

Meet the First Authors

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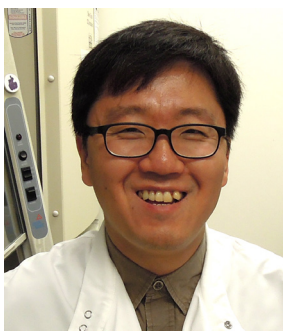
H3K27me3 and miRNA-Induced Cardiac Reprogramming (p 1403)

Dr Sophie Dal-Pra obtained her PhD from the University of Strasbourg, studying early embryogenesis of the zebrafish under the mentorship of Dr Thisse. She earned her BS and MS (both in Cellular Biology and Physiology), from the University Grenoble, France. Fascinated by the mechanisms of cell fate determination, she pursued her interest in the cardiovascular field as a senior research associate in the laboratory of Dr Dzau at Duke University. Her current work aims to characterize the epigenetic mechanism of direct cardiac reprogramming. The importance of epigenetic regulation for cell fate determination has just started to be unraveled, and she believes that future work in this area holds great promise for the improvement of direct cell reprogramming for cardiac regenerative therapy. In her free time, Sophie Dal-Pra likes to volunteer for the Compeer program at the Freedom House Recovery Center. This companionship program started in 1973 and combats the loneliness and isolation that people with severe mental illness and seniors at-risk often experience.



VEGFR3 Regulates Vascular Permeability (p 1414)

Krista Heinolainen is a PhD student at the University of Helsinki and Wihuri Research Institute. She earned her BS in Biochemistry at the University of Turku, Finland and her MS in the laboratory of professor Kari Alitalo at the University of Helsinki. Her research focuses on the role of the endothelial tyrosine kinase receptor VEGFR-3 in angiogenesis, vascular homeostasis, and permeability regulation. She is exploring the causes and consequences of edema in normal and disease-engaged tissues in order to facilitate the translation of research on VEGFs and VEGFRs into new therapeutics. When not exploring her passion for science, she loves to travel and practice ballet, thai boxing, and flow yoga.



Flow-Induced Lymphatic Growth (p 1426)

Dr Dongwon Choi earned his BS and PhD in Molecular Biology under the supervision of Dr Seongman Kang at Korea University, South Korea. During his graduate studies, he became interested in epigenetic regulation of tumor development. In 2010, Dr Choi joined Dr Hong's lab to study the molecular mechanism underlying lymphangiogenesis during development, wound healing, tumor spread, viral infection, and tissue regeneration. He is now a Research Associate in the Department of Surgery, Keck Scholl of Medicine, University of Southern California. Currently, his research focuses on the regulation of lymphangiogenesis by mechanotransduction. His life and research motto is, "Stop dwelling on the past and worrying about the future. Instead, take it one day at a time."



Transcellular Solute Transport in Lymphatics (p 1440)

Dr Valentina Triacca earned her BS and MS in Biomedical Engineering at the Polytechnic University of Milan. She obtained her PhD in Biotechnology and Bioengineering in the laboratory of Prof Melody Swartz at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Lausanne, where she developed her interests in vascular biology and medical device technology. Recently, she became passionate about understanding the pathophysiology of lymphedema and how to find better therapeutic approaches to treat this highly disabling disease. In 2015, she joined the research group of Prof Lucia Mazzolai at the Lausanne University Hospital where she is currently developing a new medical device for the treatment of lymphedema. She loves gardening, and her motto is "You can judge a good experimentalist by tasting his food!"

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4D Analysis of Regenerative Angiogenesis (p 1453)

John-Michael Arpino is a senior PhD candidate in the Department of Medical Biophysics under the supervision of Dr J. Geoffrey Pickering at the Robarts Research Institute, Western University, London, Canada. He earned his BMSc degree in Medical Biophysics – Medical Sciences Concentration from Western University in 2010. His main areas of interest include microcirculation, tissue regeneration, and developing real-time microscopy strategies. Research in these areas led to the current manuscript. His future goals are to advance regenerative approaches for individuals with ischemic disease and to develop innovative technologies for studying the microcirculation in patients with cardiovascular disease.



Angiogenic Mechanisms of Human CD34⁺ Exosomes (p 1466)

Dr Prabhu Mathiyalagan is currently pursuing his Postdoctoral training under the mentorship of Dr Susmita Sahoo at the Department of Cardiology, Mount Sinai, New York. He earned his MS in Biotechnology from Bharathidasan University, Tamilnadu, India. He received his PhD for his work on RNA epigenetics in heart disease from Monash University, Melbourne, Australia (Advisor: Dr Assam El-Osta). His research focuses on using stem cell exosomes as a treatment strategy to cure tissue dysfunction caused by ischemia. His immediate goal is to obtain competitive training in the field of cardiovascular and RNA biology that will ultimately lead to independent research. During his free time, Prabhu loves to play the piano, sketch in pencil, and spend time with his family and pet dog and fish. His favorite motto is “Science isn’t about *why*... it’s about *why not*.”

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