Honors & Awards:

Dr. Carole Oskeritzian was awarded a new R21 grant by NIH/NIAMS entitled “Mast Cell and sphingosine-1-phosphate functions in atopic dermatitis pathogenesis: a role for microRNA?” Dr. Oskeritzian serves as PI and Dr. Mitzi Nagarkatti serves as a co-I. The award was funded on April 1, 2016 for two years and a total amount of $367,126.

Dr. Angela Murphy received an R21 award from the National Cancer Institute (NCI) entitled “Linking Macrophages to Gut Microbiota in Obesity Enhanced Colon Cancer”. Collaborators on the grant include Dr. Cory Robinson (WV School of Osteopathic Medicine), Dr. Udai Singh (PMI), Dr. Ioulia Chatzistamou (PMI), Dr. Traci Testerman (PMI) and Dr. Edsel Pena (Statistics). This is a 2 year award that started on April 1st in the amount of $331,862.

Dr. Dev Karan received an NIH R01 grant from National Cancer Institute on “Modulation of host intrinsic immunity to reduce prostate cancer health disparity”. The total project award is $1,547,965. Prostate cancer is a significant health problem and second leading cause of cancer-related deaths among men in the United States. Unfortunately, African American (AA) men are disproportionately affected by prostate cancer with considerably high incidence and as much as twice the mortality rate than Caucasians. To study the cause of prostate cancer disparity and to improve therapeutic efficacy, Dr. Karan will use epigenetic approaches to investigate the role of tumor infiltrating immune cells in the tumor microenvironment, and use immunotherapy for augmenting anti-tumor immunity. A novel combination of epigenetics and immunotherapy is expected to kill aggressively growing prostate cancer as often seen in AA men. Dr. Michael Wyatt from the Department of Drug Discovery and Biomedical Sciences in the College of Pharmacy is a collaborator on this study.

Dr. Prakash Nagarkatti received a Lifetime Career Achievement Award from the Society of Toxicology. The award was presented at the Immunotoxicology Specialty Section of Society of Toxicology Annual Meeting held in New Orleans, LA on March 13-17 and is named after Dr. Jeff Vos who is considered as the Father of Immunotoxicology.

Dr. Chatzistamou has been awarded an ASPIRE-I, Sub-Track IIA grant from the Office of the Vice President for Research. The title of the project is “Assessment of the anticancer activity of a novel multi-chemokine antibody for breast cancer management.”

Mary Harrell, an undergraduate researcher and Magellan Scholar in Dr. Gomez’s lab, won second place in the morning poster session at Discovery Day for her work entitled “Characterization of the toll-like receptor 4 pathway in human skin mast cells”. Mary graduated with a Bachelor’s of Science degree in Biomedical Sciences from USC in May 2016.

Dr. Kandy Velázquez (Murphy Lab) received an ASPIRE-I, Track 2 award from the Office of the VP for Research entitled “The Effects Of Ojeok-San On Neuro-Immune Interactions In Colon Cancer”.

Yvon Woappi received the top prize for the 11:30 AM Biomedical Science oral presentations at the 2016 Graduate Student Day and went on to receive the first place prize for all disciplines.

Kristin Lescalleet (Murphy lab) successfully defended her M.S. thesis entitled ‘Prospective assessment of health disparities and injury risk factors at basic combat training at Fort. Jackson’. Kristin will be attending D.O. School in the fall.

Cody McHale, a graduate student in Dr. Gomez’s lab, was selected to give an oral presentation at the Annual Meeting of the American Association of Immunologists (AAI) in Seattle, WA. The title of his presentation was “Human skin mast cells constitutively express gp130 and functional IL-6 receptor”. In addition, Cody was awarded a 2016 AAI Trainee Abstract Award to attend the meeting.

Dr. Berlin Londono-Renteria and Dr. Tonya Colpitts were awarded an ASPIRE II grant titled “Human – mosquito complement – like proteins cross talk in Flavivirus responses.” The aim of this project is to evaluate the effect of human complement proteins on the immune response of mosquitoes during dengue virus infection.
Dr. Reilly Enos (Murphy Lab) received an ASPIRE-I, Track 2 award from the Office of the VP for Research entitled “The role of PKC-Theta in obesity-induced hepatic insulin resistance”.

Cody McHale, a graduate student in Dr. Gomez’s lab, won first place in the poster competition in his section at Graduate Student Day.

Dr. Angela Murphy received an ASPIRE-I award from the office of the VP for research entitled “Maternal Obesity Induced Transgenerational Colon Cancer Risk”. Co-investigators on this grant included Dr. Ioulia Chatzistamou and Dr. Traci Testerman.

Pegah Mehrpouya-Bahrami received the American Association of Immunologists (AAI) Trainee Poster Award, AAI annual meeting, Seattle, WA, 2016,

Pegah Mehrpouya-Bahrami received a laboratory Travel award to American Association of Immunologists (AAI) meeting, Seattle, WA, 2016, with Dr. Udai Singh.

**News and Updates:**

Dr. Carole Oskeritzian served as a reviewer for the NIH/NIAID Asthma and Allergic Diseases Cooperative Research Center (U19) grants, Special Emphasis Panel (ZAI1-LAR-I-M1), March 15-17, 2016, Potomac, MD.

Dr. Ioulia Chatzistamou served as a Judge for Oral Presentations at the Graduate Student Day at USC on April 8th.

Dr. Angela Murphy was invited to give a talk at the Cancer Prevention and Control Program Colloquium Series in January 2016. Her talk was entitled “Behavioral Interventions in Animal Models of Cancer”.

Dr. Udai Singh served on the National Institutes of Health (NIH) “Cellular and Molecular Immunology A” study section on February 25-26, 2016.

Dr. Berlín Londono-Renteria (Colpitts Lab) was invited by the Division of Parasitic Diseases & Malaria – Malaria Branch at the Center for Disease Control of Atlanta to give a seminar on the “Epidemiological Uses for Mosquito Saliva” in February.

On the mornings of 13 and 14 April, in celebration of National Medical Laboratory Professionals Week, the USCSOM MSIG for Pathology offered KrispyKreme® doughnuts and coffee, as well as promotional “SWAG” from the American Society for Clinical Pathology, together with pamphlets and booklets on a career in anatomic pathology and clinical pathology. The invited speakers for a “mini-boot camp” on laboratory medicine were Dr. Allan Brett, the Orlando Benedict Mayer Professor of Medicine at USC, Director of the Division of General Internal Medicine, Vice Chair of the Department of Medicine, and Editor-in-Chief of the New England Journal of Medicine Journal Watch General Medicine, who held an interactive session on liver enzyme tests, Dr. B. James McCallum, Assistant Professor of Clinical Internal Medicine at USC, Associate Director of Primary Care and Subspecialty Medicine for Inpatient Services and Clinical Attending at the Wm. Jennings Bryan Dorn VA Medical Center (DVAMC), Associate Chief of Staff for Education at the DVAMC, and a Diplomate of the American Board of Clinical Lipidology, who held an interactive session on lipid profiles, and Dr. Christine Wheeler, Clinical Assistant Professor in our department, as well as a diplomate of the American Board of Pathology in Blood Banking and Transfusion Medicine, who held a talk on basic aspects of transfusion medicine.

In February, Dr. Robert Startz presented a seminar titled “Diseases of the Nineteenth Century” at USC Alumni Center. The presentation began with Lewis and Clark expedition and medicine on their journey and ended with examples of diseases that were present then and now. In addition to the presentation the attendees were allowed to exam plasticized specimens. Dr. Startz received rave reviews from the class, “Your class was terrific. We’d love to have you back again!” He will be returning to present the original “PILOT” and additional lectures on “Diseases of Famous People”.

Dr. Carole Oskeritzian also served as a reviewer for the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG, German Research Foundation), April 11, 2016, Bonn, Germany.

Dr. Mitzi Nagarkatti was a member of the NIH Outstanding Investigator Award Initiative, Special Emphasis Review Panel that took place in Washington, DC on March 22-24, 2016.

Dr. Ioulia Chatzistamou served as a reviewer of abstracts for presentations for the 15th Panhellenic Meeting of Pathology that will be held on 11-15 June 2016 at Ioannina, Greece.

Dr. Angela Murphy served as a judge for the Outcomes-Quality session at the Medical Scholarship Day of Focus on April 22, 2016 at the SC State Museum, Columbia, SC.
Dr. Carole Oskeritzian served as a judge for the inaugural Medical Scholarship Day of Focus, Therapeutic Effectiveness session, April 22, 2016, SC State Museum, Columbia, SC.

Dr. Udai Singh served as a Judge of poster presentations at Discovery Day on April 22nd 2016.

Muthanna Sultan, Osama Abdulla, and Zinah Al-Ghazi (Nagarkatti Lab) served as judges for Discovery Day on April 22nd 2016.

During the Spring 2016 school semester the USCSOM Medical Student Interest Group (MSIG) for Pathology, this academic year with Class of 2018 student leaders Ross Tanis and Jacob Nelson, and with Dr. James Catropp as faculty advisor, hosted and catered for interested M1 and M2 students:

- 19 January lunch talk on a career in dermatopathology given by Dr. Alfonso Gonzalez of the Columbia Skin Clinic.

- 22 February lunch talk on a career in forensic pathology by Dr. Bradley Marcus, Chief Medical Examiner for Richland County.

Dr. Chatzistamou served as a Reviewer of grant applications for USC-SOAR IRG Grants.

Dr. Angela Murphy was invited to give a talk at the Department of Exercise Science Seminar Series in February 2016. The talk was entitled “Linking Obesity to Cancer”.

Dr. Carole Oskeritzian served as a judge in the Molecular Biology Session at the 2016 South Carolina Academy of Science Annual Meeting on April 16th at Winthrop University, Rock Hill, SC.

Publications:


Singh UP, Singh NP, Guan H, Murphy EA, Price RL, Fayad R, Nagarkatti M, Nagarkatti PS. Chemokine and cytokine levels in Inflammatory Bowel Disease patients. Cytokine 2016 Jan;77:44-9.


**Presentations:**

Bam M, Nagarkatti PS, Nagarkatti M. Argonaut and Dicer-mediated dysregulated expression of miRNAs in the PBMCs from PTSD patients. The Society on NeuroImmune Pharmacology (SNIP) 22nd Scientific Conference, April 6-9, Krakow, Poland.


Kumaraswamy Naidu C, Nagarkatti P, Nagarkatti M. Molecular modeling of AhR ligand binding domain interactions with 2,3,7,8-tetrachlorodibenzo-p-dioxin, Indole-3-carbinol and Resveratrol. 55th Annual Meeting of the Society of Toxicology, 2016, 13–17 March, New Orleans, USA.


Sultan MA, Alghetaa, H, Mohammad, A., Busbee, B, Nagarkatti, P. and Nagarkatti, M. Endocannabinoids as anti-inflammatory agents in Acute Lung Injury: Role of microRNA. Graduate Student Day, University of South Carolina, April 8th, 2016.


Cranford TL, Enos RT, Velazquez KT, McClellan JL, Davis JM, Singh UP, Nagarkatti M, Nagarkatti PS, Robinson CM, Murphy EA. Role of Monocyte Chemoattractant Protein-1 on inflammatory processes and metabolic dysfunction following high-fat diet feedings in the FVB/N strain. Medical Scholarship Day of Focus, South Carolina State Museum, Columbia SC, April 22nd, 2016.


Wedman PA, Aladhami A, Chumanevich AP, Fuseler JW, Oskeritzian CA. Mast cells and sphingosine-1-phosphate are linked to a previously undescribed cellular infiltration of the hypodermis driving pre-symptomatic atopic dermatitis. Medical Scholarship Day of Focus, South Carolina State Museum, Columbia SC, April 22nd, 2016.


Wedman P, Castleberry KM, Chumanevich AP, Fuseler JW and Oskeritzian CA. Skin ceramide profiling points to apoptosis as an early pathogenic clue of atopic dermatitis. Graduate Student Day, University of South Carolina, April 8th, 2016.


Choudhari A. Poster presentation, Medical Scholarship Day of Focus, April 22, 2016, Columbia, SC. Dietary agent with aferin-A regulates monocyte derived inflammatory cytokines via suppression of IL-1beta.

Hosseinipour M. Poster presentation, Medical Scholarship Day of Focus, April 22, 2016, Columbia, SC. SIX1 overexpression extends the lifespan, promotes epithelial-mesenchymal transition and results in decreased p53 levels in normal human keratinocytes.

Bader, J. Poster presentation, Medical Scholarship Day of Focus, April 22, 2016, Columbia, SC. Macrophage depletion decreases inflammation and tumorigenesis in the azoxymethane and dextran sulfate sodium mouse model of colon cancer.

Penta, K. Poster presentation, Medical Scholarship Day of Focus, April 22, 2016, Columbia, SC. Effect of Arsenic on Inflammation and Type 2 Diabetes.

Barn, M, Nagarkatti, M, and Nagarkatti, PS. Epigenetic regulation of pro-inflammatory cytokines in peripheral blood mononuclear cells from patients with Post-traumatic stress disorder. Medical Scholarship Day of Focus, South Carolina State Museum, Columbia SC, April 22, 2016.
McHale C. Poster presentation, Medical Scholarship Day of Focus, April 22, 2016, Columbia, SC. Human skin mast cells constitutively express gp130 and functional IL-6 receptor.

Woappi, Y; Creek, K; Pirisi L. Stem cell properties of normal human keratinocytes influence transformation responses to HPV16. Graduate Student Day. Columbia, SC. April 8th, 2016.

Woappi, Y; Creek, K; Pirisi L. Stem cell properties of normal human keratinocytes influence transformation responses to HPV16. American Association for Cancer Research, New Orleans, LA. April 19th, 2016.

Woappi, Y; Creek, K; Pirisi L. Stem cell properties of normal human keratinocytes influence transformation responses to HPV16. Medical Scholarship Day of Focus, South Carolina State Museum, Columbia SC, April 22nd, 2016.

Mehrpouya-Bahrami, P, Nagarkatti, M, and Nagarkatti, PS. Blockage of CB1 cannabinoid receptors is associated with growth of the gut bacterium Akkermansia muciniphila and attenuation of diet-induced obesity. Medical Scholarship Day of Focus, South Carolina State Museum, Columbia SC, April 22, 2016.

