



The G.S.A. NEWSLETTER

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GSA Elections Are Coming Up

By Tina Tenenhaus

At orientation I told the new students that I don't like to think of the GSA as "us" and everyone else as "them". The officers and the team of students that serve as representatives each year are just a transient sampling of graduate students and their actions are driven by the current desires and needs of the graduate students. Notice the word "transient"....

As the election for new officers approaches I thought I'd try to give you a feel for what each position entails in the hopes that many of you will consider spending some time next year shaping graduate student life here at Hopkins. The only real requirement for each position is that you are a graduate student in the School of Medicine. You don't have to have any experience as a departmental representative to run for an office, although in some cases it may help. Furthermore, you can make as much as you want out of the position. To put all glorified ideas aside, each year the GSA is given a certain amount of money, and to continue receiving money in future years the GSA has to spend it! So let's start with the treasurer.

The treasurer's role is to create a budget, to get occasional updates from Cathy Will to find out

NEW GSA EVENT COMING: Teacher of the Year Award Presentation

The GSA has decided to try something new this year, and more than ever, we truly hope you will participate. As you know, we conduct an election each year via e-mail to come up with a "Teacher of the Year." Last year's recipient was Pierre Coulombe, and this year's recipient is Jonathan Pevsner. Previously the GSA hadn't really honored the recipient in any way, and since it is obvious from the e-mails that these great teachers are truly appreciated, we thought we should do something special. What better way to reward them than to ask them to prepare yet another great lecture? ;)

On May 23rd (yep-that's the last day of the giant biochemistry course that many of you first years take), at 2 p.m., we shall convene in the West Lecture Hall for a short award presentation. Then Pierre will give a lecture on a topic of his choosing, which he has promised will be exciting and fun (and won't be followed by any tests). Following the lecture there will be much celebration including the usual fabulous GSA fare of local brews and chips. Think of it as a mid-afternoon happy hour. Most importantly, please come to show your vote of approval for our past and present Teacher of the Years.

Continued on page 4

Upcoming Lectures

Pioneers in Science Lecture
Thomas A. Steitz, Ph.D.
May 10, 2001
2:00 pm
WBSB Auditorium

Teacher of the Year Award Presentation

Pierre Coulombe
May 23, 2001
2:00 pm
West Lecture Hall



We will miss you, Nupur, your wit, your keen intellect, and your friendship. But in the midst of the pain of missing you, we each have of our own special memories of the time we spent with you in class, in lab, and outside the walls of Hopkins. Thanks, Nupur, for all of the happy memories.

Q & A with Eric Wieschaus

An interview with CMM correspondent Daniel Gorelick

In February I sat down with Nobel Laureate and Howard Hughes Investigator Eric Wieschaus, an unassuming Princeton professor who, along with Christiane Nusslein-Volhard, performed the first systematic saturation mutagenesis screen in Drosophila. For those of you that don't remember Fundamentals of Genetics class, Professor Wieschaus discovered many of the genes that regulate embryonic development. What follows is an edited excerpt from our interview: read the full seven-page interview at <http://www.med.jhu.edu/gsa/news.html>.

Q: You started graduate school saying “after three years of washing fly bottles [as an undergraduate] at Notre Dame, I never wanted to see another fly, much less work on flies for my thesis.” In an interview after winning the Nobel Prize, you said you plan to devote your entire career to studying fruit-flies and all they offer to genetics and that “you can’t beat flies.”

That’s true. I probably said both those things. I guess your question is how or what changed between entering graduate school and the Nobel Prize award. Ok. I think, what I—when I went to graduate school I didn’t see myself as a geneticist, I saw myself as an embryologist....I think at the time when I entered graduate school, and I’ve actually said this also on occasion, I didn’t even know that flies had embryos. I don’t know where I thought they came from but I—certainly it was not part of an undergraduate curriculum to study embryonic development. That’s why I had no idea when I entered graduate school, that if you looked at the fly embryo, if you looked at the blastula stage, if you looked at gastrulation, seeing the same problems with it, the same visual impact, the same remarkable processes were still, were happening in a fly embryo just as much as they were happening in the sea urchin and the frog.

Q: But when you were planning your 1980 mutant screen, you weren’t thinking at all about how this will be generalized in a huge way? Did you know the significance—

Gosh, it’s always hard to reconstruct in your mind how you do experiments, or what it is that you thought, particularly twenty years later, what it is that you thought when you were doing those experiments.... And so I think that certainly at the time when we were doing the experiments we didn’t understand their full impact but we certainly knew that they were cool, and that they were working, and that it was exciting.

Q: How much do you think your work did to pluck the fly from the stocks of genetic obscurity?

I think it is true that the success of those experiments, and their long range and unforeseen impact on areas as diverse as neurobiology or cell biology or the whole—their success in illustrating how you could use genetics, a combination of genetics and molecular biology and everything else it’s possible to do in flies to study development, that success clearly pointed the way to say, ‘well, if you can do that with embryonic development you ought to be able to do that with neurobiology, you ought to be able to do that with the cytoskeleton, you ought to be able to do that with just about anything, any biological problem.’ And that’s actually what I believe is the central contribution right now of flies to biology—is that it’s an animal, a functional, living animal in which you can study genes in the context of their normal function. You can study processes, you can get a genetic handle on how processes work.

Q: The Nobel Prize—was that just a fantastic experience?

Yes. The thing that I didn’t know about it, what was really great, I mean they give you some money, you split it with the other people, the United States government takes half of it in taxes, it’s the only government that does that—

Q: A full half?

Full half, 52% in my case. The United States, New Jersey taxes, the whole works. It’s considered taxable income so you don’t really end up with that much. It’s still money, but it’s not that much. It’s not the money. It’s actually not the fame. You’re already kind of famous, you already have a little bit of respect in the world by the time you get there—it doesn’t come that much out of the blue...But what is really great is that you go to Stockholm in December and it’s, for 10 ten days, it’s just like continuous parties.

Q: They fly you and your family over to Stockholm. Is it business class, first class?

They flew me first class, yes. Actually we offered our girls, our children, the opportunity—we had to pay for their tickets, but we would let them fly first class with us or they could fly coach and take the difference, keep the difference themselves. Naturally, being, you know, smart kids, they took coach. But then they convinced the stewardesses on the airplane, because they were children of a Nobel Laureate, to bump them up into first class anyway. So they got the money and they also flew first class.

Q: But you can wear the medal.

I could wear the medal, yeah. I haven't—I don't know what to do with the medal... Actually, what I did is, I put it in a safety box in the bank in Princeton and haven't seen it for five years but I assume it's still in the box somewhere. I mean I'm not going to go in, open up the box and fondle the medal on occasion. That's not what you really want to do with your life.

Q: Do you remember getting the phone call?

Oh yeah. Vaguely... They called, my wife picked up the phone, she handed it over to me. I, uh, well, I thought it was a wrong number. Why would someone call from Sweden? They made the announcement on [Monday] Oct 12. Before they make the public announcement in Sweden they call the people who receive the prize. If you're in the States, 10:30 Sweden time is 5:30 am US time.

Q: So you had no idea, you weren't expecting this? In the back of your mind, you weren't thinking...

Even in the back of my mind I was not thinking it... I didn't expect it to happen.

Q: It obviously doesn't seem to have lessened your scientific motivation at all. Or has it?

No.

Q: What has changed? Do you do less lab work, more lecturing...

No. I decided that I wouldn't let it change anything in my life, so I don't do any less lab work. It obviously changes some things. People are actually interested in what I have to say. They sometimes call up and want to get opinions on a lot of things that I don't know anything about. Probably the University is happier that I'm there. I probably have more cache in terms of, I could ask for things if I ever wanted it and I might have a better chance of getting it. All of that is probably true but I pretend, in my own mind, like it's not true because it's easier to live your life if you don't assume those things. In reality it has changed my life, but it hasn't really changed it that much. I think because I was happy with my life before. I am happy in the lab. I go into the lab every morning, I sort my flies, I do my experiments, I struggle with administration, I struggle with my teaching, I struggle with all my other jobs. I still try to get in four to six hours a day at the bench.

Q: Actually at the bench?

Yeah. I don't always succeed, but mostly it's in the range of four hours a day.

Q: It's a little unusual for a senior investigator to still...

It's easy. Again, because if I were doing something really complicated, like molecular biology, or—but working with flies is so easy that you, even a PI can do it.

**ON THE LIGHTER SIDE:
GSA Officers Wanted**

President

Skills required:

1. Pushing work off on others
2. Ignoring e-mails from foreign countries that start with "Dear Sirs"
3. Pretending Medical School Council meetings are interesting
4. Ignoring phone calls from consulting companies wanting the GSA to help plan a recruiting event

Perks:

1. The chance to set up a new GSA office in the 1830 building when (if?) we get one
2. A feeling of importance when you're invited to attend meetings together with Deans

Vice President

Skills required:

1. Ability to choose good beer and chips
2. Begging for volunteers to help set up and clean up events
3. Going over budget by buying too many hot dogs
4. High through-put xeroxing for orientation hand-outs

Perks:

1. Leftover beer and chips
2. Personal use of the digital camera

Secretary

Skills required:

1. Posting meeting announcements before the meeting but not so soon that they all get taken down
2. Taking copious notes

Perks:

1. Opportunity to exercise creative license when making meeting announcements

Treasurer

Skills required:

1. Ability to copy the budget from last year into a new spreadsheet and call it this year's budget
2. Knowing a cheap PI from a broke PI when evaluating travel award applications
3. Having a good hiding place at home for a couple grand of "petty" cash

Perks:

1. Personal use of the GSA laptop
2. Get to hang out with the GSA president as much as you want

what money was spent (the treasurer does not deal with any of the transactions aside from handling petty cash), and let the officers and representatives know how much more money they can spend. Another important job of the treasurer, together with 4 other finance committee members, is to advise the officers/ reps on who should receive money for travel awards or student group activities (their recommendations for funding are then voted on by the officers/ reps).

The secretary's role is to publicize the GSA meetings, take minutes at meetings and make sure they are read and approved at the following meeting, and keep attendance at meetings. In the future the secretary may also be in charge of the GSA e-mail account (forwarding messages) and the maintenance of the allgrad mass e-mail list.

There are two vice presidents who collaboratively organize a number of events. These events have traditionally included: 1) orientation, 2) fall picnic, 3) winter happy hour, and 4) spring poster session/happy hour. If you've ever organized a party you can do this! It involves short spurts of lots of work but is very rewarding in the long run.

The president's role is hard to explain. In general the president is a bridge between all of the graduate students and the rest of Hopkins, or even the world it sometimes seems. He/she oversees GSA meetings, and occasionally attends "greater" Hopkins meetings to give

the graduate students a voice on various issues or to bring back information to the representatives. Strange things turn up that cannot be ignored (contrary to what I wrote in jest in the "officers wanted" article on page XX). Unlike the VP position (and I've done that too), the president almost always has something small to attend to.

Here is how elections work. We will request nominations in May. If more than one person (or more than two in the case of VP) accepts the nomination for that position there will be an election via e-mail. For the June meeting the newly elected officers will run the show under the watchful eyes of the old officers. At this point you will also hear what departmental and other representative positions are open. From July 2001-June 30 2001 a new set of "you" will become "us".

GSA Newsletter Editors and Staff

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Baltimore, MD 21205



Graduate Exhibition

Medical & Biological Illustration

Featuring artwork of the class of 2001 from
the Department of Art as Applied to Medicine

May 11-25, 2001

Opening Reception

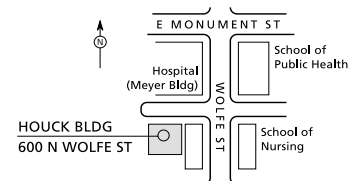
Friday, May 11, 4-7 pm

Houck Lobby

(next to Hospital front entrance)

(410) 955-3213 for additional info.

The Johns Hopkins School of Medicine



Funded by Dept. of Art as Applied to Medicine and the School of Medicine Graduate Student Assoc.

CONGRATULATIONS 2001 GRADUATES !

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY



Sohyun Ahn
 Mary K. Anderson
 Kurtis E. Bachman
 Laura J. Long Baxter
 Katherine M. Bell-McGuinn
 Jutta Beneken
 Holly J. Berkovits
 Christopher B. Buck
 Daniel P. Cahill
 Jennifer S. Cannon
 Jennifer M. Carbrey
 B. Nelson Chau
 Christakis D. des Constantini
 James E. Conway
 Gregory J. Cost
 Kathleen Crowther-Heyck
 Alison J. Davis
 Andrew P. Doan
 Eileen S. Emison
 Jin Gao
 Brian V. Geisbrecht
 Robert W. Georgantas
 Vaibhava Goel
 Kevin S. Gorski
 Alan M. Grossfield
 Kalpana Gupta

Michael F. Haller
 Joseph Hanna
 Donna J. Hansel
 Edward C. Hsiao
 Shu-Ching Hu
 Ching-Tai Huang
 Trevor C. Huang
 Daniel D. Isaac
 Lee J. Johnson
 Siddhartha C. Kadia
 Jee Hae Kim
 Daniel J. Krovich
 Gail E. Krovitz
 Wei-Lih Lee
 Qing Li
 Xiaodong Li
 Zhengbin Lu
 Shawn E. Lupold
 Melanie L. Mayer
 Alan K. Meeker
 Eric K. Nakakura
 John D. Neely
 Dzung Hung Nguyen
 Frederick C. Nucifora, Jr.
 Anitha K. Pasupathy
 Andrew A. Pieper

Brinda C. Prasad
 Xiaozhong Qian
 Christopher T. Rankin
 Jason D. Ravenel
 Melissa R. Regan
 Katherine A. Sacksteder
 Lei Shen
 Xuefei Shen
 Dale K. Shumaker
 Mary T. Silcox
 James J. Smith
 Su-Yi Tseng
 Kirsi F. Turbedsky
 Mathew R. Wallenfang
 Scott M. Walsh
 Daniel Warren
 Diane Wonsey
 Yixun Xu
 Shunbin Xu
 Jie Yang
 Bing Ye
 Hung-Hsiang Yu
 Jian Yu
 Sifang Zhou
 Teresa A. Zimmers-Koniaris

MASTER OF ARTS



Hua Chen
 Zina Deretsky
 Paul Fitzgerald

Wenjue Hu
 Lori R. MacDonald
 Helen A. Macfarlane

Kent R. Nilsson, Jr.
 Bang Thoai Wong

