

PharmTox Fights COVID-19 Week of September 21-25, 2020

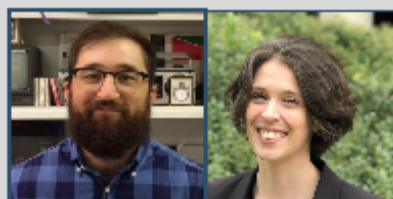
Dr. Fantegrossi Awarded DEA Contract



Associate professor, Bill Fantegrossi was recently awarded a contract with the U.S. Department of Justice, Drug Enforcement Administration. He will conduct studies on a series of drugs that are likely precursors for the classical hallucinogen lysergic acid diethylamide (LSD), and on a series of drugs with structural similarities to the psychostimulant / dissociative drug of abuse phencyclidine (PCP). The contract studies will use behavioral models of abuse liability to explore the *in vivo* pharmacology of these novel drugs, in comparison with their positive controls (LSD and PCP), generating data important for regulatory actions, including relative potency (ED_{50} values), relative effectiveness (E_{max} values), and onset and duration of action. New drugs of abuse are constantly appearing for sale on the streets and on the internet. The DEA contracts with laboratories to determine abuse liability of these novel compounds for use in regulatory decisions. Nice job, Dr. Fantegrossi!

Dr. Berquist and Dr. Brents Receive ABI Award

Assistant professors, Michael Berquist and Lisa Brents received an intramural ACRI/ABI Investigator-Initiated Research Grant Award! The award, titled "Adolescent alcohol use following prenatal opioid exposure and early life abuse", was one of three grants awarded of nineteen proposals. In this project, Drs. Berquist and Brents plan a first-in-kind study to establish a causal link between alcohol abuse susceptibility, prenatal opioid exposure, early life stress, and noradrenergic dysregulation in adolescent rats. They hypothesize that dysregulation of the noradrenergic system results in a greater susceptibility to develop an alcohol use disorder in adolescents who have experienced prenatal opioid exposure and adverse childhood experiences. The ACRI/ABI award includes two years of funding for a total cost of \$75,000. Congratulations to Drs. Berquist and Brents!



Dr. Rhee and Ms. Stewart Finish M2 Cardiovascular Module



Associate professor Sung Rhee co-directs the Cardiovascular (CV) Module for sophomore medical students with Dr. Allison Shaw-Devine from the Department of Internal Medicine. This year, the intense, five-week CV Module was conducted entirely virtually including online-proctored exams. Dr. Rhee was assisted by Ms. Sylvia Stewart, who he said was invaluable in delivering the newly designed online module successfully. We're proud of our educators!

Flashback: The Pharmacology 4 Amigos

Emeritus professors Michael Owens, Philip Mayeux, Dave Wessinger and Associate Provost for the NW campus, Jay Gandy, all joined the department within a few years of each other. They were all young contemporaries and started getting together for dinner a few times a year with their spouses. The tradition continues, although it's on hiatus due to COVID-19. They still enjoy each other's company and look forward to resuming the dinners again!

