scholarship to India

Becoming a “Fulbrighter” means joining the ranks of distinguished participants of a highly competitive and prestigious Fulbright program, sponsored by the US Department of State and Cultural affairs. While each Fulbright grantee has a specific teaching or research project to pursue, the ultimate goal of this program is to promote mutual understanding and respect between the U.S. and other nations.

Assistant Nursing Professor Renu Abraham Varughese PhD, RN, was awarded a Fulbright scholarship for professional excellence in 2015-2016 to the region of South and Central Asia. The research was conducted in collaboration with the Center for Research on Aging, Sri Venkateswara University, Andhra Pradesh, a pioneer institution for aging research in India. The research examined the feasibility of designing and developing a culturally relevant resident assessment instrument (RAI- India) for Indian senior care homes (residential facilities). RAI is an interdisciplinary tool for resident assessment and care planning used in U.S. nursing homes for over a quarter of a century. Even though this tool is widely adapted, assessment based care is comparatively a new concept for care homes in Asian societies. Therefore, RAI- India, was a ground breaking and innovative initiative in India. The study was piloted in three senior care homes in three south Indian states. The interdisciplinary team was trained on assessment, care planning and care delivery. Preliminary results indicated positive outcomes in health promotional activities, and utilization of appropriate resources for care delivery.

As a cultural ambassador, Varughese traveled in the host country promoting a healthy and successful aging culture. Varughese was also an invited speaker to U.S - Sri Lanka Fulbright Commission and to Faculty of Medicine, University of Kelaniya, in Sri Lanka.

Varughese enthusiastically stated “I would recommend this program to all who aspire to make a global impact and to bring positive changes in peoples’ lives. This is an excellent opportunity to demonstrate service, quality and leadership which are the hallmarks of the Fulbright program. Once a Fulbrighter, always a Fulbrighter.”
Local 2 Global Health Initiatives

The mission of the School of Health and Natural Sciences Local 2 Global health initiatives is to educate compassionate and innovative leaders through interdisciplinary teamwork and service learning while improving overall community health and environments of at-risk and/or underserved populations both locally and globally. This past fall we engaged in several health initiatives both near and far.

Mercy College’s Communication Disorders Department faculty, students, and alumni have been traveling around the world providing speech therapy for children who otherwise might not receive these services. Many of the children have cleft lips and palates, other craniofacial anomalies, and assorted developmental disabilities.

Communication Disorders Professors Dr. Helen Buhler and Dr. Shari Berkowitz traveled to Santa Marta, Colombia with graduate students Bruna Carbelim and Jeanette Torres. The speech team traveled with Healing the Children Northeast, a group that provides surgery around the world to children with orofacial clefts.

Lindsay Naylor, alumna of the Mercy College graduate program in Communication Disorders, traveled to Lima, Peru to provide speech therapy for the children there who otherwise do not receive intervention. The majority of the children have a history of cleft lip and palate, meaning they need speech therapy to speak intelligibly. On the left is Shannon Hall, a current graduate student in the program, who also traveled to Lima to be mentored by Naylor and provide clinical services under her supervision. The trip was under the auspices of Healing the Children, Rocky Mountain chapter.

20 students in the Physician Assistant Program along with Professor Lorraine Jamieson took the opportunity to travel to Ghana for seven days in November. They traveled to three villages and saw a total of 831 patients in four days with a variety of diseases not commonly seen in the U.S. The last day of the trip was set aside as a cultural day and the group visited the Cape Coast Castle where the slave trade originated in that area. The trip was one that the group will never forget and a reunion trip is already being planned for a few years down the road.

The Wellness Initiative Fair was held on Thursday October 13. It was a great success – close to 150 faculty, students and staff participated. Tables were manned by students from the different schools, and staff from Human Resources and Student Affairs proudly displaying different activities keeping in mind the dimensions on the wellness wheel (emotional, environmental, intellectual, social, physical, spiritual, and occupational.) A press conference was also held that day by Congresswoman Nita Lowey announcing the new STEM grant award in conjunction with Westchester Community College.

Students and faculty from the Physician Assistant Studies Program continued to travel within the College community on the mobile health vehicle, performing health screenings at fairs, malls, and regional community agencies.
Construction of New Health Professional Simulation Lab

Excitement is building among faculty and students for the opening of the new Health Professions Clinical Simulation and Learning Lab. The Lab will be a state of the art space where health care professional students will gain skills in labs designed to simulate clinical settings. The learning and assessment labs provide a safe clinical and psychological setting where students experience real-world scenarios building competence and confidence in their skills. The space includes a clinical skills and simulation lab which mimics a hospital setting, a rehabilitation lab, a home health lab which includes a mock apartment, and a skills assessment lab.

KickStart to Success for Generic Nursing Students

Dr. Irina Ellison provided students in the new generic nursing program a unique experience over the first weekend of the fall semester. KickStart to Success, an intensive 15-hour session, was developed for anatomy and physiology students by Ellison. Twenty-two freshman engaged in team building exercises, sample lab exercises such as strawberry DNA extraction and microscope drawing workshops, study skills workshops, peer mentoring sessions, model assessments, resource orientation and introduction to course concepts. Initial findings indicate that students who participated in the KickStart program scored significantly higher on course assessments than those who did not participate.

Nursing Students Attend Dr. Oz Show

Mercy College School of Health and Natural Sciences and Honors Program students were VIP audience members at an October 19 production of "The Dr. Oz show." The focus of the show was holiday foods, and afterwards Mercy students met with Dr. Oz and his medical team for a question and answer session. Students took photos with Oz, and NSNA President Kezia Varughese presented him with a Mercy College sports shirt.

Faculty advisors for the Mercy College chapter of the National Student Nurses Association (NSNA) Karen Koziol and Patrice Sobecki organized the event. Student Life Coordinator Railyn Pou facilitated the event, and nursing program faculty member Mary Hartnett and education program faculty member Victoria Nunez accompanied the group.
Interprofessional Education

Interprofessional educational (IPE) continues to grow and expand within the School of Health and Natural Science. During the fall of 2016 several experiences took place and Mercy College’s IPE Committee Chairs presented at a regional IPE conference. Spring IPE activities are planned to include students from the health sciences along with allied health professions.

On November 18 the IPE Committee implemented the 2nd IPE Interview Experience. Forty students from the Communication Disorders, Nursing, Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, and the Physician Assistant Studies Programs worked together as members of interdisciplinary groups to develop questions, and interview four individuals with long standing medical issues to obtain case histories. This was double the number of students from last year’s event! Students and clients unanimously agreed that the experience was beneficial for all. Quantitative and qualitative data was collected from all of the students for future analysis, publications and presentations. During the IPE Interview Experience 12 students from each of the disciplines trialed an IPE game created by Dr. Shari Berkowitz from Communication Disorders. Student’s feedback was positive and data was collected pre and post game for future analysis.

Five members of the IPE Committee completed a TEAMSTEPPS (Strategies and Tools to Enhance Performance and Patient Safety) two day master training course on November 28 and 29. The program trained the faculty as master coaches in teaching communication, and collaboration among health care disciplines. The committee looks forward to bringing this training to additional Mercy faculty in early summer 2017.

Natural Sciences Project Based Learning

A team from Natural Sciences was selected to participate in the 2016 Institute on Project-Based Learning at Worcester Polytechnic Institute this past June. The team was chosen because of the team’s strong application and its potential to effect change on campus. The Institute brought together other college and university teams to work on projects to advance project-based learning on their campuses. The Mercy College team included Dr. Irina Ellison, Dr. Davida Smyth, Dr. Anthony Canger, Dr. Juan Bruses, Dr. Renee Haskew-Layton, Dr. Geetha Surendran, Dr. Nancy Beverly and Mr. Matt Lewis. The Mercy College team was one of only 23 teams accepted to participate. In the Fall semester, the team worked to develop a framework for PBL and implemented projects in their courses including neuroscience, cell biology, molecular biology, environmental science, microbiology and physics.

De-Beard Dudes for St. Jude

Health Science student, Steven Perez, grew his hair and beard for three years with the intent to someday run a project called "De-beard dudes for St. Jude" to raise awareness and funds for St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. Steven achieved his goals with the help of his Capstone classmates in late December! We raised approximately $150 for St. Jude.
Exercise Science Club Hosts First IronMav Fitness Challenge

By: Jillian Grassano

On Friday, October 28, 2016, the Mercy College Exercise Science Club hosted the inaugural IronMav Fitness Challenge on the turf field. The Exercise Science Club invited all students, faculty, and community members to participate in this obstacle course for a chance to be named the “Most Fit Maverick.” The obstacle course consisted of ten different, but equally challenging tasks that tested one’s cardiorespiratory endurance, muscular strength, and muscular endurance. There were two courses, one for males and one for females, each consisted of a sled push, a rope pull, a tire flip, a net crawl, a balance walk, box jumps, hurdle jumps, a farmer walk, and shuttle runs.

Though the cold and cloudy weather was not ideal for this event, a handful of students did compete. An iPad was given away to a Mercy college student with the fastest time. The planning, coordinating, and execution of this event, lead by myself and our club president, Brenda Roviezzo, and our faithful members, provided a wonderful learning experience and gave us invaluable insight into the massive amount of effort and communication between students and faculty necessary to put on a successful large-scale community event.

The fitness challenge also provided us with the opportunity to apply and showcase our knowledge of exercise science learned in the classroom and share it with the Mercy College community in a fun and interactive way. In the spring, we hope to make this event even bigger with a brand new fitness challenge.

Vet Tech Club Road Trips

The Future Veterinary Professionals Club led an exciting fall 2016 semester. In the beginning of the semester, the club went to Six Flags Great Adventure and received a behind the scenes tour of the safari from the head veterinary technician – a graduate of Mercy College. The students learned about the various behaviors exhibited by the animals and what is required to ensure a safe and happy living environment for them. The club also went on a trip to Rhinebeck Equine Hospital to observe large animal medicine, specifically in regards to horses. The students enjoyed handling surgical equipment and were able to observe a surgery. Not many students can say they have seen surgery performed on a horse!

Another favorite trip this semester was to a farm that a student in the veterinary technology program works at. The club members spent the day performing rigorous chores around the farm, practicing blood draws, and milking cows. It was a long, chilly day, but it was an experience the students will value for quite some time. Finally, the club members went to the Mystic Aquarium in Connecticut to see the aquatic aspect of veterinary medicine. Club members had the opportunity to take a behind the scenes tour of the aquarium, along with partaking in a class on hematology. The aquatic aspect of veterinary medicine is very different from small animal or large animal medicine and it was a wonderful trip to allow the club members the opportunity to see this aspect up close.

The Future Veterinary Professionals Club had a very productive semester, full of trips and fund raisers. It is the hope of the club that we will continue to have many more exciting trips in the upcoming spring 2017 semester.
FACULTY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

PUBLICATIONS:


CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS:


McGrath, M., Macon, W., Plawiak, & **Haskew-Layton, R** (October 29, 2016) ALDH1L1 is an Astrocyte Specific Marker in Avian Astrocytes, Metropolitan Association of College and University Biologists, Old Westbury, NY.

Castillo, C., Despradel, D., Toral, K., & **Haskew-Layton, R** (October 29, 2016) PTEN: A Potential Neuroprotective Target in Astrocytes, Metropolitan Association of College and University Biologists, Old Westbury, NY.


**Smyth, D.S.** (2016). Improving Civic and Scientific Literacy through Scaffolded Thematic Classroom Research Experiences, SENCER Summer Institute, Chicago, IL.

**Vegas, N. & Smyth, D. S.** (October 29, 2016) Microbiology of the built environment. The changing microbiome of Mercy College. Poster presentation by an Undergraduate Student. Metropolitan Association of College and University Biologists, Old Westbury, NY.

Porconi, B., **Surendran, G. & Smyth, D. S.** (October 29, 2016) The effect of benzethonium chloride and natural antibacterials on agr-dysfunctional Staphylococci. Metropolitan Association of College and University Biologists, Old Westbury, NY

**Tallier, P. C., Reineke, P. R., & Frederickson, K.** (June 10-11, 2016). *Healthy living wellness program to evaluate the health of minority underserved economically disadvantaged older adults*. Roy Adaptation Association 2016 International Conference: Roadmap for the next 25 years for knowledge based on the RAM. Boston College, Chestnut Hill, MA.


Cotton, R., **Williams, M Allison.** (2016). *ACSM Certification, CAAHEP Accreditation- Moving the Profession Forward*, Annual Meeting of the American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM), Boston, MA.

AWARDS:
**Moscou, S.** National Research Mentor Network Mini-Grant, Montefiore Medical Center & Albert Einstein School of Medicine
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