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Greetings from the Office of Postdoctoral Affairs!
Ashley Carlson, Assistant Director, Office of Postdoctoral Affairs

It is a great pleasure to bring this first edition of the revived Postdoc Press to you during National Postdoctoral Appreciation Week. On Monday, September 15, over 50 postdoctoral scholars, mentors, and leaders from the postdoc community kicked off NPAW festivities with a Postdoc Appreciation Lunch in Hixson Atrium. Baby Jay came to help celebrate; fantastic prizes were donated by generous faculty, staff, and departments; and campus services shared information. A great time was truly had by all.

I began my role as Assistant Director for Postdoctoral Affairs in January, with an incredible amount and enthusiasm and support provided by Dr. Robert Klein, Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs. From my very first days on the job, I was well aware of how much he values postdoctoral scholars and the mentors who work so closely with them, and I knew we needed to set some great goals to align with that. The leaders of the KUMC Postdoc Society have also been an extremely supportive and insightful group and I am grateful to have been able to learn from, and be inspired by, each one of them.

Since then, the Postdoctoral Advisory Committee has been convened with exceptionally enthusiastic faculty, staff, and postdoctoral scholars. Under the leadership of Dr. Danny Welch this team has already been instrumental in helping to define directions for policy, programming, and services the Office of Postdoctoral Affairs will focus on.

The year to come promises to be an exciting one as it will be a brand new chapter for postdoctoral scholarship at KUMC. The Office of Postdoctoral Affairs now not only has full time staffing, but resources to help provide the non-technical training that is so important to postdoctoral scholars’ professional development. KUMC is not alone in facing some very real challenges in regards to postdoctoral scholarship, but a bright future is surely in sight with the enthusiastic support of leadership, commitment of the Postdoctoral Advisory Committee, and most importantly the bright and passionate scholars who serve in postdoctoral appointments on our campus. I am inspired and grateful to be part of an academic community so diverse, and filled with so much potential.

I look forward to getting to work with each of you!

2014-2014 Postdoctoral Advisory Committee Roster:
Chair
Danny Welch, PhD
Vice Chancellor, Academic Affairs
Robert Klein, PhD
Vice Chancellor, Research
Richard Barohn, MD
Faculty
Mike Werle, PhD
Cynthia Teel, PhD, RN, FAAN
Russell Swerdlow, MD
Monica Kurylo, PhD
Andrew Godwin, PhD
Postdoctoral Scholars
Faezeh Koohestani, PhD
Jessica Rossol-Allison, PhD
Heather Wilkins, PhD
International Programs
Kimberly Connelly
Irina Aris
Administration
Shari Standiferd
Office of Postdoctoral Affairs
Ashley Carlson
2014-2014 Postdoctoral Program Series
The Office of Postdoctoral Affairs is pleased to announce that it will be offering a monthly program series specifically tailored to the postdoctoral community at KUMC. The series will include panel discussions exploring all avenues of careers– academic and beyond, writing and teaching skills workshops, and professional development opportunities in communications, leadership, networking and more. Please visit the Postdoctoral Events page for announcements and details on upcoming events.

Upcoming KUMC Events of Interest to Postdoctoral Scholars
• Culture Hour– Every Thursday (except holidays) the Office of International Programs holds Culture Hour, a casual forum for students, faculty, and staff to discuss insights, questions, and concerns about culture. Sessions are held in Calkins Conference Room (Orr Major G005) from noon to 12:45. Bring a lunch. For more information visit the International Programs website.
• Clinical Culture and Diversity Series: To Serve or Not to Serve: Who is Actually Being Served?- Dr. Mani M. Mani, MD, Emeritus Professor, Department of Plastic Surgery will facilitate a conversation aimed at developing cross-cultural competencies. Tuesday, September 16, 12:00-12:50, GO13 SON.
• For more information on events from the Office of International Programs, please visit their website and see their article in this newsletter.
• WIMS & AMWA Power Breakfast– Women in Medicine and Science and the American Medical Women’s Association invite faculty, trainees, and students to network over breakfast in the Varnes Center 4016 School of Nursing, Tuesday, September 23, 8:00-9:00am. Details can be found on the WIMS site.
• Building a Network to Advance Your Career– Tuesday, September 23, 4:00-6:00pm, Beller Conference Center. This major networking event will include a Mentoring and Networking presentation by Kathleen Davis, Ph.D., M.S.Ed; a panel discussion with successful mentor/mentee pairs; and a networking social hour to facilitate connections on topics including publications, work-place politics, grants, promotion, work/life balance, and motivation. Registration is required, please visit the WIMS event page for details and to sign up.
• Moms in Medicine and Science (MIMS) Brown Bag Lunch Meeting– First Friday every month, Wescoe 2043, 12:00-1:00pm– Join other mothers (including moms to be, or hope to be) to share advice, stories, and camaraderie. Faculty, staff, and students are welcome. More details can be found online.
• Promoting Diversity in Medicine & Science– Wednesday, October 22, 12:00-1:30pm, School of Nursing GO13. Joy McCann Visiting Guest Professor Molly Carnes, MD will discuss how cultural stereotypes influence judgments and decision making in ways that constrain opportunities for careers in academic medicine, science, and engineering for women and individuals from other underrepresented groups. Registration is required, learn more on the WIMS event page.
Upcoming KUMC Events of Interest to Postdoctoral Scholars

- **Political Scenarios: Discussion about politics at work**– Lunchtime discussion on political scenarios at work. Thursday, November 6, 12:00-1:00pm, Wahl West 1006. Register [online](#) for lunch.
- For more information on events from [Women in Medicine and Science](#), visit their [website](#).
- **Jayhawk Way**– The next wave of KUMC’s professional development training program, The Jayhawk Way, will begin soon and is open to all employees. One on one coaching is available with Jayhawk Way coaches. Visit the [website](#) to learn more.
- **Overcome the Fear of Difficult Conversations**– Learn the skills for non-confrontational ways to bring situations into the open and respond in a successful way, Tuesday, September 16, 11:00-12:00, or Wednesday, September 24, 1:30-11:30, 1051 Wescoe. More information is available [online](#).
- **Your Vision and Expectations at KUMC**– Monday, September 22, 10:00-11:00am, 1051 Wescoe. Work to identify a compelling vision of your workplace and develop a plan that will allow you to attain that vision of why you come to work each day. More information can be found [online](#).
- **Energize your TEAM!**– Friday, September 26, 10:00-11:30, 1051 Wescoe. Learn how teambuilding exercises can be used to improve you and your teams performance and create a positive team culture through a variety of initiatives. Register [online](#).
- For more information on events from [Human Resources](#), visit the [Learning and Development](#) website.

As part of [National Postdoctoral Appreciation Week](#), Elsevier will host free-of-charge webinars for National Postdoc Association members. Remember, postdoctoral scholars at KUMC are eligible for a free affiliate membership with NPA. Visit the [National Postdoctoral Association](#) website to sign up for membership and view details on the Elsevier offer during NPAW.
Postdoctoral Advisory Committee Convened

When establishing programming, services, and policies for postdoctoral scholars, it is essential to have input and feedback from postdocs, as well as faculty and administrators. In order to facilitate effective communication and a strong collaborative effort, the Postdoctoral Advisory Committee was reformed this summer.

The committee will serve the KUMC postdoctoral community by providing advice and feedback to the Office of Postdoctoral Affairs on policies and programming. In addition the committee will help with institutional buy-in and help leverage campus resources. Considering feedback from administration and postdoctoral scholars, the committee will initiate novel policy, program, and service directions. Perhaps most importantly, the committee will support and represent postdoctoral interests in the university community.

Danny Welch, PhD, professor and chair of Cancer Biology was identified to chair the committee. His commitment and energy are immediately apparent. He writes, “The position of postdoctoral fellow is an incredibly important one. It is the launch point for one’s career, whether academic, pharma, government or elsewhere. Importantly, the requirements for postdoctoral training are evolving. The Postdoctoral Advisory Committee was formed for three reasons: (1) to assure that all postdocs at KUMC have access to the full repertoire of training opportunities in addition to the technical ones (2) to help make KUMC a place where postdocs want to come; and (3) to enrich the experiences of all postdoctoral fellows across the campus. I am very excited to work with other faculty, staff and postdocs in this partnership.”

Under Dr. Welch’s leadership, the committee has identified a number of priority issues to address, including aligning with NIH recommendations for postdoctoral scholarship and responsible conduct of research training.

The committee will meet quarterly; however it has agreed to have additional meetings during the initial start up phase to accommodate the energy of committee members and an ambitious list of priorities. For more information about the committee, please visit the Postdoctoral Advisory Committee website.

THE OFFICE OF POSTDOCTORAL AFFAIRS
PostdoctoralOffice@kumc.edu  913-588-2369  www.kumc.edu/academic-affairs/postdoctoral-affairs
The Evolution of the KUMC Office of Postdoc Affairs: Building a strong and supportive environment for postdoc scholars

Heather Wilkins, PhD – Postdoctoral Scholar, Neurology

Hopefully, you have noticed significant changes occurring in the Office of Postdoc Affairs (OPA). It may seem trivial. You may wonder why is this necessary? What is the point? Why should I become involved? I hope by the end of my editorial I will have convinced you that the return on your investment in the KUMC OPA and postdoc society (KPS) is worthwhile.

I am a postdoc in the Neurology department, under the supervision of Dr. Russell Swerdlow. My appointment began one year ago. Like many will empathize with, the transition from graduate school to a postdoc position was terrifying. My fears and reservations were calmed by the fact that I have an outstanding mentor. He took time out of his busy schedule to investigate the apartment complex I now reside in. Unfortunately, this is an uncommon trait among mentors. One of the issues some postdocs face is a lack of support from their mentor and/or a deficiency in the mentor-mentee relationship. Most avoid addressing this topic. It is to some extent a taboo to even speak of. This is where a strong OPA presence on campus is needed, scratch that required.

Postdoc appreciation week is mid-September each year. Last year, the KUMC OPA held a two hour meet and greet with a few snacks and beverages. This year postdoc appreciation week is being truly celebrated. Local businesses are offering discounts to all postdocs in the area. There are luncheons planned, with raffle prizes donated by faculty members. The career counselor is providing an hour of services to meet with postdocs as a group. These are just a few highlights of what is planned for the week. Compared to last year, the support and involvement of the OPA and faculty are beyond measurement.

I joined the KPS about 6 months ago, and since, I have also been asked to serve on the postdoc advisory committee. This new committee is comprised of faculty members, representatives from the international office, and postdocs. It has been extraordinary to see the passion mounting from this group of individuals. The desire to create a cohesive and supportive environment for postdocs by the faculty is unsurmountable. So much that, at the last meeting I had a difficult time finding an opportunity to provide my opinion. Until the faculty realized the postdocs had not been able to speak and asked us our thoughts. We do not feel uncomfortable being honest in this setting.
The Evolution of the KUMC Office of Postdoc Affairs (cont’d)

We have many people to thank, including Ashley Carlson. She has worked to bring together the KPS, OPA, and the postdoc advisory committee. The OPA now has an operating budget. The next year will prove to be very beneficial to KUMC postdocs.

The OPA will be providing travel scholarships, beyond the bench programming, writing workshops, networking, and other opportunities as needed. The Postdoctoral Advisory Committee is working to address issues regarding postdoc salary deficits, individual development plans, and training for mentors. This is where your investment in these opportunities will bring a great return. The faculty serving on the Postdoctoral Advisory Committee and the OPA have been working diligently to address postdoc concerns and needs.

There is one factor that has to be overcome. We need to take advantage of the support!!! We asked for it and our voices were not only heard, but answered. It would be a shame to lose this opportunity for KUMC postdocs due to a lack of attendance. So please, take advantage!!!!

Work Life Balance
Jessica Rossol-Allison, PhD – Postdoctoral Scholar, Kidney Institute

Postdocs are immortal.

Really.

In a 2007 letter to the National Postdoctoral Association (NPA), the NIH and NSF defined a postdoctoral scholar as “an individual who has received a doctoral degree and is engaged in a temporary and defined period of mentored advanced training to enhance the professional skills and research independence needed to pursue his and her chosen career path.” (NPA website) At KUMC, an individual is allowed to remain a “Postdoctoral Fellow” for 5 years.

In essence, postdoctoral fellows never grow old because this is a very limited, precious time in our career.

A former postdoc, now faculty member, repeated a piece of advice that she was given: Cherish this protected research time. Never again in your career will you have such a privilege.
Work Life Balance (cont’d)

She’s right. We need to make the most of our time as postdocs. With the stakes seemingly so high, I struggle to find an appropriate balance between my personal and professional commitments. As I was relating my struggles to my peer mentors, a colleague kindly stated the obvious – I need to work smarter, not harder.

I have a job that I love, a supportive husband with his own career, two young children, and two large dogs that we obviously adopted before I had children. All these wonderful people (and pets) in my life leave me in a position to make many decisions. I noticed that each decision I have to make leaves me less capable of making the next, i.e. in what order should my samples be loaded in this gel. I quickly learned that reducing the number of decisions I have to make actually increases my productivity and performance at work, and reduces my stress level. This in turn leaves me with more quality time to spend with my family.

How does this work for me? I pack my lunch and set the clothes out the night before (or for the whole week, if I’m ambitious) when I really don’t care what they are. My morning coffee is on a timer and the breakfast is either in the crockpot or cooked the night before. Our meals are mostly planned in advance so that we have as little as possible to do when we get home at night. I highly recommend a meal planning service – they even give you a grocery list! The daily chores in my house are divided so I know what I have to get done that week and when I can best complete them. Lastly, my house is getting organized! Ok, maybe not, but I’m trying to get there.

I can’t decide whether I subscribe to Peter Drucker’s Total Quality Management, a chef’s philosophy of mise-en-place or, as the Germans say, “ordnung mus sine,” order must be. Regardless, reducing the number of decisions I have to make has decreased my stress level, and helped me to be more productive.

What works for you? How do you balance your professional and personal commitments, be that family, chronic illness, or a budding Olympic career? I’d like to invite you to state the obvious in the next Postdoc Quarterly and share how you create balance in your life.

CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS:
The Office of Postdoctoral Affairs seeks contributions of content for future issues of the Postdoc Press. This quarterly newsletter is issued September, December, March, and June. Contributions may include, but are not limited to:
- Photos, illustrations, comics
- Articles on career development, postdoc life, and success at KUMC
- Event announcements or special upcoming opportunities

For more information, or to offer feedback or suggestions, email PostdoctoralOffice@kumc.edu.
The University of Kansas Medical Center Recognizes Postdoctoral Scholars During National Postdoctoral Appreciation Week

The National Postdoctoral Association (NPA) is holding the fifth annual National Postdoctoral Appreciation Week September 15 – 19, 2014. KUMC has joined the celebration by organizing and hosting a Postdoc Appreciation Lunch on Monday, September 15, 11:00-1:00 in Hixson Atrium. Postdoctoral scholars and their mentors, as well as leaders from the postdoctoral community were invited to this celebratory event featuring lunch, a campus services fair, and an appearance by Baby Jay! In addition, faculty, staff, and departments across campus have donated many fun door prizes for registered postdoc attendees. Additionally, a special career development session “Ice Cream & Social Media” will be available to postdocs on Wednesday and International Programs will give special attention to postdoctoral topics at their regular Culture Hour on Thursday.

During this week-long celebration, institutions are encouraged to plan activities that honor postdocs and recognize the contributions they make to research and development in the United States. In 2013, more than 108 institutions in 36 states, the District of Columbia and Canada hosted 264 events to recognize the work of postdoctoral researchers. For information on events across the country, see the NPA website.

NPAW is coordinated by the NPA Outreach Committee, which works to promote the mission, values, goals, and business objectives of the NPA. The event is actively promoting the day using Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter and direct contact with postdoctoral associations and offices nationwide. Majda Haznadar, Ph.D., and Barbara Natalizio, Ph.D., serve as co-chairs of the committee.

A postdoctoral scholar (“postdoc”) is an individual holding a doctoral degree who is engaged in a temporary period of mentored research and/or scholarly training for the purpose of acquiring the professional skills needed to pursue a career path of his or her choosing. For more information, please visit the NPA website.

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The University of Kansas Medical Center, Office of Postdoctoral Affairs is proud to be a sustaining member of the National Postdoctoral Association. As part of this membership, all postdoctoral scholars at KUMC are able to join NPA via a FREE affiliate membership. Visit the NPA membership website for more details.
Cultural Programs at KUMC

Irina Aris, International Exchange Visitor and Employee Advisor, Office of International Programs

The University of Kansas Medical Center has a diverse international representation among its postdoctoral community. Around 90 Postdoctoral Fellows at KUMC are internationals from countries like China, India, Thailand, Denmark, Brazil, Nepal, Ukraine, Japan, and many others. The Office of International Programs believes that it’s important to foster cultural exchanges and we strive to provide opportunities for everyone to become more familiar with the people, ideas, and customs of other nations.

Please visit the Office of International Programs’ Event Calendar which is regularly updated with information on various events that are planned on campus or within the community. We would also like to invite and encourage KUMC’s Postdoctoral Fellows to attend Culture Hour and events sponsored by International Programs’ partner ISI or International Students Inc.

Culture Hour is a casual forum for students, faculty, and staff to discuss insights, questions, and concerns about culture. It is held every Thursday at noon at the Calkins Conference Room.

ISI hosts many social events, activities, and trips throughout the year to help internationals and locals develop cross-cultural friendships and experiences. ISI is a community-based organization that works closely with the Kansas City area universities and colleges. For more information on the type of events and programs available through ISI please visit the ISI website and our Event Calendar.

In addition to on-campus and community events, the Office of International Programs has the Global Connections Program, which helps to connect individuals on campus or in the community who share an interest in developing multi-cultural awareness. For more information on Global Connections and how to sign up, please visit our website or contact Zachary Rogers. The Office of International Programs hopes to see you soon at one of our events!
# International Programs Event Calendar

For more information, please visit the International Programs [webpage](#).

## September

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<tr>
<td>9/4/2014</td>
<td>International Wives Connection- ISI EVENT</td>
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<tr>
<td>9/4/2014</td>
<td>Culture Hour</td>
<td>G005 Orr Major- Calkins Conference Room</td>
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<td>9/6/2014</td>
<td>Welcome Picnic- ISI EVENT</td>
<td>UMKC QUAD, KC, MO</td>
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<td>9/12/2014</td>
<td>International Student Fellowship- ISI EVENT</td>
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<td>G005 Orr Major- Calkins Conference Room</td>
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<td>9/16/2014</td>
<td>Clinical Culture and Diversity Series</td>
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<td>9/18/2014</td>
<td>International Wives Connection- ISI EVENT</td>
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<td>9/21/2014</td>
<td>Square Dance &amp; BBQ- ISI EVENT</td>
<td>Lake Lenexa, Black Hoof Park, Oak Shelter</td>
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<td>9/26/2014</td>
<td>International Student Fellowship- ISI EVENT</td>
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<td>Culture Hour</td>
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## November

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<td>11/17/2014</td>
<td>INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION WEEK</td>
<td>G013- School of Nursing</td>
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<td>Clinical Culture and Diversity Series</td>
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**The Office of Postdoctoral Affairs**

PostdoctoralOffice@kumc.edu  913-588-2369  [www.kumc.edu/academic-affairs/postdoctoral-affairs](#)
The Postdoctoral Press is presented by:

The University of Kansas Medical Center
Office of Postdoctoral Affairs

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