



ASM Future Leaders Mentoring Symposium

Thursday, June 15, 2023





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Wireless Internet at the Convention Center

Complimentary Wi-Fi is available at the George R. Brown Convention Center. Wireless internet is available in lobbies, session rooms, and the Exhibit and Poster Hall.

- Network Name: ASMICROBE
- Password: houston23

FLMF Symposium Speakers



Vanessa M. Ante, Ph.D., Texas A&M University

Dr. Vanessa Ante is currently a Postdoctoral Fellow at Texas A&M University Health Science Center. Vanessa received her B.S. in Biology from the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh and her Ph.D. in Microbiology from the University of Pittsburgh. Her research focuses on understanding the molecular mechanisms used by the human pathogen *Borrelia burgdorferi* to regulate virulence. In addition to her research, she has actively engaged in teaching and mentoring undergraduate and graduate students. Vanessa is the recipient of a Career Development Award from the Department of Defense Tick-Borne Disease Research Division. Following her postdoctoral training, Vanessa will be moving on to become an Assistant Professor and establish her own laboratory this fall.



Katrina Counihan, Ph.D., U.S. Department of Agriculture

Dr. Katrina Counihan earned her Ph.D. in Microbiology from the University of California Davis investigating the pathogenesis of *Streptococcus lutetiensis* endocarditis in sea otters. After completing her Ph.D., she spent a year as a Strain Development Scientist at a biotech company developing biocatalysts. Dr. Counihan then joined the Alaska SeaLife Center (ASLC), a non-profit organization, where she completed her post-doctoral research characterizing a novel adenovirus. She then became an Assistant Research Scientist with ASLC, and her work focused on oil toxicity mechanisms and developing disease detection assays, coastal monitoring biomarkers, and molecular methods for diet determination in marine animals. She was also the Director of the COHO Lab, a microbiology diagnostic lab at ASLC. She joined the US Department of Agriculture in August 2021 and is developing sequencing and ddPCR methods to detect foodborne pathogens. Outside of work, she loves spending time with her 4- and 2-year-old daughters.



Vicente Gómez-Alvarez, Ph.D., U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Dr. Vicente Gómez-Alvarez is a microbiologist with the United States Environmental Protection Agency, Office of Research and Development in the Water Infrastructure Division at Cincinnati, Ohio with 20 years of experience in planning and executing a diverse and intensive research project to study the microbiome in built and natural environments. His research focuses on microbial ecology, including the application of genomic technologies and the use of computational and bioinformatics workflow platforms for the characterization of microbiomes. He has led research projects on technological solutions for economic and environmental sustainability. Prior to this position, Vicente was an Office of the Provost Postdoctoral Research Fellow at Michigan State University, focusing on the effect of land management in the composition and function of microbial communities associated with greenhouse gases. Vicente has a Ph.D. in Microbiology from the University of Massachusetts-Amherst and a B.S. in Industrial Microbiology and a M.S. in Biology from the University.

FLMF Symposium Speakers (continued)



Matthew Herron, Ph.D., National Science Foundation

Dr. Matthew Herron is a rotating Program Director in the National Science Foundation's Division of Biological Infrastructure and a Senior Research Scientist at Georgia Tech. At NSF, he serves on the Infrastructure Capacity for Biological Research (Capacity) Program (including Cyberinfrastructure, Biological Collections, and Field Stations and Marine Labs), the Major Research Instrumentation Program (MRI), and the Integrative Research in Biology (IntBIO) Program. Herron has previously served on the Postdoctoral Research Fellowships in Biology (PRFB) Program and the Division of Environmental Biology's Evolutionary Processes Program. His research focuses on the evolution of multicellularity in the volvocine green algae.



Crystal N. Johnson, Ph.D., Oklahoma State University - Center for Health Sciences

Dr. Crystal Johnson is a new Assistant Professor in Microbiology, having joined OSU-CHS in March 2023. She obtained a Ph.D. in Microbiology from the University of Oklahoma, studying polyphasic taxonomy and the effects of biocorrosion on energy sector infrastructure. During her first postdoctoral fellowship in Ireland, Dr. Johnson worked on topics such as fecal transplantation, metabolic syndrome, and cholecystitis. She was then awarded an EU *Marie Skłodowska-Curie* Fellowship to conduct human studies on the gallbladder microbiome, with a view to informing development of post-operative therapeutics. Dr. Johnson joined Professor Paul Ross's *Microbes to Molecules* laboratory at APC Microbiome Ireland, leading industry related projects in human health-focused R&D. She served as senior researcher for multinational beverage/food companies, Anheuser-Busch and Kraft-Heinz Company, working on new green-label, plant-based health foods.

As new PI, Dr. Johnson's research will continue to investigate microbiome modulation, with a focus on cultivation of novel anaerobes and their syntrophic partners.



Michael D.L. Johnson, Ph.D., University of Arizona

Dr. Michael D. L. Johnson received an A.B. in Music from Duke University and his Ph.D. in Biochemistry and Biophysics at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. After completing his dissertation in bacterial motility and attachment, he went to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital in the Department of Infectious Disease to study how bacteria process nutrients, specifically metals, during bacterial infections. He then worked in the Department of Immunology studying newly discovered ways of how the body eliminates harmful pathogens. Currently, Dr. Johnson is an Associate Professor at the University of Arizona in the Department of Immunobiology where he studies mechanisms of metal toxicity in bacteria. He is active in science outreach through developing the National Summer Undergraduate Research Project, The BIO5 Postdoctoral Fellowship Program, being Chair of the Subcommittee for Minority Education for the American Society for Microbiology, which houses the Future Leaders Mentoring Program, and online through twitter @blacksciblog.

FLMF Symposium Speakers (continued)



Victoria McGovern, Ph.D., Burroughs Wellcome Fund

Dr. Victoria McGovern runs the Burroughs Wellcome fund's programs in Infectious Diseases, Climate Change and Human Health, and the workforce development-focused Career Guidance for Trainees program, where she serves as the Gertrude Elion Endowed Program Officer and Strategic Advisor. Since her postdoc she has been involved in science policy efforts related to strengthening the scientific workforce. She is a past chair of Sigma Xi's Committee on Public Understanding of Science, was one of the original writers for Science's Next Wave (now Science Careers) and is currently one of the contributors to the Graduate Career Consortium's Carpe Careers column at Inside Higher Education. She has served on the Committee on Postdoctoral and Graduate Education of the American Society for Microbiology and the Early Career Scientist Steering Committee of the Genetics Society of America, and she currently serves on the National Postdoctoral Association's advisory board. She joined BWF in 1997.



Erin McClelland, Ph.D., Marian University

Dr. Erin McClelland received a Bachelor of Arts from the University of California, Santa Barbara and a Ph.D. in Biology under Dr. Wayne Potts from the University of Utah. She completed postdoctoral training under Dr. Arturo Casadevall at Albert Einstein College of Medicine. She is an Assistant Professor of Microbiology and Immunology at Marian University College of Osteopathic Medicine.

Dr. McClelland's research interests encompass understanding host-pathogen interactions of the pathogenic yeast, *Cryptococcus neoformans*, including at the level of macrophage polarization and the sex of the host, to try to understand why 70% of patients with cryptococcosis are male.

Dr. McClelland is a member of the American Association of Immunology and the American Society of Microbiology. She was the KY-TN ASM Branch President from 2018-21 and is the Indiana ASM Branch President-Elect. She has mentored many students through their various undergraduate and graduate degrees and is constantly stressing communication skills!



LeShawndra Price, Ph.D., National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, NIH

Dr. LeShawndra Price, Director of the Office of Research Training and Special Programs (ORTSP) at the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), is a leading expert in the fields of health equity, global health, and implementation science, with more than 20 years of experience at the NIH. She supports research training programs to develop the next generation of researchers and physician scientists, including promoting diversity within the biomedical research workforce, within NIAID's mission areas. Dr. Price also manages NIAID's Small Business Innovation Research and Small Business Technology Transfer programs and implements the Institute's international outreach and compliance program, including overseeing the NIAID Global Infectious Disease Research Administration Award for Low- and Middle-Income Country Institutions (G11).

FLMF Symposium Speakers (continued)



Boo Shan Tseng, Ph.D., University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Dr. Boo Shan Tseng is an Associate Professor and the Graduate Coordinator in the School of Life Sciences at the University of Nevada Las Vegas. She received her BS at MIT in 2003 and her PhD at Rockefeller University in 2010 working under Dr. Hironori Funabiki on eukaryotic chromosome segregation. Dr. Tseng transitioned to studying *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* biofilms as a postdoctoral fellow with Dr. Matthew R. Parsek at the University of Washington. She started her faculty position at UNLV in 2016. The Tseng lab mainly focuses on biofilm physiology and envelope stress response in *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*. Dr. Tseng has served as a member of the ASM Council on Microbial Sciences and is currently the ASM Region 7 Branch

Planning Coordinator.



Neeraja Venkateswaran, Ph.D., Tetracore, Inc.

Dr. Neeraja Venkateswaran started her career as government scientist in Defense R & D Establishment in India. She followed her husband to California, where she briefly worked at UCSF, and then moved to the biotech industry. She worked on immunohistochemistry marker development for various cancers for 6 years at BioGenex in California. Then they moved on to Texas, where she rose up to the director of R & D and business development at Radix BioSolutions. Another move to Maryland brought Venkateswaran to her current role at Tetracore, where she has worked as the primary investigator for developing serology assays for various pathogens; also antigen detection assays for bio threat agents and toxins. In her career of over 30 years in various positions in academia, government, and industry,

Venkateswaran has been actively engaged in assay development. She serves as a reviewer in the peer-review process of grant and contract applications with NIAID.



The Program

Thursday, June 15

8:00 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.

Registration and Welcome

Location: Convention Center, Room 360 BCDE

Speakers

- Irene Hulede, American Society for Microbiology
- Michael D.L. Johnson, Ph.D., University of Arizona

8:30 a.m. – 9:15 a.m.

Opening General Session

How Does Your Network Know How to Help You If They Don't Know Who You Are or What You Want?

Location: Convention Center, Room 360 BCDE

Speaker

- Michael D.L. Johnson, Ph.D., University of Arizona

9:30 a.m. – 10:15 a.m.

Concurrent Session I

Persist Like a Biofilm: Resilience Lessons from Bacterial Communities

Location: Convention Center, Room 350 DEF

Speaker

- Boo Shan Tseng, Ph.D., University of Nevada, Las Vegas

9:30 a.m. – 10:15 a.m.

Concurrent Session II

Career Exploration and How to Overcome Career Roadblocks

Location: Convention Center, Room 360 BCDE

Speakers

- Vanessa M. Ante, Ph.D., Texas A&M University
- Katrina Counihan, Ph.D., U.S. Department of Agriculture
- Vicente Gómez-Alvarez, Ph.D., U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- Neeraja Venkateswaran, Ph.D., Tetracore, Inc.

10:15 a.m. – 10:40 a.m.

BREAK

10:40 a.m. – 11:25 a.m.

General Session

Best Practice on Getting Funded and Funding Opportunities

Location: Convention Center, Room 360 BCDE

Panelists

- Matthew Herron, Ph.D., National Science Foundation
- Victoria McGovern, Ph.D., Burroughs Wellcome Fund
- LeShawndra Price, Ph.D., National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, NIH

The Program (continued)

11:40 a.m. – 12:25 p.m.

General Session

Effective Communication & Self-Advocacy

Location: Convention Center, Room 360 BCDE

Speaker

- Erin McClelland, Ph.D., Marian University

12:40 p.m. – 1:40 p.m.

Networking Lunch by Discussion Topics

Location: Convention Center, Room 370 A-F

Facilitators

Vanessa M. Ante, Ph.D.
 Kurt Ash, Ph.D.
 Selma Burciaga, Ph.D.
 Katrina Counihan, Ph.D.
 Vicente Gómez-Alvarez, Ph.D.
 Matthew Herron, Ph.D.
 Alexis Jaramillo Cartagena, Ph.D.
 Crystal N. Johnson, Ph.D.
 Michael D.L. Johnson, Ph.D.
 Peter Lipke, Ph.D.
 Erin McClelland, Ph.D.
 Victoria McGovern, Ph.D.
 Mila Ortigoza, Ph.D.
 LeShawndra Price, Ph.D.
 Neeraja Venkateswaran, Ph.D.

Discussion Topics

Funding Opportunities
 Postdoctoral Opportunities
 Overcoming Graduate School Challenges
 Building Self-Confidence
 Mental Health and Wellness
 Funding Opportunities
 Volunteering and Service
 Postdoctoral Opportunities
 Professional Branding
 Establishing Boundaries
 Committees: Friend or Foe
 Belongingness
 Work-Life Balance
 Funding Opportunities
 Building Networks

1:40 p.m. – 2:15 p.m.

General Session

These Are, I Kid You Not, the Most Effective Ways to Leverage your Professional Network

Location: Convention Center, Room 360 BCDE

Speaker

- Crystal N. Johnson, Ph.D., Oklahoma State University

2:20 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Closing Remarks and Next Steps

Location: Convention Center, Room 360 BCDE

Speakers

- Tiffani Fonseca, M.B.A., American Society for Microbiology
- Michael D.L. Johnson, Ph.D., University of Arizona

Networking Lunch Discussion Topics

Thursday, June 15 (12:40 – 1:40 p.m.) | Friday, June 16 (12:00 – 1:00 p.m.) | Sunday, June 18 (12:00 – 1:00 p.m.)
Location: Convention Center, Room 370 A – F

Note: The descriptors below are a sampling of (but not limited to) what will be discussed at each roundtable during the FLMF Symposium Networking Lunch and the FLMF Mentoring Power Lunches. The networking lunches will be an informal discussion amongst the FLMF community and ASM leadership.

Please refer to the color codes by each topic (below) to locate the designated roundtables.

- **Belongingness** ■
Recognize that you are not alone; recognize and learn how to respond to micro-aggressions; practice micro-affirmations; combat isolation.
- **Building Networks** ■
Make connections; form collaborations and partnerships; join scientific communities; participate in events.
- **Building Self-Confidence** ■
Understand your strengths and weaknesses; have confidence in your abilities; learn to receive constructive criticism.
- **Committees: Friend or Foe** ■
Understand the benefits of your graduate committee and how to use your committee to your advantage.
- **Establishing Boundaries** ■
Set clear expectations; understand what is important to you; learn how to respectfully say no.
- **Funding Opportunities** ■
Discuss funding opportunities and tips to secure funding.
- **Mental Health and Wellness** ■
Strategies on when and how to seek help regarding your well-being.
- **Overcome Graduate School Challenges** ■
Overcome imposture syndrome; develop time management skills; overcome thesis or dissertation anxiety.
- **Postdoctoral Opportunities** ■
Learn about postdoc opportunities and tips for succeeding in postdoc programs.
- **Professional Branding** ■
Identify attributes that determine who you are to yourself and others; create your own digital footprint.
- **Volunteering and Service** ■
Understand the skill of giving back; enhance skills and obtain experience through volunteering and service.
- **Work-Life Balance** ■
Importance of self-care; balance your professional and personal lives.

Required Sessions & Events

- **ASM Future Leaders Mentoring Symposium (Invitation Only)**
Date: June 15, 2023 | Time: 8:30 AM – 2:30 PM
Location: 360 BCDE; GRB Convention Center
- **ASM Microbe 2023 Attendee Orientation**
Date: June 15, 2023 | Time: 3:15 PM – 4:15 PM
Location: 310; GRB Convention Center
- **Opening Keynote Session**
Date: June 15, 2023 | Time: 4:30 PM – 6:15 PM
Location: General Assembly; GRB Convention Center
- **ASM Future Leaders Mentoring & Networking Power Lunch (Invitation Only)**
Date: June 16, 2023 | Time: 12:00 PM – 1:00 PM
Location: 370 A-F; GRB Convention Center

Note: A meal voucher will be provided to each FLMF attendee to be used at the Convention Center concessions. We ask that you purchase your meal and bring it back to **Room 370 A-F** for roundtable discussions with FLMF mentors, ASM leadership, Academy fellows, and more.

- **39th Annual Minority Mixer (ASM Joint Reception)**
Date: June 16, 2023 | Time: 6:30 PM – 7:30 PM
Location: Lanier Ballroom BCEF; Hilton Americas Hotel

Note: FLMF Fellows and Mentors must be present in the Lanier Ballroom at 7:00 p.m., as you will be officially recognized, alongside receiving a photo op with the entire FLMF community and ASM Leadership.

- **ASM Future Leaders Mentoring & Networking Power Lunch (Invitation Only)**
Date: June 18, 2023 | Time: 12:00 PM – 1:00 PM
Location: 370 A-F; GRB Convention Center

Note: A meal voucher will be provided to each FLMF attendee to be used at the Convention Center concessions. We ask that you purchase your meal and bring it back to **Room 370 A-F** for roundtable discussions with FLMF mentors, ASM leadership, Academy fellows, and more.

Recommended and Curated Career/DEI Sessions & FLMF Presentations at Microbe 2023



A curated list of all FLMF programming and activities named, **Future Leaders Mentoring Fellowship Program** can be found on the [ASM Microbe website](#) (under Scientific Program) and by clicking the QR code above. Please know that the sessions (aside from the required sessions listed above) are not required, but we encourage you to attend and visit each other's presentations to support and demonstrate community-building amongst your peers.



ASM

**FUTURE LEADERS
MENTORING FELLOWSHIP**

**Irene Hulede
Education Director**

**Tiffani Fonseca, MBA
Project Lead**

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