



LSM Newsletter, 11/2015, No. 3

LSM SPEAKER CHANGE

At the beginning of this year, Prof. Jürgen Soll stepped back from his position as speaker of the LSM. Prof. Soll joined the LMU in 2001 as a Professor for Plant Biochemistry and Physiology. He initiated the establishment of the LSM in 2009 and was the head of the LSM for the past 6 years. The LSM has offered many advantages both for the PhD students joining it, and also for the entire Faculty of Biology, which can refer to the graduate program when applying for funding (e.g. SFB applications). After several years of third-party funding, the LSM is now financed exclusively by the faculty, which was realized because of Prof Soll's unwavering commitment to keeping the program running. The LSM hereby wants to thank Prof. Soll for all his efforts and achievements in establishing and supporting the Graduate Program during his 6 years of tenure.

The position of the LSM speaker is now held by Prof. Marc Bramkamp, who joined the LMU in 2012. As his predecessor, Prof. Bramkamp places great importance on the LSM graduate school as an integral part of the Faculty of Biology.

ABOUT THE LSM

The Graduate School Life Science Munich (LSM) is an international doctoral program at the LMU which includes the Faculties of Biology, Chemistry, Biochemistry and Pharmacy and more than 35 research groups. For detailed information visit www.lsm.bio.lmu.de.

NUMBERS ABOUT THE LSM

Currently, there are 56 students in the LSM, 43 % with an international background. The LSM includes students from 17 different countries. 35 students have graduated from the LSM since 2011 to date.

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From Molecules to Systems:
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF LIFE SCIENCES MUNICH
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NEWSLETTER



Comments regarding the newsletter: erpf@bio.lmu.de,
Aline.Sandre@bio.lmu.de, bielmeier@bio.lmu.de,
nagler.christina@gmail.com, sebastian.konrad@bio.lmu.de

His motivation in taking over the position as LSM speaker lies in the interdisciplinary nature of the LSM. Students with different scientific and cultural backgrounds, but a common interest in life sciences, are brought together by the program enabling them to benefit from each other's perspectives and knowledge. Being well integrated in the faculty, the LSM further provides PhD students the possibility to share expertise and technical equipment.



Prof. Dr. Marc Bramkamp, the new LSM speaker

LSM transferable skills and method courses are not only advantageous for preparing PhD students for the job market, but group leaders also benefit from the acquired skills that are then brought into their labs. In the future, Prof. Bramkamp aims to implement the newly passed study regulations more consistently, improve the administration process and consolidate good ideas that have proven to be valuable.

THANK YOU, ADDIE!

After 3 years as head of the LSM student council, Addie Kolybaba-Stewart hands over her work to Chris Mulholland. Over the last years, Addie put great efforts into establishing the student council organization into what it is today. Due to her work, it is possible to implement students' ideas into the reformation of the LSM curriculum. A big part of the success of the 2013 Open House Day has also to be attributed to Addie's commitment and organizational talent. We thank Addie for all the work she has done for the LSM! We wish you all the best for the last part of your PhD and your future career!

LSM INTERVIEW WEEKS

In 2015, the LSM held two a two application rounds. The regular application round open for external and internal candidates in November 2014. In total, 323 candidates registered, of which only 138 fully submitted their applications. From this pool of applicants, 25 were invited for the interview days in March, but only 22 were courageous enough to attend. Eventually, the LSM accepted 13 new students with 11 students being internal candidates. The second application round this year was held in July and was specifically dedicated to internal candidates, who otherwise would have to wait for the next winter application round. With the 8 more successful applications of this round, we were able to welcome in total 21 new LSM students this year. Note that the application round for 2016 is already open and will close on

December, 31st. Selected candidates will visit us during the interview days in February 24th-26th. For any questions regarding the application and interview week, visit the LSM webpage (www.lsm.bio.lmu.de).

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Did you publish something special? Then apply for the new LSM publication prize! Submit your publication together with a small paragraph (in PDF form) to the LSM Office (lsm@bio.lmu.de), where you explain what you did, why it is an important and special in your own field of biosciences. The publication date has to be within 2015. Application deadline is March, 31st 2016. The LSM publication price is notated with 400 € and the winner will be announced at the next Biocenter Open house day in July 2016.


LSM PUBLICATIONS

Publications of LSM students in the last 6 months:

Pérez-Escobar, O.A., Balbuena, J.A., and Gottschling, M. (2015). Rumbling orchids: How to assess divergent evolution between chloroplast endosymbionts and the nuclear host. *Syst. Biol.*
 Guefrachi, I., Pierre, O., Timchenko, T., Alunni, B., Barrière, Q., Czernic, P., Villaécija-Aguilar, J.-A., Verly, C., Bourge, M., Fardoux, J., et al. (2015). BradyrhizobiumBcIA Is a Peptide Transporter Required for Bacterial Differentiation in Symbiosis with Aeschynomene Legumes. *Mol Plant Microbe In.*
 Huylmans, A.K., and Parsch, J. (2015). Variation in the X:Autosome Distribution of Male-Biased Genes among *Drosophila melanogaster* Tissues and Its Relationship with Dosage Compensation. *Genome Biol Evol* 7, 1960–1971.
 Nickel, C., Soll, J., and Schwenkert, S. (2015). Phosphomimicking within the transit peptide of pHCF136 leads to reduced photosystem II accumulation in vivo. *FEBS Lett.* 589, 1301–1307.


LSM RETREAT

This year, the LSM retreat took place from 13th to 16th of May at Haus Bergsee, which is located above lake Spitzingsee in the Schliersee mountains. On the first day, LSM students organized a team building workshop in order to get to know each other. Additionally, Dr. Simon Golin, the lecturer of the workshop 'career planning for PhD students' introduced himself. In the following two days, he provided valuable tips on application writing and gave general information on how to act in key situations during interviews and conferences. Moreover, the LSM students presented several posters and talks and all retreat participants could vote for the best performances. Samy Carbonnel (1st), Inga Sjuts (2nd), Ivica Kristoficova (3rd) won prizes for the best posters and Andrea Künzel (1st), Christina Nagler (2nd), Claudia Vilhena and Cathi Nickel (3rd) for the best talks. The highlights of the retreat were the social activities including archery, sightseeing in the mountains, socializing after dinner and the 'retreat runners' group.



This year's AGM (Annual General Meeting) was held on the 22nd of July. All LSM students and group leaders were highly encouraged to join this event in order to discuss current LSM topics. This year, Prof. Marc Bramkamp introduced himself as the new speaker of the LSM and addressed several topics. These included the new LSM study regulations, which allow students to enroll officially in the LSM graduate program. In addition, he put out the idea of a conference organized by LSM students that would give the students the possibility to invite


ALUMNI: QUESTIONNAIRE TO FORMER LSM STUDENTS

Christina Schempp is a former student council member and graduated in the Lab of Angelika Vollmar at the Faculty of Chemistry and Pharmacy in 2014.

When did you graduate? March 2014

What was the topic of your PhD thesis? The V-ATPase inhibitor Archazolid - Impact on anoikis resistance in metastatic cancer cells

Where are you currently living? Mannheim

What are your current professional pursuits? What is your job? I work at Roche Diagnostics GmbH in the "Case Investigation and Resolution" as Management Startup Trainee. We are responsible for complaint-handling concerning middle and high volume clinical chemistry analyzers in Roche professional diagnostics.

What are your daily tasks and responsibilities? I am in the trainee program but without rotations in different departments. Here I can complete different trainings concerning management and leadership skills. My daily work is in the global complaint handling unit. We are responsible for complaints concerning the clinical chemistry applications run on roche analyzer used for patients blood, urin and liquor diagnostics. If problems worldwide pop up which can not be fixed locally or might be related to a problem at our side these cases are escalated to my department and we try to find a resolution. This also involves triggering corrective and preventive actions.

important scientists and to get insight into event organization. Subsequently, the former student council head Addie Kolybaba presented recent work of the LSM student council including the new TAC guidelines, which are now available on the LSM webpage. Eventually, the new student council members were voted in. The event closed with a barbecue, which unfortunately had to take place indoors due to rain just when we were about to start the grill. Let's hope for better weather on the next year's AGM and summer barbecue!



How long did it take for you to find a job after your PhD? 9 month

What were the reasons why did you move to a new field? I thought that industry can give me more job security and different opportunities than academia.

That in pharmaceutical industry I have more freedom to change the topic or field I am in.

What do you like about your job? What could be improved or changed? I like that I am still close to science as I am confronted with a lot of scientific problems when it comes to complaint handling. I like that it is quite an interface position, where I get the chance to work with a lot of different people in different business areas. As I am doing the job as a trainee, I also like the perspectives I get out of it. On the other hand, I really had to get used to having an office job and to sit at my desk the whole day. Decisions are not that easy and fast any more as many more people are involved and more regulations have to be considered.

Your professional advice to PhD students that want to pursue a similar career path? For me, it really payed off to wait for the right job and not take the first one that was offered to me. Even if this meant moving to another city. Of course this was hard as there is always fear of not finding anything suitable. But sitting down, scanning through job offers, as well as applying for different kinds of jobs and even when lucky enough having interviews, helped me to get a clearer picture about what I want to do and what I definitely did not want to do.