

USC PDA Newsletter

Published for the University of Southern California's science, humanities and social science postdocs

USC POSTDOCTORAL ASSOCIATION EXECUTIVE COUNCIL 2012-2013

The USC PDA Executive Council organizes social and professional development events for the postdoctoral community at USC's University Park and Health Sciences Campuses, Children's Hospital Los Angeles, the House Research Institute and the Information Sciences Institute.



Dr. Rachel Britt, President

She is a Postdoctoral Fellow in Dr. Michael Lieber's lab at the Norris Comprehensive Cancer Center. The overall goal of her research is to determine why certain DNA regions in immune system cells are frequently broken and recombined in new configurations that lead the cells to become cancerous.



Dr. Reymundo Dominguez, Secretary

He is an NINDS Postdoctoral Fellow in the lab of Dr. Robert H. Chow at the Zilkha Neurogenetic Institute. The overall goal of his research is to study how membrane protein trafficking is linked to neuroprotective actions of steroid hormones.



Dr. Megan Rieger, HSC Networking Chair

She is a Postdoctoral Fellow in Dr. Zea Borok's lab at the Keck School of Medicine. She is supported by the Training Program in Viral and Chemical Carcinogenesis. She studies mechanisms regulating adult development and disease in the distal lung, particularly the function of FOXO1 in alveolar epithelial cell differentiation and tumor formation.



Dr. Vikram Sorathia, Professional Development Chair

He is a Postdoctoral Research Associate at The Center for Interactive Smart Oilfield Technologies – a joint USC and Chevron center of excellence for research and academic training. His work in Prof. Viktor Prasanna's lab in the Viterbi School of Engineering focuses on integrated optimization.



Dr. Kelly Kent, Public Relations Chair

She is a Postdoctoral Research Associate in Dr. Ruth Wood's lab in Cell and Neurobiology at the Keck School of Medicine. She studies the relationship between the neurohormone oxytocin and affiliative social behavior in mice as a means to understanding disorders with social deficit phenotypes like Autism Spectrum Disorder.



Dr. Tao Kwan, HRI Representative

She is a Postdoc at the House Research Institute. Her projects focus on development aspects of cell cycle regulation and epigenetic modifications of gene regulation as they relate to the inner ear, hearing loss and regeneration.



Dr. Ricky Sethi, Information Sciences Institute Representative

He is a Postdoctoral Fellow and the recipient of an NSF Computing Innovation Fellowship. He works with Dr. Yolanda Gil at the USC Information Sciences Institute where he conducts research in machine learning, computer vision, social computing, and science learning.



Dr. Susana Cavallero, Vice President

She is a Postdoctoral Research Associate in Dr. Henry Sucov's lab at the Broad Center for Regenerative Medicine and Stem Cell Research. Her research focuses on the identification of growth factors that influence the patterning of coronary blood vessels during heart development.



Dr. Gilly Koritzky, Treasurer

She is a Postdoctoral Research Associate in the lab of Dr. Antoine Bechara at the Brain and Creativity Institute. Her research focuses on decision-making and other cognitive factors related to overeating and obesity.



Dr. Ati Ghoreysi, UPC Networking Chair

She is a Postdoctoral Research Associate at SangerLab in Biomedical Engineering. Her research focuses on probabilistic spike-based models of sensorimotor control and has led to the replication of a variety of human motor behaviors in simulations and on a robot arm, such as restorative reflexes, risk involved responses and motor learning.



Dr. Harianto Tjong, Information Technology Chair

He is a Postdoctoral Research Associate in Dr. Frank Alber's lab in Molecular and Computational Biology. He studies the higher order genome organizations while developing computational methods to infer the 3D structure of nucleic chromosomes of multiple organisms.



Dr. Behzad Kharabi, CHLA Representative

He is a Postdoctoral Fellow in the lab of Dr. Markus Muschen at Children's Hospital Los Angeles. The overall goal of his research is to find novel mechanisms to target therapy-resistant leukemia.



Dr. Keith Woodhouse, Humanities and Social Sciences Representative

He is a Postdoctoral Fellow with the University of Southern California and Huntington Library Institute on California and the West. His research focuses on the history of radical environmentalism in the late-twentieth century.

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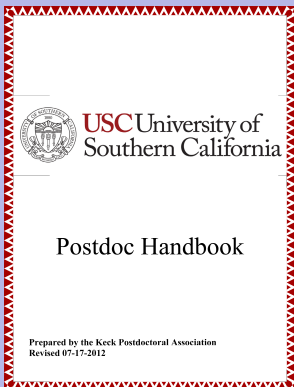
POSTDOCS NEWS

NEW POSTDOCTORAL BENEFITS PROGRAM- As of August 1st, 2012, The USC Office of Postdoctoral Affairs has removed discrepancies in benefits between Postdoctoral Research Associates and Postdoctoral Fellows. Prior to the change, Postdoctoral Research Associates received staff benefits while Fellows received student benefits. This discrepancy mostly affected those postdocs who were initially hired as Postdoctoral Research Associates and were then awarded an external fellowship. Despite the prestige of winning a fellowship and being supported with their own funds, these postdocs were automatically switched from "staff" to "student" status with the consequent reduction of their benefits. With the new plan, along with the prestige of a fellowship, fellows will receive benefits closely matched to those offered to faculty and staff, as will all newly hired Postdoctoral Research Associates and Teaching Fellows.

Postdoctoral Research Associates hired **BEFORE August 1st** will remain fully eligible for staff benefits, including the retirement plan. Faculty can **NOT** force postdocs to change to the new status and can **NOT** require postdocs to move to a lower benefit rate at the end of their current appointment.

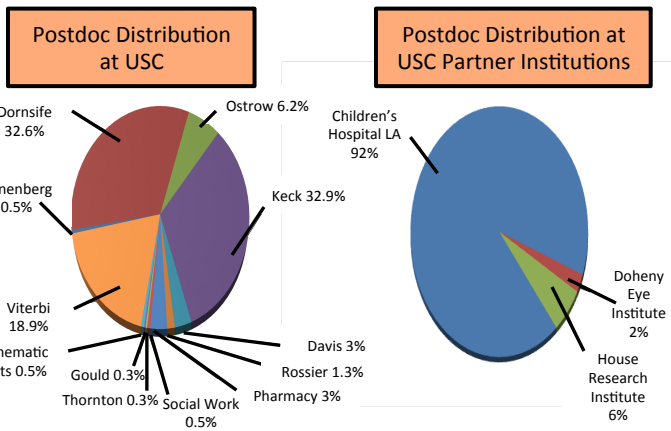
MINIMUM SALARY FOR POSTDOCTORAL SCHOLARS- As a reflection of NIH's new salary guidelines, the **minimum annual salary** for all first-year Postdoctoral Scholars will be **\$39,264** for FY13. This minimum applies to all newly appointed postdocs, and all renewed postdocs, on or after **August 1st, 2012**. Please make sure that your research administrators are aware of the new minimum salary. **If you are a postdoc and you do NOT receive at least the minimum annual salary please contact Dr. Mark Todd at the Office of Postdoctoral Affairs (mtodd@provost.usc.edu) or the USC Postdoctoral Association (uscpsda@usc.edu).**

POSTDOC HANDBOOK:
An updated version of the USC Postdoc Handbook is now available online! Full of **useful information** about USC, Los Angeles, and Professional Development. Soon it will include information about the new benefits plan! Visit the link below to download your copy today.



<http://uscpsda.org/usc-postdoc-handbook/>
Check back for new updates!

WHO WE SERVE: There are 371 Postdocs at USC and 168 at Partner Institutions (CHLA, HRI and DEI, ISI included in Viterbi):



TRAVEL AWARDS: This year the USC PDA distributed \$7,000 in travel funds to 10 deserving postdocs presenting their research at home and abroad!

Name	Department	Name	Department
Dr. Vasanthan Raghavan	Mathematics	Dr. Jason Chan	Zilkha Neurogenetic Institute
Dr. Yong Ho Kim	Medicine	Dr. Scott Applebaum	Biological Sciences
Dr. Julia Saltz	Molecular & Computational Biol.	Dr. Oscar Donoso	CHLA: Pediatrics
Dr. Paul Bryson	Mork Family Dept. Chem. Engineering	Dr. Eve Kandyba	Stem Cell and Developmental Biol.
Dr. Kelly Kent	Cell and Neurobiol.	Dr. Kye Il Joo	Mork Family Dept. Chem. Engineering

HELP NEEDED! Opening on USC PDA Executive Council to replace out-going UPC Networking Chair. Looking for Postdoc eager to add **Leadership Experience** to his/her resume by helping to organize PDA events on the University Park Campus. Please contact uscpsda@usc.edu with questions or to volunteer.

UPCOMING EVENTS

NATIONAL POSTDOC APPRECIATION WEEK

September 17th – 22nd

See Posted Flyers or visit

<http://uscpsda.org/> for Details of Multi-Campus Events!

BEHAVIOR BASED INTERVIEWING

October 23rd, 2012

Sue Robbins,
Ascend Training Solutions

EFFECTIVE RESEARCH MENTORING

November, 2012

Dr. Eric Hooper,
University of Wisconsin-Madison