



Molecular Medicine and Translational Science Graduate Program Student Profiles

Lanazha Belfield

Second Year PhD Student, 2018-2019

Year Matriculated: 2017

Email: lbelfiel@wakehealth.edu

Education: Bachelor's of Science Biology Major Physics Minor,
Winston-Salem State University, 2017

Research mentor: D. Clark Files, MD (Pulmonary)

Research Interests: Acute Respiratory Distress Syndrome; Muscular Atrophy; Muscle Proteins



Julie Bennington, DVM

Third Year PhD Student, 2018-2019

Year Matriculated: 2017

Email: jbenning@wakehealth.edu

Education:
DVM, Kansas State University, College of Veterinary Medicine

Research mentor: Kouly Williams, DVM, (WFIRM and Comparative Medicine/Pathology)

Research Interests:

She is currently working under the mentorship of Kouly Williams, DVM, at WFIRM and is also excited to be shadowing Dr. Gopal Badlani, MD, Professor of Urology and Vice Chair of Clinical Affairs, during Urology clinics. Her research interests include developing animal models for regenerative and reconstructive medicine that are directly translational to the military patient and veteran population as well as working with Non-Human Primates. She hopes to be able to teach as well as continue clinical research in Comparative Medicine after earning her PhD in MMTS.



Matthew Brovold

Sixth Year PhD Candidate, 2018-2019

Year Matriculated: 2013

Email: mbrovold@wakehealth.edu

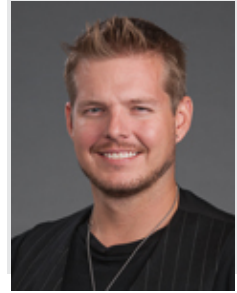
Education:

Arizona State University, B.S. Genetics, cell and developmental biology

Research mentor: Shay Soker, PhD (WFIRM)

Research Interests:

I am currently investigating the function and potential function of the Lgr5 pathway, a pathway critical in many somatic stem cells, which has also been found to be important in a variety of cancer stem cells. I will be mostly looking at this pathway via fetal liver cells and its importance in their proliferation in vitro and in vivo.



Aaron Deal

Third Year PhD Student, 2018-2019

Year Matriculated: 2016

Email: awdeal@wakehealth.edu

Education:

Davidson College, BS - 2012

Research mentor: Leah Solberg Woods, PhD (Molecular Medicine)

Research Interests: Genetic mapping



Anthony Dominijanni

Second Year PhD Student, 2018-2019

Year Matriculated: 2017

Email: adominij@wakehealth.edu

Education:

M.S., Cancer Biology, Wake Forest University, 2017

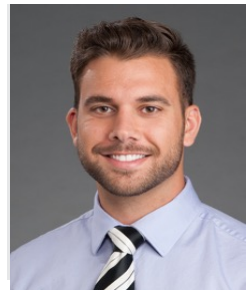
B.S., Biology, Virginia Tech, 2014

Research mentor: Shay Soker, PhD (WFIRM)

Research Interests: Development of in vitro 3D organoids for testing the efficacy and mechanism of both novel and established cancer therapeutics on CRC.

Establishing high throughput screening methods for testing therapeutics on 3D cancer organoids in comparison to the 2D monolayers.

Identify the role of stromal cells on cancer spheroids using 3D organoids.



Brittni Foster

Third Year PhD Student, 2018-2019

Year Matriculated: 2016

Email: bmfoster@wakehealth.edu

Education:

Western Carolina University; Chemistry MS

Research mentor: Bethany Kerr, Ph.D. (Cancer Biology)

Research Interests:

Bone microenvironment, prostate cancer, metastasis, metastatic cancer stem cells, circulating tumor cells.



Jenny Gonzalez-Armenta

Third Year PhD Student, 2018-2019

Year Matriculated: 2016

Email: jlcollin@wakehealth.edu

Education:

BS in Chemistry, Western Carolina University, 2016

Research mentor: Anthony Molina, Ph.D. (Internal Medicine – Section on Gerontology and Geriatrics)

Research Interests:

Effects of diet and exercise, healthy aging, bioenergetics



Chukwuwieke Gwam, MD

Second Year PhD Student, 2018-2019

Year Matriculated: 2018

Email: cgwam@wakehealth.edu

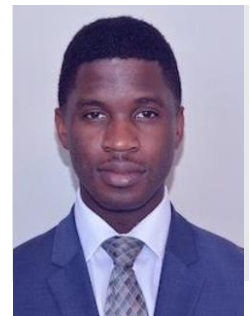
Education:

MD, Howard University College of Medicine

Research mentor: Bethany Kerr, PhD (Cancer Biology)

Research Interests:

Bone microenvironment, prostate cancer, metastasis, metastatic cancer stem cells, circulating tumor cells.



Alexandria Harrison

Third Year PhD Candidate, 2018-2019

Year Matriculated: 2015

Email: alexharr@wakehealth.edu

Education:

Research mentor: Donald McClain, MD, PhD (Endocrinology & Metabolism)

Research Interests:



Joshua Hayes

Second Year PhD Student, 2017-2018

Year Matriculated: 2016

Email: jthayes@wakehealth.edu

Education: B.S. in Biology, Winston-Salem State University, 2015

Research mentor: Reto Asmis, PhD (Molecular Medicine; Center for Precision Medicine)

Research Interests:

nanoparticle development, pancreatic cancer, targeted drug delivery



Alexander Jinnah, MD

Fourth Year PhD Candidate, 2018-2019

Year Matriculated: 2016

Email: ajinnah@wakehealth.edu

Education:

BSc – University of Southampton ('07- '10),

MD – Medical University of the Americas ('11-'15)

Research mentor: Thomas L. Smith, PhD (Orthopaedic Surgery)

Research Interests:

Fracture healing, bone graft substitutes



Adam Jorgensen

Third Year Student MD/PhD Program, 2018-2019

Year Matriculated: 2015

Email: ajorgens@wakehealth.edu

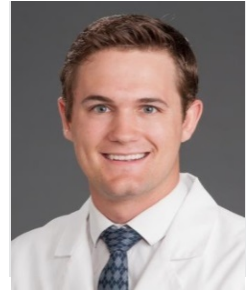
Education:

BS, Exercise Science, Brigham Young University

Research mentor: Anthony Atala, MD, WFIRM

Research Interests:

skin tissue engineering, bioprinting, surgery, and regenerative medicine.



Oula Khoury

Fifth Year PhD Candidate, 2018-2019

Year Matriculated: 2015

Email: okhoury@wakehealth.edu

Education:

MS in Molecular Biology, Lebanese American University,
Beirut, Lebanon, June 2013

BSc. in Biology, Lebanese American University, Beirut, Lebanon, June 2011

Research mentor: Anthony Atala, MD (WFIRM)

Research Interests:

Use of stem cell therapy for the treatment of inflammatory lung diseases.



Daniel Lara, MD

Third Year PhD Student, 2018-2019

Year Matriculated: 2017

Email: dlara@wakehealth.edu

Education:

BS (University of Notre Dame) MD (Creighton University School of Medicine)

Research mentor: Thomas Smith, PhD (Orthopaedic Surgery)

Research Interests:

Neuromuscular Junction/Peripheral Nerve Trauma and Regeneration



Steven Leung, MD

Second Year PhD Student, 2018-2019

Year Matriculated: 2016

Email: sleung@wakehealth.edu

Education:

B.S. Human Biology, University of California, San Diego

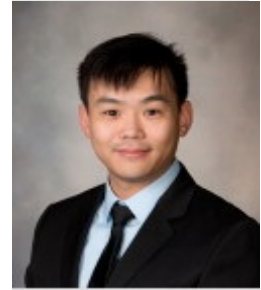
M.B.B.S, University of Queensland

M.S., Wake Forest University Graduate School of Arts & Science

Research mentor: Sean Murphy, PhD (WFIRM)

Research Interests:

Evaluation of Cystic Fibrosis Inflammatory Cell Function



Diana Lim

Second Year PhD Student, 2018-2019

Year Matriculated: 2018

Email: dlim@wakehealth.edu

Education:

B.A. in Neuroscience, Dartmouth College

Research mentors: James Yoo, MD, PhD (WFIRM) and John Jackson, PhD (WFIRM)

Research Interests:

Regenerative Medicine, Organogenesis, Oncology (Glioblastoma), Translational Medicine, Food Insecurity, Healthcare Education



T. David Luo, MD

Fifth Year PhD Candidate, 2018-2019

Year Matriculated: 2015

Email: tluo@wakehealth.edu

Education:

B.S. Purdue University,

M.D. Indiana University School of Medicine

Research mentor: Thomas L. Smith, PhD (Orthopaedic Surgery)

Research Interests:

Peripheral nerve injury and repair



Erica Lyons

Seventh Year PhD Candidate, 2018-2019

Year Matriculated: 2011

Email: ewieser@wakehealth.edu

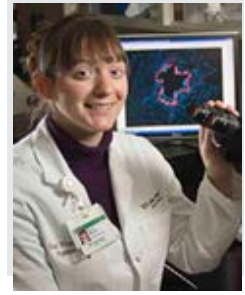
Education:

B.S.E. in Chemical Engineering, Case Western Reserve University.
Minor: Japanese

Research mentor: Allyn Howlett, PhD (Physiology & Pharmacology)

Research Interests:

Endocannabinoids in neural differentiation



Alejandro Marquez-Lara, MD

Sixth Year PhD Candidate, 2018-2019

Year Matriculated: 2014

Email: amarquez@wakehealth.edu

Education:

Central University of Venezuela "Luis Razetti" School of Medicine

Research mentor: Thomas L. Smith, PhD (Orthopaedic Surgery)

Research Interests:

Tissue healing and pain management.



Sumaiya Nazli

Second Year PhD Student, 2018-2019

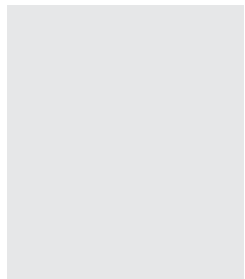
Year Matriculated: 2017

Email: snazli@wakehealth.edu

Education:

Research mentor: Raghunatha Yammani, PhD (Molecular Medicine)

Research Interests:



Goodwell Nzou

Fourth Year PhD Candidate, 2018-2019

Year Matriculated: 2015

Email: gnzou@wakehealth.edu

Education:

BSc. in Chemistry, Nazareth College, Rochester New York. United States.
May 2015

Research mentor: Anthony Atala, MD (WFIRM)

Research Interests:

Three dimensional human brain equivalent in-vitro models with a functional Blood Brain Barrier for drug screening and disease modeling applications.



Angelica Riojas

Third Year PhD Student, 2018-2019

Year Matriculated: 2016

Email: ariojas@wakehealth.edu

Education:

B.S. Biology, Texas State University;
M.S. Biochemistry, Texas State University

Research mentor: Laura Cox, PhD (Molecular Medicine; Center for Precision Medicine)

Research Interests:

Genetics and genomics, sex specific differences, hypertension



Martin Rodriguez

Second Year PhD Student, 2018-2019

Year Matriculated: 2017

Email: mrodrig@wakehealth.edu

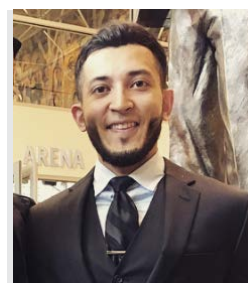
Education:

BSc in Biomedical Engineering, Marquette University, 2017

Research mentor: Graca Almeida-Porada, MD, PhD (WFIRM)

Research Interests:

Fetomaternal Immunology of In Utero Stem Cell Transplant in treatment of Hemophilia A



Samuel Rosas, MD

Second Year PhD Student, 2018-2019

Year Matriculated: 2017

Email: srosas@wakehealth.edu

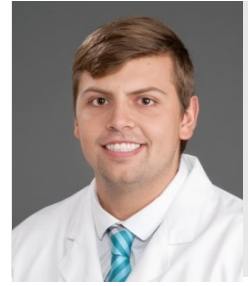
Education:

Universidad CES, School of Medicine

Research mentor: Jeffrey Willey, PhD (Radiation Oncology)

Research Interests:

Arthritis, cancer, joint reconstruction, biologics.



Carson K. Sakamoto, DVM

Third Year PhD Student, 2018-2019

Year Matriculated: 2017

Email: csakamot@wakehealth.edu

Education:

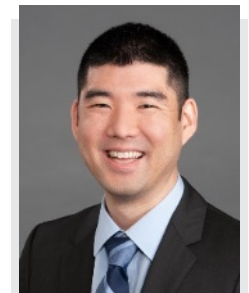
Washington State University, Pullman, Washington
Doctor of Veterinary Medicine
Graduated May 2017
Research Scholars Program

University of Hawaii at Manoa, Honolulu, Hawaii
Master of Science in Animal Sciences
Graduated May 2013

University of Hawaii at Manoa, Honolulu, Hawaii
Bachelor of Science in Biology
Graduated December 2006

Research mentor: Karen Haas, PhD (Microbiology & Immunology)

Research Interests: Host and Environmental Factors of Disease; Infectious Diseases



Lipika Salaye

Sixth Year PhD Candidate, 2018-2019

Year Matriculated: 2011, Univ. of Utah.
2015, Transferred to WFU Graduate School of Arts and Sciences

Email: Isalaye@wakehealth.edu

Education:

B.Sc. Microbiology-Biochemistry, St. Xavier's College, Mumbai, India;
M.Sc. Genetic Engineering, Mumbai, India.

Research mentor: Donald McClain, MD, PhD (Endocrinology & Metabolism)

Research Interests:

Diabetes & obesity, iron metabolism, circadian rhythm and miRNA



Priyanka Thakur, MVSc

Third Year PhD Candidate, 2018-2019

Year Matriculated: 2016

Email: pthakur@wakehealth.edu

Education:

Post Graduate: Master of Veterinary Sciences (M.V.Sc.), 2008-2010,
Major: Veterinary Pathology
Date of completion: September 2010

Graduate: Bachelor of Veterinary and Animal Sciences,
Dr. G.C. Negi College of Veterinary Sciences,
CSK HPKV, Palampur, Himachal
Pradesh, India. (Five year Graduate programme, 2003-2008).

Research mentor: Mark Cline, DVM, PhD (Pathology, Comparative Medicine)

Research Interests:

Radiation induced lung fibrosis.



Briana Thompson

Second Year PhD program Student, 2018-2019

Year Matriculated: 2018

Email: brthomps@wakehealth.edu

Education:

B.S., Physics, Wake Forest University, 2017
B.A., Mathematics, Wake Forest University, 2017

Research mentor: Sang Jin Lee, PhD (WFIRM)

Research Interests: Liver Cancer, Brachytherapy, Yttrium Radioisotopes



Lauren West-Livingston

Third Year MD/PhD program Student, 2018-2019+

Year Matriculated: 2017 (PhD)

Email: lwest@wakehealth.edu

Education:

B.A., Spanish Studies, Duke University, 2012

M.S., Biochemistry, UNC Greensboro, 2015

M.D./Ph.D. dual degree program, Wake Forest School of Medicine (MD –matriculated 2015)

Research mentor: Sang Jin Lee, PhD (WFIRM)

Research Interests:

Tissue engineered vascular grafts, regenerative medicine, tissue engineering, interactions between biomaterials and cells/tissue, in vitro optimization for clinically translational research, neuroregeneration, social factors of medical care, medical sociology, medical education, microaggressions in medical education, implicit bias, stereotype threat, intergroup anxiety



Shaina Yates-Alston

Third Year PhD Student, 2018-2019

Year Matriculated: 2016

Email: sayates@wakehealth.edu

Education:

Winston Salem State University;

Bachelor of Science in Clinical Laboratory Science, MT(AMT)

Research mentor: Nicole Levi-Polyachenko, PhD (Plastic & Reconstructive Surgery)

Research Interests:

Microbiology, immunology, colorectal cancer, metastasis, cancer biology, cell biology

