

PharmTox Weekly Buzz

(A publication of the UAMS Department of Pharmacology and Toxicology)

Week of September 6-10, 2021

Save the Date!

Pharmacology and Toxicology Annual Fall Reception

Friday, September 24, 2021 @ 12:00 p.m.

This will be a virtual event.

Manuscript published by McGill Lab



The laboratory of assistant professor Mitch McGill recently published a paper in *Acta Pharmaceutica Sinica B*. “Exogenous phosphatidic acid reduces acetaminophen-induced liver injury in mice by activating hepatic interleukin-6 signaling through inter-organ crosstalk” is the last paper authored by former graduate student Melissa Clemens, before her untimely death in 2020. Melissa is first author on the publication and graduate student Joel Vazquez is co-author. The journal has an impact factor of 11.4.

The McGill laboratory demonstrated earlier that endogenous levels of phospholipid phosphatidic acid (PA) are important for liver regeneration signaling after acetaminophen (APAP) hepatotoxicity. However, the effect of treatment with exogenous PA, which is available over-the-counter as a dietary supplement, was unknown. Melissa found that exogenous PA reduces early liver injury after APAP overdose in mice by increasing expression of interleukin-6 (IL-6) in adipose tissue. The IL-6 is then secreted into the circulation and signals to the liver to upregulate protective genes. However, unlike endogenous PA, exogenous PA had no effect on liver regeneration at later time points. Collectively, the data indicate that PA supplements could be used in conjunction with current treatments to improve outcomes in APAP overdose and they provide more insight into the role of IL-6 in liver injury.



2021 Research Induction Ceremony: Monday September 13th



Congratulations to graduate students Lance Benson (mentor, Dr. Shengyu Mu) and Brian Parks (mentor, Dr. Lisa Brents) who passed their oral qualifiers and will be recognized at the annual Research Induction Ceremony on Monday, September 13 at 3 p.m. The ceremony will be held in Stephens Spine Institute, 12th Floor Auditorium, and also can be attended virtually via [Zoom](#). This formal event recognizes students who successfully passed their qualifying exam and their transition from student to PhD candidate. It marks the initiation of dissertation research, and at this point, the new PhD candidates embark on a career of discovery in biomedical and health research.