

“Dr. Basnakian Returns to the NIH DBDT Study Section ”

Dr. Basnakian recently served as a scientific reviewer for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Drug and Biologic Disposition and Toxicity (DBDT) study section. This marks the second time he has been invited to lend his expertise to this prestigious panel, which plays a critical role in the federal grant review process by ensuring the scientific merit of national research initiatives.

The DBDT study section is responsible for evaluating research applications focused on the disposition and safety of a broad spectrum of therapeutic agents. This includes traditional small molecule drugs and pro-drugs, as well as complex biological products like therapeutic proteins, gene therapies, and phytochemicals. During the review session, the panel examined proposals investigating how enzymatic and transporter processes influence the pharmacokinetic properties and toxicological profiles of these agents across various cell types and organ systems.

Beyond basic drug metabolism, the panel’s scope extends to the mechanisms of therapeutic agent-induced toxicity and the development of *in vitro*, *in vivo*, and mathematical models used to predict drug safety. The review process also considers how pharmacogenetics, environmental factors, and the human microbiome may impact the action or pharmacokinetics of drugs and biologics. By participating in this review, Dr. Basnakian helps maintain the highest standards of scientific rigor for NIH-funded research, ultimately advancing the field's understanding of how to make modern therapies safer and more effective.



“A New Masterpiece in B306 ”

Our office spaces are getting a fresh look thanks to the artistic talents of graduate student Bushra Zaman. We’re used to seeing her focused on her research, but Bushra recently picked up colored pencils to create a custom drawing for the B306 office suite.

This project was made possible by Dr. Rusch, who stepped in to provide the art supplies and the support to get the creative process moving. The goal behind the piece is a thoughtful one: the department is looking to gradually replace the older paintings in the B306 suite with original, personal artwork that better reflects our community.

The new drawing is being framed and then will be ready for visitors to view in B306. Bushra shared that she is incredibly grateful for Dr. Rusch’s kindness and encouragement throughout the process. Be sure to swing by the suite to check out the new installation and see Bushra’s impressive contribution to the department!



“Breakfast is Back!”

A big thank you to everyone who attended the department breakfast on Thursday morning! It was great to see such a strong turnout and to have everyone back together for the return of this monthly tradition. These gatherings are an important way for us to step away from our desks and labs to connect as a department. As we look ahead to keep this momentum going, we are officially opening the call for a host for our next gathering on Thursday, May 21st. Hosting a breakfast is a fantastic way for your lab to showcase its team spirit and contribute to the collaborative atmosphere of the department. Whether you want to keep it simple with coffee and pastries or bring in a unique spread, the goal is simply to provide a casual environment for connection. If your lab is interested in hosting next month, use the sign up link in the distributed email!

