Acquire Valuable New Skills at AllerGen’s 2010 Trainee Symposium

AllerGen’s Fifth Annual Trainee Symposium 2010 is taking place this weekend! This year’s conference, Training for Excellence in Science and Society, is being held from June 6–8, 2010, at the Chestnut Conference Centre in downtown Toronto.

The preliminary program is available on AllerGen’s website, www.allergen-nce.ca. For those who have not already registered, please email Melissa Shuker, AllerGen Program Coordinator, at shuker@mcmaster.ca.

In addition, AllerGen is making available a half-day “Clinical Workshop for Non-clinicians” on Wednesday June 9, immediately following the Trainee Symposium. This workshop will focus on the diagnosis and treatment of asthma and allergy, including hands on demonstrations.

AllerGen Students and New Professionals (ASNPN) in attendance from February 7–9, 2010, 65 trainees (representing 35% of all AllerGen Students and New Professionals [ASNPN]) in attendance took the opportunity to learn from and network with national and international leaders in the field of allergy and related immune disease at AllerGen’s 5th Annual Innovation from Cell to Society Conference in Quebec City.

A record number of 51 posters were presented at this year’s Annual Research Conference. Forty were adjudicated: 7 in Programme A; 23 in Programme B; and 10 in Programme C. The remaining 11 posters displayed additional research findings.

The top two poster presenters in each Research Programme delivered oral presentations and responded to questions from the audience.

In Programme A, Salman Ali, a Master’s student from the University of British Columbia, supervised by Dr. Stuart Turvey, Assistant Professor, Division of Immunology and Infectious Diseases, Faculty of Medicine, Pediatrics, won first place for his poster titled Functional characterization of human variants of NFKBIA: a key regulator of immune responsiveness implicated in susceptibility to infectious and inflammatory disease. Michelle North, a PhD student from the University of Toronto, supervised by Dr. Jeremy Scott, Assistant Professor, Research Scientist, Divisions of Occupational and Respiratory Medicine, Department of Medicine, Faculty of Medicine, won second place for her poster titled Examining the role of arginase in air pollution-induced exacerbation of asthma.

In Programme B, Steven Maltby, a PhD student from the University of British Columbia, supervised by Dr. Kelly McNagny, Professor, Department of Medical Genetics, won first place for his poster presentation titled CD34 is Required for the Infiltration of Immature Cells into the Mouse Colon during DSS-induced Colitis. Ramses Ilarraza, a Post-Doctoral Fellow, from the University of Alberta, supervised by Dr. Darryl Adamko, Associate Professor, Departments of Pediatrics and Medicine, won second place for his poster Unique properties of RV in an in vitro model of asthma exacerbation.

In Programme C, Daniel Harrington, a PhD student from McMaster University, supervised by Dr. Susan Elliott, Professor, School of Geography and Earth Sciences, won first place for his poster presentation titled Who’s afraid of the big bad peanut? Perceived societal risks of food allergy and anaphylaxis from the perspective of affected and unaffected Canadians. Salma Bahreinian, a Master’s student from the University of Alberta, supervised by Dr. Anita Kozerskyj, Associate Professor, Department of Pediatrics, Faculty of Medicine, won second place for her poster titled Does Chronic Stress Predict the Development of Asthma in pre-adolescents?

The poster competition and oral presentations gave trainees the opportunity to showcase their research and receive feedback from AllerGen researchers. Congratulations to the winners and to all those who participated in the 2010 poster competition!

In this issue:

- The 2010 Trainee Symposium is taking place in Toronto on June 6–8, 2010 ........ 1
- AllerGen Trainees Shine at AllerGen’s 2010 Annual Research Conference ................. 1
- Karolinska Institutet (KI) Centre for Allergy Research Exchange ......................... 2
- AllerGen launches national competition for an Emerging Clinician-Scientist Research Fellowship ......................... 3
NCE Full Review

It is that time yet again in AllerGen’s life cycle… As AllerGen approaches the end of its first seven years of NCE support, research leaders and administrative centre staff are ramping up towards the development and submission of an exhaustive proposal outlining the Network’s progress to date and future strategic priorities in order to secure a second and final seven years of NCE support for the period 2012–2019.

In early July, research leaders will be meeting to map out future strategic priorities for research. Research Programme workshops will be held as follows over the balance of the year:

- Programme A: Monthly teleconference May 27, 2010
- Programme B/CIC: November 9–10, 2010, Sheraton Gateway, Toronto
- Programme C: October 4, 2010, Sheraton Gateway, Toronto

The Board of Directors will hold a strategic planning retreat on November 13 to 15, 2010 to finalize and approve the strategic priority directions.

Final documentation is due early August 2011.

In support of this exercise, all current and former AllerGen trainees and ASPNPN members are invited to submit testimonials about the impact that their AllerGen experience has had on their career development (between .5 and 1.5 pages in length) are asked to submit testimonials directly to Melissa Shuker, Programme Coordinator at shuker@mcmaster.ca. We look forward to hearing from you!
Recent AllerGen Publications

January 2010


February 2010


March 2010


AllerGen’s New Emerging Clinician-Scientist Research Fellowship

On April 9, 2010, AllerGen launched a national competition for an Emerging Clinician-Scientist Research Fellowship valued at $250,000 over two years. The goal of the AllerGen Emerging Clinician-Scientist Research Fellowship is to enable Canadian Clinical Immunologists and Allergists to pursue allergy, asthma and/or anaphylaxis academic research training immediately following their Clinical Immunology and Allergy sub-specialty training in order to:

- Strengthen the academic capacity of Canadian Clinical Immunology and Allergy sub-specialists.
- Increase Canadian capacity for translational Clinical Immunology and Allergy research, and
- Facilitate enhanced patient care through excellence in basic and clinical Allergy and related immune disease research.

This fellowship is aligned with AllerGen’s strategic objectives related to Canadian capacity building, which are to:

- Increase research capacity in the field of Clinical Immunology and Allergy,
- Foster and enhance academic innovation arising from basic and clinical research for medical students and postgraduate clinical trainees that pursue sub-specialties in allergy and clinical immunology, and
- Increase the number of medical students that pursue the Clinical Immunology and Allergy sub-specialty and undertake related basic and/or clinical research.

Eligible candidates are Canadian citizens or permanent residents who are clinicians that have completed Clinical Immunology and Allergy sub-specialty training within the past 18 months at an academic health sciences centre. Preference will be given to applicants whose host institution can confirm that the applicant has been identified for a junior faculty position following successful completion of the fellowship.

AllerGen Travel Awards Report

The following students are recent travel award recipients that have attended or will be attending major national and international conferences thanks to the partnered support from this AllerGen program.

**ICRH Young Investigator Forum (May 2010, Vancouver, BC)**

Ilan Asher, PDF, McMaster University, Supervisor, Dr. Judah Denburg

**Anaphylaxis Canada Spring Conference (May 2010 – Toronto, ON)**

Tahira Batool, PGY 2 Internal Medicine, Queen’s University

**Canadian Respiratory Conference (April 2010, Halifax, NS)**

Bonnie Chow, MA, McMaster University, Supervisor, Dr. Susan Elliott

**Canadian Domestic and International conference (May 2010 – Toronto, ON)**

Tracy Pitt, Fellow-in-Training, Winnipeg Children’s Hospital, Supervisor, Dr. Allan Becker

**American Thoracic Society International Conference (May 2010, New Orleans, LA)**

Meghan Brown, MSc, University of Toronto, Supervisor, Dr. Padmaja Subbarao

2011 Conference
February 6–8
Westin Bayshore
Vancouver, BC
Food Allergy Awareness Month Established

Anaphylaxis Canada applauds a motion by the Canadian Parliament recognizing May as Food Allergy Awareness Month. The Government of Canada will be commemorating the occasion by promoting a number of initiatives intended to support the 1.3 million Canadians who live with food allergies. This is the first year that a month has been designated for food allergy awareness in Canada.

This will hereafter be a permanently recognized occasion in Canada, helping to raise national awareness of allergic disease.

AllerGen NCE Inc.

Scientific Director and CEO: Dr. Judah A. Denburg, MD, FRCP(C)
Managing Director and COO: Diana Royce, EdD

All newsletter enquiries and comments should be sent to:
Jordan Moore, Manager, Communications (905) 525-9140 ext. 26641

AllerGen is supported by the Government of Canada through the Networks of Centres of Excellence program.

Update on AllerGen’s Canadian Allergy and Immune Diseases Advanced Training Initiative (CAIDATI) Awards

CAIDATI is intended to contribute to a significant increase in Canada’s research capacity in allergy, asthma, anaphylaxis and related immune/inflammatory processes through joint funding of new studentships in partnership with other (i.e., non-AllerGen-supported) programmes across Canada.

AllerGen launched its second CAIDATI call in December 2009. The deadline for studentship applications was March 1, 2010. AllerGen studentships will fund students to undertake research directly aligned with AllerGen’s research mandate priority areas.

On March 1, 2010, a total of 26 applications were received:

- PDF: 6
- PhD: 7
- MSc: 11
- Summer MD: 1
- Summer Undergraduate: 1

These applications will be adjudicated by the Advanced Education and Training Opportunities Advisory Committee (AETOAC) on June 20–21, 2010. The results of this competition will be made public early August 2010.