

# VAIGS Alumni Newsletter September 2016

#### **Save the Date**

- Grand Challenges in Parkinson's Disease
  - o Sept. 26-27, 2016
- Hope on the Hill Gala
  - o October 27, 2016
- West Michigan Regional Undergraduate Science Research Conference
  - o November 5, 2016
- A Conversation About Women's Health hosted by Carol Van Andel
  - o November 16, 2016

## The 2016-2017 Incoming class

- Maggie Chassé, who's originally from Alaska, received her Master's in biochemistry from Colorado State University.
- Wooyoung Choi, VAIGS' first international student from South Korea, received his Master's from Tsinghua University in 2012.
- Minge Du comes to VAIGS from Stony Brook University and received her Master's in genetics from Southeast University in China.
- Guillermo Flores is an M.D.-Ph.D. candidate who is currently completing his second year of medical school at MSU.
- **Katie Krajnak**, who earned her Master's in biological sciences from Purdue University Calumet.
- Alexis Weber graduated from MSU in 2014 with a B.S. in genomics and molecular genetics, with an additional major in microbiology.

#### **VAIGS Recent Publications**

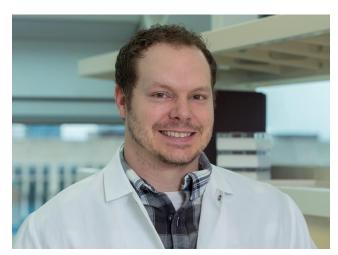
- Andersen, N.J., E.A. Boguslawski, A.S. Naidu, C. Szot, J.L. Bromberg-White, K. Kits, C.Y. Kuk, L.E. Holton, B. St. Croix, C.M. Chambers, and N.S. Duesbery. 2016. Anthrax toxin receptor 1 is essential for arteriogenesis in a mouse model of hindlimb ischemia. PLoS One 11(1): e0146586.
- Zhou, X. E., **Parker de Waal**, <u>H. Eric Xu</u>, et al. X-ray laser diffraction for structure determination of the rhodopsin-arrestin complex. *Sci. Data*3:160021 doi: 10.1038/sdata.2016.21 (2016).

### **Staying Connected**

- Join the <u>Graduate Student Association (GSA)</u>
  <u>Student & Alumni Group</u> on LinkedIn! The GSA provides a peer-based organization to support and aid in the development of scientific careers, fosters camaraderie among graduate students, facilitates scientific outreach to the local community, and promotes professional collaborations beyond VAI.
- For more information regarding opportunities to stay involved with Van Andel Institute and our mission, please don't hesitate to contact the following:
  - Nancy.schaperkotter@vai.org,
    Student Affairs
  - Teresa.reid @vai.org,
    Development



### **Meet Our 2016 Graduates**



Casey Droscha successfully defended his dissertation this spring. After graduation, Dr. Droscha began working as a Research Scientist with NorthStar Cooperative Incorporated, an agricultural biotech company in the Lansing area.

**Undergraduate University**: Central Michigan University (B.S.)

**Thesis**: Characterizing mechanisms of gene transcription in models of bone development

Mentor: Bart Williams, Ph.D.



Marie Mooney successfully defended her dissertation in January. In April, Dr. Mooney began a postdoctoral position with Dr. Andre Bachmann in the Department of Pediatrics and Human Development at the College of Human Medicine, Michigan State University (MSU).

**Undergraduate University**: Michigan Technological University (B.S. bioinformatics, summa cum laude)

**Graduate University**: University of Cincinnati (M.S. biomedical engineering)

**Thesis**: Modeling glioma-derived growth factor signal transduction in pediatric glioblastoma

Mentor: Matt Steensma, M.D.