Upcoming Events

Genome editing: where do we draw the line?
9 October 2017, London, UK

Bioscience Careers Day 2017
14 October 2017, London, UK

Hydrogen Bonds & DNA
10 November 2017, Nottingham, UK

Synthetic Biology UK 2017
27–28 November 2017, Manchester, UK

Understanding translational research
30 November – 1 December 2017, London, UK

New Approaches for Investigating Nascent Peptide Folding
11–13 December 2017, Cambridge, UK

Capture Hi-C: Practical approaches to mapping genome-wide regulatory interactions
13 December 2017, London, UK

Biochemical Basis of Respiratory Disease
8–10 January 2018, Nottingham, UK

Shaping your career in molecular biosciences: taking a wider view
15 January 2018, London, UK

The Dynamic Cell III
19–21 March 2018, Manchester, UK

Evolving molecular bioscience education
April 2018, Chester, UK

New Horizons in ESCRT Biology
17–20 April 2018, London, UK

30th Annual UK RNA Polymerase focused meeting
19–20 April 2018, London, UK

Experimental techniques for studying proteins and lipids in biological membranes
Summer, Birmingham, UK

83rd Harden Conference Autophagy - from Molecules to Disease II
3–6 June 2018, Warwick, UK

Meeting Reports

British Society for Matrix Biology Spring meeting: Matrix proteoglycans – active participants in cell-ECM communication

3–5 April 2017, St Catherine’s College Oxford, UK

The Spring British Society for Matrix Biology meeting, supported by the Biochemical Society, focused on how extracellular matrix proteoglycans modulate cell physiology in health and disease. Talks from invited speakers highlighted the important roles that proteoglycans play in regulating cell behaviour in health and disease.

The 2017 Fell-Muir Award was presented to Cay Kiely (University of Manchester), in acknowledgement of her outstanding contributions to the field of matrix biology. Her keynote lecture described her work on fibrillin and its role in elastic tissue form and function.

Young scientists co-chaired the sessions and presented 8 of the talks selected from abstracts. Karen Onions (University of Bristol) won the oral presentation prize for her talk on use of VEGF-C to target endothelial glycocalyx dysfunction. There were 60 posters at the meeting, with Laura Ferreras (Newcastle University) and Andreas Romaine (University of Oslo) winning prizes for their posters on HS-3-O-sulfotransferase in renal fibrosis, and syndecan-4 in cardiac hypertrophic remodeling, respectively.

Feedback from the meeting has been overwhelmingly positive, with researchers enjoying the opportunity to hear about cutting-edge research and state-of-the-art analysis techniques in the glyobiology field.

Linda Troeberg (University of Oxford, UK)

International Conference of Hydrogen Deuterium Exchange Mass Spectrometry

15–17 May 2017, Gothenburg, Sweden

The aim of the conference was to bring a global community together and hear the latest research using Hydrogen Deuterium Exchange Mass Spectrometry. Over 150 people from around the globe attended, with talks ranging from academic investigations exploring the latest advances in mass spectrometry technique, to large-scale industrial bio-pharmaceutical applications.

Preceding the conference was a Workshop, where there were three sessions focusing on sample preparation, data collection and data analysis.

The conference opened with a retrospective of the field from Walter Englander (University of Pennsylvania), a seminal scientist in the field of HDX who has been actively pushing the technique forward for the past 50 years. Other invited speakers included Perdita Barran (University of Manchester), Kasper Rand (University of Copenhagen), John Engen (Northeastern University), Thomas Jørgensen (University of Southern Denmark) and Patrick Griffin (Scripps Research Institute). A wide range of topics was discussed, with the possible increases in resolution of the technique through either electron-based fragmentation methods, detail inspection of spectrum distribution, or subtraction of overlapping peptides being a recurring source of debate.

Ruth Knox (Derek Wilson Lab of York University, Canada) won the poster prize for her poster entitled ‘Discovery of active site conformational dynamics of TEM-1 beta-lactamase’.

Glenn Masson (St Catharine’s College, Cambridge, UK)

Have an idea for an event?
Submit your event proposal by 6 November 2017
www.biochemistry.org/Events/ProposeanEvent
Student Ambassador Focus - Dragana Catici

Dragana Catici graduated from University of Worcester with a degree in Biology. Following that she moved to the University of Bath, where she completed her Masters in Protein Structure and Function. Dragana is currently a PhD student at the University of Bath, working on understanding protein flexibility and ligand induced protein conformational change in signalling hubs.

What motivated you to become a scientist?
As a child, I was always fascinated by nature. My grandad would take me on long walks around forests or fields, and would teach all about the animals and flowers that we saw around us. I was also quite lucky to have had great science teachers at school too. They were very enthusiastic and very passionate about making us all understand and appreciate the beauty and wonders of science. At university, the lecturers were very encouraging and gave me plenty of opportunities to develop technical skills and taught me not be scared of failure. I remember my first biochemistry lectures, learning how important proteins are for the proper functioning of cells and organisms, and have been curious ever since.

What are you reading at the moment?
As a final year PhD student, most of my reading at the moment is papers about protein structure and dynamics! However, I do try and find time to read for pleasure, and currently on my nightstand I have Bram Stokers' Dracula, and Richard P. Feynmans' Six Not-So-Easy Pieces: Einstein’s Relativity, Symmetry, and Space-Time.

What’s on your lab bench/desk right now?
A manuscript waiting for submission, showing how the physical parameters of the intracellular environment affect the thermodynamics of protein conformational change. Hopefully the reviewers will like it – fingers crossed!

What’s been the greatest challenge in your career so far?
Understanding work-life balance was definitively a struggle for me during the first year of my PhD. I was very lucky to be part of a large research group, and speaking to people that have already gone through a PhD has helped quite a lot.

What is your advice for someone who would like to pursue a career in molecular bioscience?
To choose something you are really passionate about, and to not give up!

Student Ambassadors are a key group of members that help us to raise awareness of the Biochemical Society, promote its activities, recruit new members and act as the Society’s point of contact at their institution. If you would like to get involved as an Ambassador, please contact: membership@biochemistry.org.

Summer Circadian Clock Club 2017

29 June 2017, University of Bristol, UK

This meeting allowed established and young researchers in the fields of circadian rhythms and sleep biology to present their new research, spanning a considerable breadth of experimental systems and questions. The meeting attracted about 140 delegates from the UK and other European countries.

Professor Martha Merrow from the University of Munich delivered the keynote Biochemical Society Lecture, ‘Circadian rhythms in non-photosynthetic prokaryotes’. Her far-reaching lecture introduced important concepts for new researchers in the field, and addressed important questions such as whether rapidly-dividing microbes might benefit from having a circadian clock. The other 13 research talks covered topics ranging from the temporal investigation of collective mood through analysis of twitter content to molecular aspects of the functioning of the circadian oscillator in experimental systems such as plants, animals and humans.

Antony Dodd and James Hodge (University of Bristol, UK)

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