UMGCP Class of 2021: Ready to Launch

Graduate training is always a rigorous and challenging journey. However, the Class of 2021 has weathered numerous unprecedented challenges as they navigated through their graduate journey during the COVID19 pandemic. At last, they are in the final days of graduate school. We couldn’t be more proud of their tenacity, flexibility, and accomplishments. We will be welcoming them to the ranks of alumni of the UMGCP at the end of April and can’t wait to see all they accomplish during their careers.

Hiam Abdel-Salam: MD Anderson Cancer Center
Farid Barquet Ramos: Dana Farber Cancer Institute
Madison Donald: Spectrum Health Helen DeVos Children’s Hospital, Departments of Biochemical Genetics and Medical Genetics and Genomics
Nicole Huser: University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics, Holden Comprehensive Cancer Center
Eva Kahn: Mayo Clinic Department of Clinical Genomics, General Genetics/Pediatrics
Andrew McKeon: Currently pursuing positions in academic settings
Kaegan Mestel: Medical College of Wisconsin, Multi-Specialty Pediatrics
Michael Restrepo: City of Hope, Cancer Genetics
Frances Richardson: University of New Mexico, Division of Pediatric Genetics
Austin Whitted: Phoenix Children’s Hospital, Department of Genetics and Metabolism
Julie A. Wood: Providence Health & Services, Spokane, WA, Pediatric Medical Genetics

Call for Nominations: 2021 Diane Baker Alumni Award

We are writing to ask for your help in identifying the 12th recipient of the annual Diane Baker Alumni Award. In recognition of Diane’s excellence as an educator, clinician and innovator, the recipient should demonstrate assets such as commitment to professional activism, innovation in the practice of genetic counseling, leadership, and laudable scholarly achievement. Previous awardees include Barbara Biesecker (Class of 1981), Jill Stopfer (Class of 1988), Amy Sturm (Class of 2001), Stephanie Cohen (Class of 1993), Meg Hefner (Class of 1980), Anne Madeo (Class of 1999), Lori Lynn Williamson Dean (Class of 1991), Janice Bach (Class of 1979), Elizabeth Kearney (Class of 1996), Sara Scollon (Class of 2006), and Amy Gaviglio (Class of 2007).

Please submit a paragraph describing the nominee’s qualifications and a copy of his/her CV to Monica Marvin at monicama@umich.edu. Nominations are due by June 15.

Nominations from previous years will be carried forward. Please note that alumni who are current members of the UMGCP Executive Faculty are not eligible for this particular award (Yashar, Marvin, Uhlmann). For a complete listing of our alumni, visit https://medicine.umich.edu/dept/human-genetics/alumni?combine=Genetic+Counseling and this is also a great time to notify Monica of any updates to your current affiliation!)
In December 2020, we were thrilled to receive notification that the Accreditation Council of Genetic Counseling granted the University of Michigan Genetic Counseling Program full accreditation for eight years, the maximum time allowed for programs undergoing full accreditation. We would like to thank everyone who contributed to our self-study, including alumni, students, employers, clinical supervisors, research mentors, classroom instructors, external advisory board members, and administrative staff. The input that we garnered from our focus groups, exit interviews, surveys, etc. was invaluable in helping us highlight the strengths of our program, as well as helping us vision for the future.

Strengths noted in the summary of our virtual site visit and self-study report were many. Of particular note, current students and alumni spoke highly of the mentorship and support they received from program leadership and faculty, with appreciation for the ease of communication and our approachability, including our “open door” policy. Reviewers also noted the value of the interdisciplinary interactions with students and faculty from other disciplines in the basic sciences, public health, social work, etc. The reviewers were also impressed by the clinical and research opportunities available to our students, both in Ann Arbor and at affiliated sites. The strength of our alumni community was noted as an important asset to our program, with alumni from across the country contributing to the clinical, research, classroom, and professional development of current and prospective UMGCP students. We really appreciate the strong connections our alumni have maintained with each other and the program through their careers. As the alumni association says, “Wherever you go-GO BLUE!”

At the end of the day, our clinical supervisors, classroom faculty, research mentors, students, and staff are at the heart of what makes our program so special. We can’t thank you enough. Finally, a heartfelt thank you to Brynn Arnall, our Program Administrative Specialist, who was invaluable in helping us pull together a lengthy and detailed self-study report and coordinating a virtual site visit that included meetings with over 50 members of the UMGCP community! Thank you!!!