Many faculty members have a story about a teacher who inspired them. Three people immediately come to mind for me: my father, an engineer by training who enjoyed showing me how to use my chemistry set, my fourth grade teacher who arranged for me to attend a special science program for two summers, and a high school chemistry teacher who made absolutely everything fun and later had a role in developing the Science Olympiad. Teachers and mentors from college, graduate school, and postdoctoral training had important roles in shaping my ability to become a successful educator and researcher. This year, our annual newsletter puts the spotlight on graduate education, one of the core missions of our department. I hope you enjoy reading the perspectives of three of our faculty members on teaching.

Faculty members enjoy imparting knowledge to trainees and are engaged in classroom teaching of graduate students in MS and PhD programs as well as medical students. In addition to formal classroom teaching, a lot of time is spent on one-on-one research mentoring of undergraduates, graduate students and postdoctoral fellows. The successful launch of a trainee into the career of their choice is a source of pride and satisfaction. The legacy of an educator is often the most rewarding part of being a faculty member.

Our graduates pursue a variety of careers in academia, medicine, government, public policy, biotechnology, law, science writing and other areas. Graduate education is beneficial for many types of careers because it prepares individuals to pose a question and to design a way to address it, to think critically about information, to lead a project and function independently, and to be a life-long learner. Being a graduate student is an intensive apprenticeship that differs in many ways from undergraduate education. The focus shifts from absorbing what is known to learning how it was discovered, the strength of the supporting evidence, the gaps in current knowledge, and how to fill those gaps. Research, at a lab bench or computer or both, requires a re-awakening of curiosity, the development of an independent and questioning spirit, and a commitment of effort. As trainees develop these skills they are rewarded with the thrill of discovery and confidence that grows from significant accomplishments.

I offer my thanks to the many teachers who inspired me and to my departmental colleagues who have devoted themselves to making education at University of Michigan the best it can be.

With best regards,

Sally A. Camper, Ph.D.

Inaugural Class of the League of Educational Excellence

On January 23, 2013 at a dinner in the Omenn Atrium of the A. Alfred Taubman Biomedical Science Research Building, the Medical School paused to honor some of our most esteemed educators with induction into The League of Educational Excellence — an honor established in 2013 to celebrate faculty who have a passion for sharing their extensive knowledge through the instruction of students in our classrooms, laboratories, and hospitals and health centers.

Many of the nearly 100 members of the first League class had been lauded previously for their teaching as recipients of the Kaiser-Permanente Awards for Excellence in Teaching or the Lifetime Achievement Award in Medical Education through the Dean’s Awards Program; department chairs nominated others. All inductees received a special medallion commemorating their membership in the inaugural class. More information is available at: msa.med.umich.edu/education/lee.

Congratulations to those faculty members inducted into The League of Educational Excellence, including those from the Department of Human Genetics: Thomas D. Gelehrter, Gilbert S. Omenn, Diane M. Robins, and Beverly M.Yashar.
Spotlight on

Graduate Education

Thomas D. Gelehrter, M.D. Professor Emeritus, Active, of Human Genetics and Internal Medicine. Over 40 years of teaching Medical Genetics in the classroom and in the clinic. Co-authored “The Principles of Medical Genetics”, a textbook with Francis Collins and David Ginsburg.

I was inspired in research and teaching by many people, including Gordon Tomkins, my research mentor at NIH and Lee Rosenberg, my Chair at Yale. It is an old adage that we (physicians) learn from our patients, as well as from our students and from our teachers. It’s true; we owe them our gratitude. I also try to learn something—good or bad—about teaching from every lecture or seminar I attend. It is particularly gratifying to interact with students who are really bright and have inquisitive young minds. About twenty years ago I gave the Aristoteles Lecture at the University of Athens, and at the end of it four Greek geneticists presented me with the Greek translation of our textbook. I was unaware that this translation was in the works, and was delighted. Another unexpected delight was receiving comments from colleagues, and strangers, in genetics from around the world who had used our book and appreciated it. Finally, receiving comments from young doctors who had been medical students at UM and taken my course is a lovely reminder why teaching is rewarding.

A major challenge in teaching medical students is to take a subject that is viewed by many clinicians as esoteric and perhaps unimportant, and make it exciting and important to students who will be inundated with basic and clinical information. Our other big challenge is to help train medical students to become active learners, with enough scientific knowledge and with inculcated scientific attitudes that they will stay abreast of this rapidly advancing field. Ideally some will choose to be the creators of these advances.

Diane M. Robins, Ph.D., Director of Graduate Studies in Human Genetics (12 years), Professor of Human Genetics.

Thinking back on what inspired me, most experiences involved one-on-one interactions – a desire to become a marine biologist from fishing with my dad, and a desire to become a cell biologist from my undergrad advisor who would show me how to do things in the lab and then leave me alone to practice. I still remember when he showed me how to section specimens for electron microscopy and then left me alone with his $10,000 diamond knife, telling me to be careful (!). That had the desired effect, and served as a lesson in how to empower others. In grad school, my mentor was important, of course, but I learned the real lessons of science, teaching, and life from the older grad students and postdocs in the lab. It was an exceptional group, many of whom I still count as close friends and colleagues.

Early in my career I realized that teaching was one of the few times when one gets immediate positive feedback for a job well done. When a student is excited and engaged, you can see it in their faces and in the questions they ask. In research, you can feel a rush of discovery, but by the time the paper is published it feels like old news.

Frequently I’ll get an email from a student, from a class long ago, saying they noticed a publication and wanted to say hi, or that they are in town and want to visit. Recently a very bright student, who I once admonished about their attitude, wrote to me and said “…thank you for being honest with me all those years ago, even if you don’t remember it! … It pushed me into getting serious about my goals, and I credit you with giving me some clarity of purpose.” We touch these lives in so many unpredictable ways!

Beverly M. Yashar, M.S., C.G.C, Ph.D., Director, Genetic Counseling Graduate Training Program, Associate Professor of Human Genetics

In my career as a geneticist and a genetic counselor, I was fortunate to be able to train with and learn from outstanding educators in the classroom, at the bench and in the clinic. Each had a unique educational style, and what stands out is that I was regularly challenged to not just figure out what the right answer was and why it worked, but to figure out where the question failed to fully explore the topic or phenomenon, to be creative in figuring out how to ask a better question, and to be innovative in identifying the answer. I strive to make the learning experience for each of my students highly individual and to create a learning environment in which there is not a single right answer. Having the opportunity to watch my students think through the answer(s) and being available to help guide them along this process is one of the most enjoyable parts of being an educator. My goal is to figure out where a student is developmentally at the start of their graduate training and then to work together to help them reach their potential. Each student comes in with very different experiences and perspectives, but a common interest and excitement about training to become a genetic counselor. It is this regular journey of discovery for them and rediscovery for me that makes working as an educator novel, fulfilling and rejuvenating each year.
Graduate Education

The 2013-14 year includes 38 graduate students in Human Genetics, with 20 doctoral students, 3 of whom are MD/PhD students, 4 MS in Human Genetics, and 14 MS in Genetic Counseling. In addition, there are 10 PhD students in other graduate programs who are being mentored by Human Genetics primary faculty, including 5 in Bioinformatics, 4 in Cellular and Molecular Biology, and 1 in Cancer Biology.

New Students

PhD Program in Human Genetics
- So Hae (Irene) Park, AB, Cornell University
- Allison Richards, BS, University of Chicago

Master’s Program in Human Genetics
- Alexander Katz, MD, Jefferson Medical College

Master’s Program in Genetic Counseling
- Samantha Greenberg, BS, University of Michigan
- Caitlin Hale, BS, University of California, Los Angeles
- Michelle Jacobs, BS, Queen’s University at Kingston, Ontario
- Diane Koeller, BA, Carnegie Mellon University
- Katlyn Partynski, BA, University of San Diego
- Kyle Salsbery, BA, Taylor University
- Alex Yragui, BS, University of Michigan

Introducing New Postdoctoral Fellows

Anshika Srivastavia, Ph.D. (Bielas Lab) is originally from India, and received her post graduation degree from University of Lucknow and Ph.D. from Sanjay Gandhi Post Graduate Institute of Medical Sciences, Lucknow, India. Currently in the Bielas lab, Dr. Srivastavia’s research is focused on identification of Citron Kinase phosphorylation targets and their functional aspects in human neurogenesis.

Julia Wildschutte, Ph.D. (Kidd Lab) is originally from Pennsylvania and received her B.S. from the University of Pittsburgh, her M.S. from Duquesne University, and her Ph.D. from Tufts University. Currently in the Kidd lab, Dr. Wildschutte is studying the evolution of transposable elements in canines and defining how they contribute to genomic and phenotypic diversity.

Leonard Cheung, Ph.D. (Camper Lab) was born in British Hong Kong, moved with his family to the U.K. in 1994. He attended Imperial College in London, receiving a three year bachelor’s degree in biochemistry. He received his Ph.D. in Medical Biology from the University College of London. Dr. Cheung’s PhD studies at the University’s Institute of Child Health explored the role of Notch Signaling in pituitary hormone production. In the Camper lab Dr. Cheung will be studying pituitary stem cells.

Jacy Wagnon, Ph.D. (Meisler Lab) received her B.A. in Chemistry from Hendrix College in Conway, Arkansas, and her Ph.D. in Biochemistry and Molecular Biology from the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences. She carried out postdoctoral work with Wayne Frankel at the Jackson Laboratory on a mouse model of genetically complex epilepsy caused by loss of an RNA binding protein, CELF4. In the Meisler lab, Dr. Wagnon will be working on the role of sodium channel mutations in inherited and sporadic epilepsy.

Saurabh Agarwal, Ph.D. (Iwase Lab) is originally from India, and received his BTech in Biochemical Engineering & Biotechnology from Indian the Institute of Technology, New Delhi in 2003. He earned his Ph.D. in Biology from the University of California, San Diego in 2012. Currently in the Iwase lab, Dr. Agarwal is looking to identify the roles of histone H3K4 methylases and demethylase in epigenetic regulation and Intellectual disabilities.

Pia Bagamasbad, Ph.D. (Robins Lab) is originally from Manila and received her B.S. in Molecular Biology and Biotechnology from the University of the Philippines in 2001. She was a Research Scholar at Boston University prior to coming to the University of Michigan for graduate work with Dr. Bob Denver in the Molecular, Cellular and Developmental Biology Dept, receiving her Ph.D. in 2012. In the Robins lab, Dr. Bagamasbad is pursuing novel means to redirect androgen receptor activity in prostate cancer from tumor growth to differentiation.
Recent Graduates

Congratulations to the recent graduates of our PhD program:


**Lavania Sharma, Michele Bailey, Emily Higuchi, Lesli Kiedrowski, Michelle Ernst, Erin Milne.**

**Tehmina Masud** (Sekiguchi Lab) “Aberrant V(D)J Recombination: Misrepair of DNA Breaks and Implications for Lymphomagenesis.” Tehmina accepted a position with Dr. Samuel Aparicio in the Department of Molecular Oncology at the British Columbia Cancer Agency in Vancouver, B.C.

**Janelle O’Brien** (Meisler Lab) “Regulation and Mutation of Voltage-Gated Sodium Channel Nav1.6 (SCN8A).” Janelle began a postdoctoral position in Val Sheffield's lab at the University of Iowa in September 2013.

**Sandra Richardson** (Moran Lab) “A Mechanistic Examination of APOBEC3-Mediated LINE-1 Inhibition.” Sandra began a post doctoral position with Dr. Geoff Faulkner in Brisbane, Australia, in September 2013.

**Valerie Schaibley** (Li Lab) “Understanding the Patterns and Consequences of Single-Nucleotide Mutations in the Human Genome Using High-Throughput Sequencing.” Valerie accepted a Human Geneticist position at a start up company called ActX in Seattle, in September, 2013.

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Congratulations to the UMGCP Class of 2013

**Michele Bailey, MS**
Genetic Counselor
Diagnostic Cytogenetics: Seattle, WA

**Michelle Ernst, MS**
Genetic Counselor
Yale Cancer Center: New Haven, CT

**Emily Higuchi, MS**
Genetics Outreach Specialist
University of Wisconsin: Madison, WI

**Lesli Kiedrowski, MS, MPH, CGC**
Genetic Counselor
UT Southwestern: Dallas, TX

**Erin Milne, MS**
Genetic Counselor
Mayo Clinic: Rochester, MN

**Lavania Sharma, MS**
Professional Support Specialist
Myriad Genetics Laboratory: Salt Lake City, UT
Awards, Honors and Promotions

Tony Antonellis received the 2012 EBS Basic Science Teaching and Mentoring Award in Human Genetics.

Stephanie Bielas, Neuroscience Scholars Award.

Jeffrey Innis was named a 2012 Top Resident Teacher, Department of Pediatrics.

Shigeki Iwase, Neuroscience Scholars Award.

Jeffrey Kidd was named one of 22 Pew Scholars in the United States for 2013. He is the 18th Pew Scholar on the U-M faculty.

John Kim was promoted to Associate Professor, Department of Human Genetics, and received the Frederick C. Neidhardt Collegiate Professorship.

Guy Lenk was promoted to Research Investigator, Department of Human Genetics.

Jun Li was promoted to Associate Professor, Department of Human Genetics.

John Moran was honored as a Fellow by the American Association for the Advancement of Science, for seminal contributions to understanding the molecular genetics of mobile repetitive elements and their role in shaping the human genome. He also was the recipient of ASHG’s 2013 Curt Stern Award, which recognizes researchers who have made significant scientific contributions during the past decade. ASHG will present the award on October 26 during the organization’s 63rd annual meeting in Boston. The Curt Stern Award also recognizes Dr. Moran’s mentorship of graduate students and postdoctoral researchers as well as his stalwart support of and service to ASHG.

Gilbert Omenn was given the American Association of Medical College 2013 David E. Rogers Award “for contributions to American medicine.” Dr. Rogers took an interest in Dr. Omenn when he was director of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Clinical Scholars Program at the University of Washington in the mid-1970s.

New Faculty

Vivian Cheung, M.D. joined the faculty as Professor in the Department of Pediatrics and Communicable Diseases, Division of Pediatric Neurology and in the Department of Human Genetics in September, 2013. Dr. Cheung comes from the University of Pennsylvania where she established an extraordinary research career rising from the level of Instructor (1998) to tenured Professor in the Departments of Pediatrics and Genetics (2009). It was in 2008 that Dr. Cheung’s accomplishments were recognized by the Howard Hughes Medical Institute and she was appointed as a prestigious Howard Hughes Investigator. Dr. Cheung brings with her an extraordinary research portfolio, focusing on human genetics and gene regulation. Along with her late collaborator, Dr. Richard Spielman, Dr. Cheung developed the field of genetics of gene expression where they demonstrated that regulators influencing expression levels can be identified by gene mapping, allowing genome-wide searches of gene regulators without a prior knowledge of the regulatory mechanisms. Her group, along with many others, has adopted this method to identify regulators of gene expression and has shown that DNA variants of these regulators affect phenotypic manifestations and disease risks. Additionally, Dr. Cheung has recently identified RNA-DNA sequence differences that are beyond the known RNA editing mechanisms. This discovery identifies an unknown step in RNA processing and will lead to underlying mechanisms of fundamental steps in gene transcription. She also focuses on the genetic basis of radio sensitivity and individual differences in unfolded protein response. These observations will lead to discoveries regarding the basis of individual variability and sensitivity to radiation and protein loads and relate those findings to diseases such as cancer and neurodegeneration. Her work is funded by the Howard Hughes Institute and two current R01 grants from the National Institutes of Health. Dr. Cheung has 40 peer reviewed publications regarding her investigations of gene variation, regulation, and expression.

Kenneth Kwan, Ph.D. joined the faculty as Assistant Research Professor at the Molecular and Behavioral Neuroscience Institute, and Assistant Professor in Human Genetics in September, 2013. Dr. Kwan received his Ph.D. in 2008 from Yale and was a postdoctoral fellow with Dr. Nenad Sestan in the Neurobiology Department at Yale. His research focus has been on molecular mechanisms of brain development, with an emphasis on the transcriptional regulation of neocortical neuronal identity and connectivity. His approaches include the use of human tissue, stem cells and genetically modified mice. Dr. Kwan is the recipient of numerous honors and has 13 peer-reviewed research articles, including first author manuscripts in Cell and in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Science. He has taught neuroanatomy to medical and graduate students focusing on the organization of the human brain.
**Genes, Environment and Behavior Cluster**

Finding solutions to the most important scientific questions often requires interdisciplinary teams. In 2007 President Coleman announced a new initiative to hire approximately 100 tenure-track faculty members that would conduct interdisciplinary teaching and research. The Department of Human Genetics identified the genetics of neurologic disease and gene x environment interactions as important areas for future growth, and we were awarded a cluster of hires together with the Molecular and Behavioral Neuroscience Institute, the Medical School Department of Neurology, and the Departments of Psychology and Molecular, Cellular, and Developmental Biology in the College of Literature, Science and Arts. We are proud to have recruited **Stephanie Bielas**, **Shigeki Iwase**, and **Ken Kwan** as Assistant Professors in the Department of Human Genetics through this presidential initiative.

**Stephanie Bielas** – Assistant Professor of Human Genetics. The ongoing research in the Bielas lab uses the power of human genetics to reveal the great diversity of genetic causes underlying abnormal brain development. These discoveries provide a platform from which to investigate the molecular pathology of disease and novel features of normal development. A major challenge to investigating human neurodevelopmental disorders has been the inaccessibility of affected tissue. The capacity of patient induced pluripotent stem cells (iPSC) to differentiate into the full complement of neural tissue opens an exciting new avenue to investigate human specific features of neurodevelopment. The Bielas lab is using a combination of transgenic mouse and iPSC models to investigate the defects in neurogenesis and synapse development associated with primary microcephaly, a major cause of childhood neurological dysfunction resulting in intellectual disability. Neural rosettes are a three-dimensional tissue formed during neural differentiation of iPSC lines. This image shows pink proliferative cells adjacent to a yellow central rosette lumen. This mirrors neural stem cell proliferation adjacent to the lateral ventricles in developing human brain and can be used to model neurogenesis defects in culture. Human iPSC lines can be differentiated into neural rosettes and disassociated neural progenitors to investigate human specific mechanisms of neurodevelopmental diseases.

**Shigeki Iwase** – Assistant Professor of Human Genetics. The research goal of the Iwase laboratory is to elucidate the chromatin-mediated regulatory mechanisms engaged in brain development and function. Environmental cues are conveyed by cytoplasmic signaling events that converge on chromatin, become integrated, and then give rise to gene expression changes that, in turn, determine the cellular response and ultimately our behavior. High-throughput genome sequencing has identified an unexpectedly large number of mutations in genes encoding chromatin regulators as potential causative agents in human developmental disorders such as intellectual disabilities. However, unlike synapses, chromatin has not been the focus of research in the etiology of human brain disorders. In most cases, it is not known how mutations in genes that regulate chromatin lead to disease. This represents a crucial knowledge gap, which hinders the discovery of novel therapeutics for treating brain disorders. In order to fill this gap, Dr. Iwase’s laboratory employs an interdisciplinary approach that encompasses chromatin biochemistry, structural biology, functional genomics, cell biology, and behavioral studies using mouse models.

**Kenneth Kwan** – Research Assistant Professor, Molecular & Behavioral Neuroscience Institute (MBNI), Assistant Professor of Human Genetics. Evolution of the cerebral cortex is thought to underlie our species’ most remarkable cognitive, perceptive, and motor capabilities, the execution of which depends on the precise establishment of axonal connectivity during development. Miswiring of neocortical circuitry can lead to disorders, including autism and schizophrenia, that affect the most distinctly human cognitive functions. Research in the Kwan laboratory is aimed at the genetic processes that underlie cortical circuit assembly, their evolution during the emergence of cognition and complex behavior, and their dysregulation in neurodevelopmental disorders. Using a multispecies approach that integrates molecular genetics, functional genomics, and circuit neurobiology, his lab’s research promises to yield mechanistic insights into cortical circuit development, evolution, and dysfunction.
Department Events

James V. Neel Lecture and Graduate Fellowships in Human Genetics

Huntington F. Willard, Ph.D., the founding director of the Duke Institute for Genome Sciences and Policy and the Nanaline H. Duke Professor of Genome Sciences at Duke University, gave the thirteenth James V. Neel Lecture in Human Genetics at the University of Michigan on Friday, May 17th, 2013.

The annual lectureship honors James V. Neel, M.D., Ph.D., a pioneer in the study of human genetics and one of the first to foresee its importance in the diagnosis and treatment of medical conditions. In 1956, Neel established the first academic department of human genetics in the United States at the University of Michigan Medical School, which he chaired for 25 years. In addition to the lecture and poster session, the James V. Neel Fellowship Awards, which recognize outstanding academic and research achievements of Human Genetics graduate students pursuing Ph.D. degrees and M.S. degrees in Genetic Counseling, were presented to Emily Higuchi from the Genetic Counseling Program and Valerie Schaibley, from the Ph.D. Program (Li lab). Following the lecture faculty, students and guests attended a poster session and reception for the awardees and Dr. Willard.

Thomas D. Gelehrter, MD Lecture in Medical Genetics

The Fourth Thomas D. Gelehrter Lecture in Medical Genetics was presented on October 14, 2013, by Leon E. Rosenberg, M.D., whose career experiences include involvement with government, academia, and industry. His contributions to understanding the genetic basis of inherited disorders of metabolism resulted in numerous awards including membership in the National Academy of Sciences and Institute of Medicine. His talk was entitled “DNA and Other Strands: The Making of a Human Geneticist.” Dr. Rosenberg is a Professor at Princeton University in the Department of Molecular Biology and the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Public Affairs. He founded the Human Genetics Department at Yale and was Chief Scientific officer at Bristol-Myers Squibb.

This annual lectureship honors Dr. Thomas D. Gelehrter, an internationally recognized leader and expert in human genetics. He is an active member of the department, engaged in teaching medical students and seeing patients in the genetics clinic. Please consider making a donation to the Thomas D. Gelehrter Medical Genetics Lectureship fund, so that it can be an enduring legacy that continues to raise awareness about the importance of medical genetics and improve this vital field. Donations can be made at the Human Genetics online giving link at: http://hg.med.umich.edu/giving, or by using the attached envelope.

Annual Diane Baker Alumnae Lecture in Genetic Counseling

The Department of Human Genetics and the Genetic Counseling Program recently named Stephanie Cohen (Class of 1993) as the recipient of the Fourth Annual Diane Baker Alumni Award. This event honors the vision and commitment to the profession of genetic counseling by the founder of Michigan’s Genetic Counseling Program, Diane Baker, MS, CGC. Ms. Baker was a premiere member of the program’s faculty until her retirement in 2001. Professor Cohen’s clinical service, scholarship, and dedication to the genetic counseling profession embody the true spirit of this award.

Ms. Cohen is an Adjunct Assistant Professor in the Department of Medical and Molecular Genetics at the Indiana University School of Medicine, where she is active in training genetic counseling students. She has worked in cancer genetics since 1998, developed the Cancer Genetics Risk Assessment Program at St. Vincent Hospital, and has been a local and national advocate for the field of genetic counseling. She is the immediate past-president of the Indiana Network of Genetic Counselors (INGC), serves on the Indiana Genetics Advisory Committee (IGAC) and is leading the National Society of Genetic Counselors (NSGC) Service Delivery Model Task Force effort to identify and evaluate genetic counseling service delivery models.

The Department of Human Genetics Summer Picnic

The Human Genetics annual picnic was held on July 25 at Gallup Park. Families and friends of the department spent an afternoon of fun activities, delicious food and perfect weather. Games for all ages were held, with the Antonellis lab taking first place in the annual Tug-of-War competition.

The Department of Human Genetics 25th Annual Retreat

The 2013 Annual Retreat was held Friday, September 20th and Saturday, September 21st at the Kellogg Biological Station on Gull Lake. Jeff Kidd, Linda Peasley the student and event representatives Diane Flasch, Mike Hinten, Lauren Hipp, Emily Maclary and Yu-yu Ren, organized a terrific weekend of science presentations, posters, and fun activities. Our keynote speaker was Dr. Nicholas Katsanis, Director, Center for Human Disease Modeling, Jean and George W. Brumley Professor of Cell Biology and Pediatrics from Duke University Medical Center. Dr. Katsanis delivered an excellent keynote and also participated in the student led discussion entitled “ACMG Recommendations for Reporting of Incidental Findings in Clinical Exome and Genome Sequencing.”

Annual Chili Cook-Off for HG Graduate Education

In an effort to raise funds for HG graduate education and promote department camaraderie, the third Chili Cook-Off for Graduate Education in 2012 took on a spooky theme on October 31st, Halloween day. Over 15 entries included a variety of vegetarian and meat chili, including “Dead Patriots,” “Monster Mash” and “Blazing Saddles.” A new competition in 2012 offered samples of cornbread entitled, “Pollen’s Bane,” “Maize and Bleu” and “I Can Smell it Now…”.

The top three finishers in each category received prizes, and over $600 was raised for graduate education. The 4th annual Chili Cook Off and Cornbread Competition will take place Friday, November 22, 2013 – all HG department staff, students and faculty are encouraged to enter their favorite cornbread and chili recipes, in support of HG graduate education.
EBS Development and HG Alumni Activities

The Department of Human Genetics, in coordination with the Endowment for the Basic Sciences, has participated in a series of “Biomedical Science Showcases” presented around the country in the past two years. These events, designed to highlight some of the most exciting scientific research underway at U-M, are open to all biomedical science alumni and spouses or partners. In addition to providing a pleasant venue for socializing and reconnecting with mentors, classmates and lab partners, they are an excellent professional networking opportunity for Michigan alumni to get to know those who live nearby.

Past showcases have taken place in Chicago, Washington, DC, San Francisco, and in Seattle with an event hosted by Lucy Sannes, EBS’ first bequest donor. Presenters have included department chairs and senior faculty describing groundbreaking bioscientific research at Michigan’s Medical School. Another showcase took place on September 28th in Bethesda, with invitations to over 160 alumni from each of the EBS departments. If you are interested in learning more about upcoming Biomedical Science Showcases, please contact Kim White (whitkimb@umich.edu) to update your contact information.

Alumni Gather at American Society of Human Genetics

Alums and faculty of the Department of Human Genetics met at the annual Human Genetics Alumni Gathering, on October 23rd.

Michael Guo (BS CMB 2010) is an MD, PhD candidate conducting research at Harvard, Reid Alisch (PhD 2003) is an Assistant Professor at University of Wisconsin in Madison, WI, Christine Beck (PhD 2011) is a postdoctoral fellow at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston, TX, and Bryan Macdonald (PhD 2004) is a Research Fellow at Children’s Hospital in Boston, MA.

Please plan to attend our alumni gatherings at the upcoming meetings.

ASHG Future Meeting Dates

2014 San Diego, CA
October 18-22

2015 Baltimore, MD
October 6-10

2016 Vancouver, Canada
October 18-22

2017 Orlando, FL
October 17-21

2018 San Diego, CA
October 16-20

2019 Houston, TX
October 15-19

2020 San Diego, CA
October 27-31

2021 Montreal, Canada
October 19-23

2022 Los Angeles, CA
October 18-22

Department of Human Genetics Donor Honor Roll 2012-2013

Thank you to those who made donations this past year:

Ruth Abramson
Diane Baker and Francis Collins
Jack Billi
Carolyn Bruzdzinski
Sally Camper
Gretchen Darlington
Andrew Feinberg
Steve Ferrucci
Thomas Gelehrter
David Ginsburg
Thomas Glaser
Grundbacher Trust
Thomas Glover
Louise Holland
Timothy Johnson
Paul Lee
Bobbie Levine
Jun Li
Jean MacCluer
Monica Marvin
Harvey Mohrenweiser
John Moran
David Olson
Patricia Peebles
Charles Pelzer
Elizabeth Petty
Diane Robins
Jane Schultz
Rachel and Karl Simin
Lana Sequin-Spillman
Richard Tashian
Wendy Uhlmann
Margaret Wade
Greg Witbeck
Beverly Yashar

Contribute today to help support named professorships, lectureships, fellowships and research funds. For online giving go to: http://hg.med.umich.edu/giving
In Memoriam


Myron (Mike) Levine joined the Department of Human Genetics as Associate Professor in 1961 and remained active in the department for more than 50 years. He was deeply committed to our academic missions of education and research, and made invaluable contributions to the life of the Department. Mike earned his B.S. in Biology and Biochemistry at Brooklyn College in New York City in 1947. He carried out his thesis research on paramecium genetics at Indiana University in Bloomington with Tracy Sonneborn. His postdoctoral work was with Nobel laureate, Salvador Luria. The early research in Mike’s laboratory in Michigan focused on the genetic regulation of lysogeny in bacteriophage P22. Later Mike dissected the genetic regulation of latent infection by Herpes virus. He worked collaboratively to develop the virus as a carrier for gene therapy, taking advantage of the natural tropism of the virus for neuronal ganglia. Clinical trials are now testing a gene therapy for chronic pain, using the herpes vector.

Mike was a founder of the Graduate Program in Cellular and Molecular Biology, and was the Director of CMB from 1974 to 1990. He was much appreciated for his wise counsel to generations of CMB students. Mike was honored with the UM Distinguished Faculty Achievement Award, the Distinguished Biomedical Lecture, and the Annual CMB Myron Levine Lecture. Several of Mike’s trainees achieved eminent positions in academic research, including Hamilton Smith, who received the Nobel Prize for work on type II restriction endonucleases, David Botstein, a leader in the field of genomics and Chair of the Genetics Departments at Stanford and Princeton, Alan Goldin, Associate Dean for Academic Affairs at UC Irvine, and Roz Sandri-Goldin, Chair of Microbiology & Molecular Genetics at UC Irvine.

Mike was greatly valued by his faculty colleagues. His was a voice of reason – clear, insightful, dispassionate and humane, a model of the academic virtues. Mike and his wife Bobbie hosted many department gatherings with their warm and generous hospitality. After his retirement in 1996, Mike remained active as an Emeritus Professor. For more than 50 years, Mike Levine contributed to the quality of academic life in our department. He will be long remembered and greatly missed.

– Contributed by Miriam Meisler, Ph.D.
Myron Levine Distinguished University Professor

The Myron Levine Memorial Research Fund has been established to honor Dr. Levine’s contributions to the Department of Human Genetics. For more information go to http://hg.med.umich.edu/giving
2013 Human Genetics Faculty

Back row:  Tom Glover, John Kim, Raymond Chan, Jun Li, Tony Antonellis, David Ginsburg, Tom Wilson, Sundeep Kalantry, Guy Lenk, Jeff Innis, Ryan Mills, Tom Gelehrter

Middle row:  Shigeki Iwase, Ken Kwan, Martin Arlt, John Moran, Cristen Willer, Margit Burmeister, Jeff Kidd, Eric Fearon, Charlie Sing

Front Row:  Beverly Yashar, Monica Marvin, JoAnn Sekiguchi, Catherine Keegan, Sally Camper, Miriam Meisler, Richard Tashian, Donna Martin, Diane Robins, Huira Kopera

Not pictured:  Stephanie Bielas, David Burke, Vivian Cheung, Ernest Chu, Julie Douglas, Santhi Ganesh, David Kohrman, Ben Koester, Christopher Krebs, Gilbert Omenn, Jane Schuette, Wendy Uhlmann