EMV Newsletter

SEPT 2015 - EDITOR: ANNA.APPELBERG@MED.LU.SE

PHD STUDENTS AND POSTDOCS - IT IS TIME 2 TALK!
Time 2 Talk is a monthly lunch meeting for PhD students and postdocs. The lunches offer topics on professional development in a broad perspective. This is an excellent opportunity to meet colleagues from other research groups, while enjoying a lunch sandwich (for free).
The second lunch meeting within TIME 2 TALK:
5 October - International experience during PhD studies. Seize the opportunity! Pernilla Garmy just came back from USA where she combined vacation with visits to several research groups. During the lunch she will tell about her experiences and how she went about to make it happen. When and where: 12.15 - 13.30, BMC, Sölvegatan 19, Dora Jacobson, D15 Registration no later than October 1st. Click here for more info and registration.

SUGGEST COURSES FOR THE MEDICAL PROGRAMME
The Medical programme has two periods of five weeks set aside for courses intended to broaden and deepen the students' knowledge. You are invited to suggest topics for these courses for the spring semester. Please leave your suggestions with martin.garwicz@med.lu.se no later than Oct 1st.

CARDIO VASCULAR SPRING MEETING
in Gothenburg April 27th-29th. Click here for more info.

Congratulations Oktar Guloglu and Anton Spanne to your new PhD titles! Congratulations Per Petersson and Laurent Roybon to your new reader (docent) titles.

ERASMUS-ICM STIPEND TO NEW ZEELAND
The faculty is hereby announcing a scholarship for researchers to visit New Zealand between now and June 2017. Applications should be received by Karin Frydenlund no later than Oct 4th. The application should contain purpose and stated motives for the visit (maximum of one page) plus an invitation letter from the collaborating partner. An application that can present a collaboration and the possibility of receiving New Zealand researchers in return are prioritized. The stipend encompasses 160 Euro/day (for a maximum duration of 14 days) and Euro 1000 for travel expenses. Please turn to karin.frydenlund@med.lu.se for questions.

DISSERTATION L FASCHING
Liana Fasching defends her thesis in biomedicine/neurobiology entitled “The Role of Transposable Elements in Neural Stem Cells.” Oct 23rd at 09:00. Venue: TBD Supervisor: Johan Jakobsson, PhD Opponent: Joshua Dubnau, PhD, Cold Spring Harbor Chairman: Prof Cecilia Lundberg Welcome!

DISSERTATION K HÄGERBRAND

MEDICON WEEKEND OCT 15TH-16TH
Medicon weekend is a collaboration between Medicon Village, Lund University, and region Skåne. The weekend focuses on four areas; attacking cancer, stopping diabetes, join in on e-health, and live a better life with prevention. Click here to read more and buy your ticket (Swe).

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An interview with Agnete Kirkeby

Luckily the very same summer, Malin Parmar had started up her group and was looking for a post doc. It was a perfect match; the right place at the right time.”

“What does ‘differentiating neurons’ mean?” “It means that you can steer stem cells in the laboratory to become exactly what you want. They can turn into anything, to muscle cells, heart cells, kidneys, skin… My specialty is turning them into a special kind of neurons.”

After having worked for Malin Parmar for several years, Agnete started up her own research group in July.

“Half of the time I’m very enthusiastic and half of the time I feel anxious. It’s a privilege that you can decide yourself what you want to investigate, who you want to hire etc. At the same time, the job comes with a lot of responsibility; making sure the money lasts and that your students and postdocs are happy with their projects. And then there’s a loooooong list of obligations the head of department hands you when you start. That’s all new to me.”

“What makes you a good researcher?” “I’m not the right person to answer that,” Agnete laughs. “I think great enthusiasm and great resilience characterize researchers as a collective. That we just keep on going even when nothing works. Not to give up is probably the first demand on a good researcher.”

“What helps you cultivate the resilience you describe?” “I don’t always think it’s easy. Nobody does. But I think it helps to adopt a longer perspective. Even if progress might be slow, there are achievements. Research does pay off with exciting findings in the long run.”

“What’s the coolest moment in your career so far?” “I recently got to present my research at a huge conference in Stockholm. That was a significant experience for me.”

Agnete continues by explaining the main features of her current work: “The goal of my research group is to produce a model for the human fetal brain from stem cells in the lab. We know lots and lots about brain development in rodents, but very little about the human development. If you just take a quick look at the adult brain in humans and rodents, it seems obvious that there must be something going on during development, which makes the human brain special. The problem is that we don’t know what this is. We just don’t know what makes the human brain human. In the rare occasions when human fetuses may be studied, it is strictly a matter of looking at what’s already

Agnete Kirkeby came to EMV for a postdoc in 2009. She has recently started her own group, entitled Human, Neural Developmental Biology.

“I am Danish. I live in Copenhagen, and I have commuted across the bridge for 6 years”, Agnete says and continues with explaining her excellent Swedish: “When I started teaching, the medical students used to giggle when I said something incorrect, so I quickly learnt from my mistakes.”

Agnete completed her PhD studies in Copenhagen, and New York, where she worked with stem cells and how they differentiate into a particular type of neurons.

“I wanted to continue my work, but there was no stem-cell research on neurons in Copenhagen.
there. It isn’t possible to dynamically investigate what’s going on, to express genes or turn them off. Also, all the material is roughly of the same age. Human fetus development between week 0 and week 6 is more or less like a black box. This is a period when the brain is very, very sensitive, since there is so much going on development-wise. And how can you study the genes that are critical for the development of the human brain in rodents? You can’t. The model that we are developing offers an opportunity to do that.”

Agnete elucidates another application of the brain model; a new EU initiative called REACH. EU would like all chemicals that exist in the environment and in products like lotions, shampoo and cleaning fluids etc to be tested for toxicity, preferably in a human system and not on animals. In addition this could be a possible model to do so.

“Do you have any scientific role models?” “Yes. The off-the-shelf hot shots that everyone knows about. But at the same time I’d like to say that I don’t necessarily strive to be like them. Life balance is too important for me. If I were to work as hard as they do I would not consider it worth it. As a matter of fact everything comes at a price. I have scientific role models, but I’m also why we’ve said that the goal is the size of a ten week old brain.”

“No, no, it’s 1-2 centimeters in size... It’s not possible to make something large. We cannot make blood vessels, so it cannot become very large. That’s also why we’ve said that the goal is the size of a ten week old brain.”

“How large will the model brain become? Like a handball? A melon?”

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“Do you have any scientific role models?” “Yes. The off-the-shelf hot shots that everyone knows about. But at the same time I’d like to say that I don’t necessarily strive to be like them. Life balance is too important for me. If I were to work as hard as they do I would not consider it worth it. As a matter of fact everything comes at a price. I have scientific role models, but I’m also a realist.”

“We just don’t know what makes the human brain human.”

“Except from hard work - what characterizes your role models?” “Novelty. They make you think. Wow! Imagine that! Things that have never even occurred to you. Like Yamanaka who received the Nobel Prize three years ago who made stem cells from skin. Something that no one had even imagined possible. And he did it. I’d like to have that openness in my own mindset. I also think this is necessary for the project that we have initiated since we combine and re-design techniques in a new way to reach our aim. I don’t want to limit myself to what has already been done, but I would like to challenge myself to dare try new things. It’s always easier to stay on a path that you have already initiated, but accomplishing something new that’s never been done before is an extra tempting goal for me. I’m sort of hoping that I will continue to be enthusiastic enough to dare to try new things.”

“Now that fall and Nobel season is closing in; what’s your view on the Nobel Prize?”

“The prize signifies the utmost respect. At least the science prizes. I think everyone agrees that it’s awarded to the best discoveries. People discuss the timing, but other than that there is consensus. I think every scientist dreams to receive it, since it signifies the ultimate respect for your research. The thing I really like about the prize is that it’s awarded to discoveries which have turned out to have a massive impact on the future. It’s not just about what’s hot here and now. It’s about discovering something new which many, many people can make use of afterwards. Something which drastically changes the way other scientists tackle problems. This is why the laureates often have to wait many years to receive the prize. Because it takes time to really see the impact of their discoveries.”

“What’s the best thing that could happen in your field right now?”

“I will continue collaborating with Malin Parmar on our project to take stem cells to Parkinson’s disease patients. There’s been a long period of research on embryonic stem cells going on in labs around the world, actually since the late nineties. But it’s only now that these stem cells are beginning to be tested in humans. It would be huge if we within the next 5 years could start to see the first results from clinical trials showing that these stem cell treatments actually work in patients. There has been hope during so many years. Some people must feel that it’s taken so very long, and why must it take so long. But now it’s high time for clinical trials. We’re eagerly awaiting the results and hope that they are positive. That would be amazing progress for the field and for our own research.”

Anna Appelberg
Anna-Lisa Rosenberg Scholarship

According to the will of late Anna-Lisa Rosenberg, part of her assets finance a yearly revenue in support of research on diseases of the nervous system.

Grants of 50 000 - 100 000 sek are to be awarded once a year for one year at a time. Continuous support cannot be counted on. The money should not be used for travelling or for the applicant's own salary. Applicants holding a PhD and being in the early stage of their career are prioritized. Projects should preferably be carried out within the neurobiological field and involve clinical collaboration - having a co-applicant from a clinical section is beneficial.

Send application to Anna Appelberg EMV:s kansli Hs 66 BMC I13. Application should arrive no later than 09:30 Monday Oct 5th.

The application can be in Swedish or English and should contain:
- Project title
- Title, position and working place of applicant (and co-applicant)
- Short résumé ("CV") and publication list of applicant
- Specified project costs
- List of other grants awarded or applied for by the particular project.
- Account of any previous grant awarded by the Anna-Lisa Rosenberg Foundation
- Project summary of maximum 300 words
- Project plan with explicit focus (not more than 4 pages, including illustrations and references)
- Go-ahead from animal testing committee

NEW REGULATIONS REGARDING ANIMAL-BASED RESEARCH ABROAD

Since June 24th 2015, there are new rules regarding animal-based research conducted by Lund University researchers outside Swedish borders. When Lund University scientists conduct, or participate in, animal-based research in countries outside Sweden, he or she must subject the research terms to the scrutiny of the Lund University animal welfare board, should he or she suspect that the animal-handling terms diverge from those prevalent in the European Union directives. The starting point for such an assessment, which should be documented before a collaboration is initiated, must be that the animal handling from an ethical perspective is no less rigorous than corresponding experiments would be within the European Union.

Link to decision document (Swe)
Contact person is LU veterinarian Anders Forslid.
An interview with Emma Linnér

In June, Emma Linnér started as HR administrator at the department office.

"Why is it that you applied for a job here at EMV?"
"I thought that Lund University seemed like a good employer. I've had friends that have studied, and still study here. I wanted to move down to Skåne and our friends in Malmö from Småland, where I grew up, so I took the chance and applied."

"What was your last job about?"
"I worked as an internship supervisor at a company called Hermods. I was in a neighboring field, but it wasn't exactly what I had studied. Even though I enjoyed the work, I wanted to move on and get closer to what my education had been about. Being in HR administration made the cut, and gives me the opportunity to learn more about how things are run in the university. It is quite a difference from the private sector. There's a lot more to keep in mind here with all the rules and regulations. Sometimes I sit like 'I know that somebody has told me about this...'."

"Can you tell me more about your education?"
"I have a bachelor's from the Linnaeus University. The programme was called 'staff and work life'. My specialty is psychology. I compared the different programmes and thought 'there's a lot of psychology in this one, what fun'. So it was one of the reasons I choose the HR programme in the first place. I feel that it was a good choice."

"What are you actually doing?"
"I work with prolonging PhD positions, and with the salary increases they get during their studies. I arrange scholarships and prolong them. Things like that. And then there are some insurance issues as well.

"What's the best thing about your profession?"
"I'm happy with it because I think it is fun. It's fun that I come in to contact with a lot of people. I work towards all the research groups and managers, PhD students and people on stipends. It's fun since there is such a vast net of contacts. At the same time I enjoy the work duties it entails."

"What makes you a good HR administrator?"
"I'm very neat and orderly. At home too. This makes me well organized. At the same time I am able to multitask. I'm a multitasker that's well organized. That's the answer."

"Here's a question I ask all the researchers since it is a part of the reality of being a researcher: How do you deal with setbacks?"
"A setback is likely to be a problem of some kind. So naturally I try to solve the problem. It's easy to feel deflated and think that 'this is impossible', but there is, knock on wood, always a solution to everything. Since I don't work full time, for me a setback could mean that I discover something on Thursday that I can't solve until next Wednesday. That can be a challenge, to try to live with a problem until you can actually do something about it. To try to keep your spirits up."

"What's the coolest moment in your work life so far?"
"That has to be when I got this job. When I was contacted about this position I was sick with a fever and in bad shape. I couldn't meet with short notice. I was thinking what if this makes everything fall through... Since I was sick there was a Skype interview. Then I had a personality test arriving home. Then I came down here for feedback and a work test. And references. There were several steps and I felt that I could fulfill the requirements and that was fun. That's a more thorough recruitment process than what I have been part of before... Once I had completed the entire process and was offered the position, I got a job the one day, my boyfriend got offered a job the next day and in the weekend we were offered an apartment. A lot of things fell into place just like that."

"Can you tell me more about an incident when you have been proud about you work?"
"My old job was a lot about helping newly arrived people to settle in Sweden, and come closer to the labor market. I helped them with internships and the thought was always that they would benefit from this and move forward somehow. When I could help somebody and indeed move him or her closer to the labor market then I felt proud. That I could contribute to something for someone that had a difficult situation."

"What does a typical work day look like?"
"That depends on which weekday it is. If it's a Tuesday I might have 20 e-mails, whereas if it's a Wednesday there might only be two. I sort out what's in the pipeline, and find answers to any questions. Then I usually prepare for some signatures, or send of decisions etc. There are plenty of fast-paced twists and turns. You think 'today I'm doing this...' and then someone calls or sends off and e-mail and it's urgent and needs to be dealt with asap. Then you have to try help out and solve the issue as fast as possible. So far I don't think I've had a day that has turned out exactly the way I imagined in the morning."

"What are your impressions of EMV so far?"
"It's a fun atmosphere. Everyone is helpful and funny and nice.
Publications with affiliation department of Experimental Medical Science


Specific autoantibody profiles and disease subgroups correlate with circulating micro-RNA in systemic sclerosis.


Multi-locus sequence analysis (MLSA) of clinical "Candidatus Neoehrlichia mikurensis" strains from Europe.


Expression of fibromodulin in carotid atherosclerotic plaques is associated with diabetes and cerebrovascular events.


Spontaneous activity and stretch-induced contractile differentiation are reduced in vascular smooth muscle of miR-143/145 knockout mice.


IL-17A and the Promotion of Neutrophilia in Acute Exacerbation of Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease.


The Origin, Development and Molecular Diversity of Rodent Olfactory Bulb Glutamatergic Neurons Distinguished by Expression of Transcription Factor NeuroD1.


Multimodal approach to assess tumour vasculature and potential treatment effect with DCE-US and DCE-MRI quantification in CWR22 prostate tumour xenografts.


ESCRTs regulate amyloid precursor protein sorting in multivesicular bodies and intracellular amyloid-β accumulation.


Keep it clean!

SEPT 15TH: WINDOW CLEANING AT BMC