



A Celebration of Leadership

Dr. Mordecai Blaustein, former Chairman of the Department of Physiology, was honored on October 29, 2003. Dr. Blaustein stepped down as Chairman of the Department of Physiology in September of this year, after twenty-four years of service.

The events began with a lecture at 4:00 p.m. in Davidge Hall. Dr. Mark Nelson, one of Dr. Blaustein's former students, who is now Professor and Chair of the Department of Pharmacology at the University of Vermont, presented a lecture entitled: "Tuning potassium channels to regulate blood pressure." Nelson's talk, a mixture of humor and science, began with a personal overview of Dr. Blaustein's early medical and scientific career and the discovery of sodium/calcium exchange. The talk progressed to the role of sodium/calcium exchange in smooth muscle function and, in particular, to the role of the exchanger in controlling calcium in the restricted space (the "Mordy Space") between the surface membrane and the sarcoplasmic reticulum. Dr. Nelson's talk highlighted the overall function of the space and presented key work from his own group concerning the role of local calcium sparks, potassium channels and membrane voltage. Dr. Nelson showed how those and other mechanisms work together with the sodium/calcium exchanger to provide the exquisite control of arterial tone required for normal circulatory function.

The lecture was followed by a reception in the Samuel D. Harris National Museum of Dentistry, where guests enjoyed drinks and hors d'oeuvres.

Following the lecture and reception, the Department of Physiology hosted a special reception and dinner in Blaustein's honor, at the National Museum of Visionary Art in Baltimore. Everyone enjoyed hors d'oeuvres and drinks



Dr. Joseph Kao, Associate Professor, toasts Dr. Blaustein at the Visionary Art Museum.

inside the museum, where guests could also tour the museum and see the exhibits. Everyone then adjourned into the Sculpture Barn for a lovely dinner, which was highlighted by words from some of Blaustein's very respected mentors, including Dr. Daniel Tosteson, Dean Emeritus of Harvard Medical School, Dr. Carlton ("Cuy") Hunt, Physiology Chair Emeritus, Washington University School of Medicine, and Dr. John M. Dennis, Dean Emeritus, University of Maryland School of Medicine. Some of the Department of Physiology faculty, Dr. Bruce Krueger, Dr. Robert Bloch, Dr. John Hamlyn and Dr. Joseph Kao spoke to the guests about their many wonderful experiences working with Blaustein during his twenty-four years as Department Chairman.

Mordecai Blaustein is now devoting full time to research and teaching. He remains in the Department as Professor of Physiology, and Director of the Maryland Center for Heart, Hypertension and Kidney Disease.



Dr. Mark Nelson presents lecture in Davidge Hall, as part of "A Celebration of Leadership" in Honor of Dr. Mordecai Blaustein.



Dr. Bruce Krueger, Professor, presents a plaque to Dr. Blaustein at the Visionary Art Museum, where a dinner was Hosted by the Department of Physiology in Dr. Blaustein's honor.

Dr. John Hamlyn, Professor, contributed to this article.

New Graduate Students Welcomed at Party in Their Honor

The Department held a party on Friday, October 3, 2003 to welcome the new Department of Physiology Graduate Students:

Ph.D. Students:

Scott Burks

Jackie Kerr

Hayley Mattison

M.D./Ph.D. Students:

Darryl Auston

David Edwards

Amanda Mason

M.S. Students:

My-Le Nguyen

Becky Saunders

Non-Degree:

Sandra Nauman



Scott Burks, Jackie Kerr, Amanda Mason, Hayley Mattison, Darryl Auston and David Edwards (left to right)



Jackie Kerr, Hayley Mattison and John Hamlyn (left to right)



Dana Yoo, Bob Koos and Scott Burks (left to right)

Joseph Mauban and Patrick Reed Successfully Defend

Joseph R. H. Mauban successfully defended his doctoral dissertation on October 14, 2003. The title of Dr. Mauban's dissertation was "Essential role of EDHF in the Initiation and Maintenance of Vasomotion in Rat Mesenteric Arteries." Dr. Gil Wier has been Dr. Mauban's advisor.

Patrick Reed successfully defended his thesis on October 21, 2003. The title of Dr. Reed's doctoral dissertation was "The Sarcolemma in Dystrophic Skeletal Muscle." Dr. Robert Bloch has been Dr. Reed's advisor.

Dr. Reed has been appointed as a Postdoctoral Fellow, working in Dr. Robert Bloch's laboratory.

Congratulations to Joseph and Patrick!



*This newsletter is published by the
Department of Physiology,
University of Maryland School of
Medicine:*

*Chair: Meredith Bond, Ph.D.
Editor: Katherine Frankel*

Faculty News

Paul Welling, M.D. was appointed to an NIH study section, Cell and Molecular Biology of the Kidney, for a term lasting 2003-2007.

Barbara Hansen, Ph.D. Received a competing renewal to an ongoing National Institute on Aging contract entitled "Obesity, Diabetes and Aging Animal Resource." The new grant covers the period 10/01/03—9/30/08. The 5-year award includes \$2,932,008 in total costs.

Larry Goldman, Ph.D. is co-PI on a new grant with Dr. Bill Balke. **Paul Welling, M.D.** is a Co-Investigator on this grant. The project title is "Ca Permeable Na Channels & Cardiac Cell Excitation." This is a four year award for \$1,485,000 total costs.

(Look for more news on grants in the next edition of the newsletter. Five new grants are very likely on their way, judging from some very excellent percentile scores just received. More details to follow!)

Michael Selmanoff will be performing with a new Maryland Chorus that T. Herbert Dimmock has organized.



The chorus has been working on an inaugural performance of Mendelssohn's Elijah. The performance will include over 100 musicians and a soloist from the Metropolitan Opera Company. The performance will be held on Sunday, December 21, 2003 at 7:00 p.m. at Chizuk Amuno Congregation, 8100 Stevenson Road in Baltimore.

Barbara Hansen Receives George Bray Founders Award

Dr. Barbara Hansen was selected as the 2003 recipient of the George Bray Founders Award.

This award recognizes significant contributions that advance the scientific or clinical basis for understanding or treating obesity and is made possible by an endowment from George

Bray, MD. Recipients receive a \$1,000 cash prize.

As recipient of this award, Dr. Hansen was invited to give a few remarks before a plenary session of the NAASO Annual Meeting on October 13, 2003.

Congratulations on a well-deserved honor, Dr. Hansen!

Mirka Lencesova and Martin Lences honored at Baby Shower

Dr. Blaustein's lab hosted a baby shower and farewell party in honor of Dr. Mirka Lencesova and Martin Lences in early September.

Mirka and Martin returned to their home country, Slovakia, in September. Members of Dr. Blaustein's lab have been in touch with Mirka and Martin since they returned to Slovakia, and they are doing very well. Martin has taken a new position very similar to the one he held here at Maryland. Mirka is due to deliver their baby in December, and they have been busy getting their apartment ready for their new arrival!

Mirka was first author of a paper that will be published in *Journal of Biological Chemistry*, entitled "Plasma Membrane-Cytoskeleton-Endoplasmic Reticulum Complexes in Neurons and Astrocytes." The paper was a collaborative effort between Dr. Blaustein's laboratory and Dr. Bloch's laboratory, and it was published electronically in October, ahead of the print version. The other authors included Andrea O'Neill, Wendy Resneck, Robert Bloch and Mordecai Blaustein.



The Blaustein lab: Moo Yeol Lee, Steve Kinsey, Mordy Blaustein, Mirka Lencesova, Martin Lences, Vera Golovina, Jin Zhang (back row, left to right)
Roberto Romani, Maurizio Cavalli, and Hong Song (bottom row, left to right)

Welcome to New Members of the Department of Physiology

Bradley McConnell— Research Associate working in Dr. Bond's laboratory.

Linda Lund— Research Associate working in Dr. Bond's laboratory.

Christina Zhang—Lab Assistant working in Dr. Thompson's laboratory.

Thomas Heinbockel—Assistant Professor working in Dr. Alger's research group.

David Lamkin— Laboratory Animal Technician working in Dr. Hansen's Laboratory.

Deborah Speert—Postdoctoral Fellow working in Dr. Peg McCarthy's laboratory.

Miranda Karson—Postdoctoral Fellow working in Dr. Alger's laboratory.

Thomas Heinbockel—Assistant Professor working with Dr. Alger.

Patrick Reed—promoted to Postdoctoral Fellow in Dr. Bloch's laboratory.

Jason Navari—Research Assistant in Dr. Bloch's laboratory.

Amparo Mazzocco-Spezia—Laboratory Assistant working with Dr. Golovina.

Meena Kahn—Laboratory Assistant working with Dr. Hamlyn.

Linda Corson—Statistical Data Analyst working in Dr. Hansen's Laboratory.



Happy Thanksgiving!