

# The G.S.A. NEWSLETTER



a publication of the  
Graduate Student Association  
Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine

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## Why you should care about... Having Access to a Career Center

Tara L. Riemer

*This is one of a series of articles discussing my opinions on issues impacting scientists or graduate students in the sciences.*

Most graduate students have little knowledge of what a career office or a career center can provide. You probably have vague recollections of the one at your undergraduate institution as the place where all of your engineering and business major peers flocked during senior year while looking for a job. It was a place you avoided. You, after all, were going to graduate school, and had little need for career guidance.

However, you are in graduate school now, and possibly graduating within the next year or two (or five). Now you may desire some career guidance, and the potential sources are more limited.

If you plan to pursue the academic track and will pursue a postdoctoral position in your current field, all of the necessary career guidance may be available from the faculty and current postdocs in your lab or department. Obtaining advice on where and how to look for postdocs should be fairly easy. Your CV and cover letters can be reviewed and critiqued by your advisor, who likely knows the researchers whose labs you wish to join.

*con't p. 6, Career Center*



Prof. Chi Dang, better known for his research on the c-myc oncogene, lectured on "The Art of Negotiation — Getting What You Want" as part of the GSA Career Workshop Series. The Hopkins hematology professor addressed an interested audience of graduate students and postdocs. He stressed information gathering as well as setting realistic and fair goals prior to bargaining for a position in either academia or industry.

Photo by J. Beneken.

## Upcoming GSA Meeting

**April 14**

GSA Meetings are held on the  
2nd Tuesday of each month at 3  
pm in Hunterian Room G-5.

## NOTES FROM THE GSA

### Upcoming Events

Pioneers in Biology Lecture  
by Dr. Joshua Lederberg  
**Friday April 24.**

Hands on Baltimore 5th  
annual  
Serv-A-Thon  
**Saturday, May 2**  
(see article)

Alicia Showalter Reynolds  
Memorial Lecture  
by Dr. Linda Buck  
**Tuesday, May 5**

GSA tickets to see the  
Orioles vs. Mariners  
**Tuesday, June 2.**

### Websites

Website for upcoming  
GSA events  
<[http://www.med.jhu.edu/gsa/  
events/coming.html](http://www.med.jhu.edu/gsa/events/coming.html)>.

GSA events calendar  
<[http://www.med.jhu.edu/gsa/  
events.html](http://www.med.jhu.edu/gsa/events.html)>.

# Out and About

Lesley R. Brown

On November 1, 1997, about eight members from the GSA spent the night at the Maryland Science Center as part of their Camp In Program. Before I tell you how much fun it was, I'll give a little background about the Camp In Program and the Maryland Science Center. The Maryland Science Center itself is a non-profit organization which has no affiliation with the city or any area schools or universities. It operates on funds generated by visitors and it receives an endowment from the Maryland Academy of Sciences. And if you have never checked out the Science Center, it is open everyday except for Thanksgiving and Christmas. (And you thought only grad students kept these kinds of hours).

The first camp in was held about 14 years ago and the first "campers" were Girl Scouts. The initial purpose of the program was to encourage girls to become interested in science by providing exposure and hands on science education. The philosophy is and has always been to take the stress out of learning and relate it to everyday things. Hence, the workshops cover topics such as phase changes and the biochemistry of digestion and they are very interactive. The Camp In Program became so successful that it has expanded and now serves Boy Scouts and other youth groups as well. There are 42 to 45 camp in events per year. What is even more impressive is that one person, Céleste Barthel, the assistant supervisor of the Camp in Program organizes and oversees this entire project. If you are interested in being a volunteer or scheduling a camp in date for your favorite youth group, Ms. Barthel can be reached at (410) 545-5956. If you want an insiders view, contact Holly Berkovits, the GSA community outreach coordinator, who is currently on staff at the Science Center as one of the educators.

The night we volunteered, the Science Center hosted a camp in for youth groups from various churches and organizations in the inner city. We were met by about 200  
*con't p. 6, Science Center*

## PARKING UPDATE

Last summer's parking upheaval, caused by the closing of the President Street lot, resulted in major changes in the parking arrangements for students. This worked to our advantage, as the number of subsidized onsite student parking spots was significantly increased.

However, the hospital had to squeeze all its parking needs for employees, students and patients into the remaining lots. As a result, students who park offsite lost the ability to purchase coupons to the Washington Street Garage for occasional onsite parking needs.

Reinstitution of this privilege was discussed at a recent meeting of the parking committee and it was decided that "such a program could not be accomodated at this time." Part of the justification for this is that there is already a program in place for students to pay a reduced cost for periodic daily onsite parking. Since many students are unaware of this policy, a description of it follows:

Students pay for onsite parking only until 4pm, Monday-Friday, regardless of how late they leave. You must simply show your ID when you pay. The normal fee schedule is:

0-1 hour	\$2.25
1-2 hours	\$2.75
2-3 hours	\$3.50
3-4 hours	\$4.00
4-5 hours	\$4.50
5-6 hours	\$5.00
6-24 hours	\$8.00

Depending on the time of entry, the fee can then be less than the cost of a coupon, currently \$5. For example, if you arrive at 11am and leave at 8pm, you only pay for 5 hours (\$4.50).

There are waiting lists for onsite parking at the Washington Street and McElderry Street garages. Please e-mail Holly Berkovits if you would like to have your name placed on either of these lists or if you have any parking questions. [holly@groucho.med.jhmi.edu](mailto:holly@groucho.med.jhmi.edu).

### GSAN Thank You Lunch

The GSA Newsletter would like to thank all past, current and future contributors. All of you have made the Newsletter a successful venture! Join the editors at 1pm on Thursday, May 14th in Hunterian G5 for pizza and drinks! Please RSVP to Ed Hsiao ([ehsiao@welchlink](mailto:ehsiao@welchlink)) or Jutta Beneken ([jbeneken@welchlink](mailto:jbeneken@welchlink)) by May 12th.

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## From the Dean's Desk

James Hildreth, MD, PhD

The Howard Hughes Medical Institute (HHMI) and the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) have launched a new Web site offering "one-stop shopping" for young scientists seeking information on grants and other forms of support for research and training in the biomedical sciences. Grants Net <<http://www.grantsnet.org>> features an extensive database on fellowships, grants and various sources of research support, as well as links to funders' Web sites, online applications, and comments from recent application reviewers.

The site currently focuses on graduate and postgraduate training and junior faculty positions, but expansion is planned to encompass undergraduate and precollege science training.



Michelle Rubush presented a workshop on "Creating Your Image" aka dressing for success. Her tips? Complement your colors and dress to emphasize eye contact. Here she gives Brian Collins tips on shirt colors. You can schedule your own consultation with Ms. Rubush — contact her at <[jrubush@aol.com](mailto:jrubush@aol.com)>. Photo by E. Hsiao.

## Restaurant Guide

Sarah Wheelan

Two lesser-known but worthy Baltimore restaurants are the focus of this month. Both are well-loved by locals, and for good reason.

The first is Weber's on Boston, formerly Le Bistro Midi, formerly Weber's. The name is as confusing as the address, because while Weber's is found on Boston street near the American Can Company, it's technically located at 845 S. Montford Ave. (410-276-0800). Weber's is probably best known for its extravagant Sunday brunches, but its dinners rival Baltimore's more expensive restaurants, at half the price. Appetizers are priced at \$6 to \$9 and were excellent. The smoked salmon appetizer consisted of a hefty portion of smoked salmon delicately flavored with capers. The Thai calamari had an equally interesting mix of strong flavors; a vinegar and ginger dip was paired with perfectly deep-fried calamari to create a tangy treat, and the calamari showed no signs of the rubbery quality that infests most of the appetizers around town.

One of the specials sounded especially appealing — the honey-ginger glazed chicken and vegetables, for only \$9.95 (unlike many restaurants whose specials are twice the price of any other entree). It proved worth its billing, as the chicken was perfectly tender and the glaze provided a subtle accompaniment. Another entree, the vegetarian portobello mushroom (\$10.95), was much more strongly flavored and also very good. The mushroom had been lovingly grilled to bring out one of the strongest portobello flavors I've had, and it was topped with a mix of tomatillos and several other tangy vegetables to complement the smoky flavor of the mushroom.

Desserts sounded so tempting that even on full stomachs we managed to sample a couple. The oreo cookie cheesecake (\$5.25) was good, as expected; the banana mousse-filled chocolate crepe (\$5.25) left a little to be desired, as the mousse had a strange grainy texture and the chocolate crepe was soggy and thin. Other desserts sounded even better; a trip to Vaccaro's is also a possibility. Overall we were very happy with the food, the service, and especially the prices.

For a wonderfully romantic and relaxing dining experience, date a massage therapist. If not available, treat yourself to Peerce's Plantation, a gorgeous and well-established restaurant in Phoenix, MD, about 15 minutes north of the beltway off of Dulaney Valley Rd. (Call for directions and reservations at 410-252-3100). It's all you could ask for — valet parking, a romantic candle-lit garden atmosphere, and food to knock your dress socks off. We enjoyed the seafood strudel appetizer; the rich sauce and generous portions could have made this a meal but instead it's a reasonably priced (\$7) appetizer filled with crab and lobster, with a red pepper cream sauce. The crab soup is widely renowned as the best in Maryland, and for good reason. A crab (or eight or nine, judging by the density of crab meat in this incredible soup) would be proud to contribute to this simple and flavorful tomato-based soup.

*con't p. 4, Restuarant*

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The pen is mightier  
than the pipet...

Please send any poems,  
short stories, creative writing,  
articles, or black and white  
art/photos to the  
GSA Newsletter!

Submissions for the next  
issue are due on  
Tuesday, May 5.

Contact any editor for a copy of the 1997-98  
Submission Guidelines, or check the GSA Web  
Page!

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**Help Wanted**

If you are interested in editing  
the newsletter, please contact  
Ed Hsiao or Jutta Beneken for  
more information!

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## The Mountains by Bang

As I walked over the fresh soft snow  
Silent  
The trees press tightly against the trail  
The sun warm  
on my face  
I opened my eyes  
my world for a moment in kilter.

Wes Bang Wong

## Seeking Volunteers for Baltimore Community Service: Serv-A-Thon 98

Tara Riemer/Jutta Beneken

Hands On Baltimore is a local volunteer organization that is planning Serv-A-Thon 98. This is the 5th annual fund-raising event for Hands On Baltimore to support its year-long programs and thousands of hours of volunteer service to Baltimore City schools. Last year the Serv-A-Thon was a huge event in honor of Baltimore. This year, Serv-A-Thon volunteers will work on over 100 projects at 35 public schools all over Baltimore City. The goal is to improve the learning environment of children by painting classrooms, hallways, cleaning up playgrounds, and planting trees and flowers. This is a wonderful opportunity to make a tremendous difference in our communities.

Sound exciting? I think so. The date is Saturday, May 2, and it will be an all-day event, starting with a kick-off get-together in the morning before volunteers head off to their respective project sites. The day will end with a BBQ and a party (site to be determined).

How can you help?

1. Be a volunteer on a JHMI team. We are going to try to organize teams of students, staff, or whoever is interested! If you would like to help **\*\*organize\*\*** a team of students, let us know.

2. Be a site captain or project leader. These leadership positions require a bit more dedication. Site captains will be in charge of the projects at a site, and will need to visit the site a few times in advance of May 2. The project leaders are basically assistants to the site captain, and will need to attend a short training session and converse with their site captain before the event. (If you know someone else who would be good at one of these tasks, please pass along the info to them). No major skills required, except dedication, the ability to direct volunteers, and willingness to get dirty.

3. Let us know if a group you are a part of (alumni group, church, school, etc.) would be interested in forming a volunteer team for the day.

Please contact us if you are interested in more information on this event. We can send you a detailed list of the volunteer opportunities and how to get involved. Email Tara at triemer@jhu.edu or phone: 410-955-9603 daytime. Email Jutta at jbeneken@welchlink.welch.jhu.edu or phone: 410-614-2533 daytime.

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*con't from p. 3, Restuarant*

The entrees change often but include a variety of seafood, pasta, and meat dishes, all perfectly flavored, for \$10 to \$19. We tried a strawberry shortcake for dessert and were quite pleased; the only disappointment was that we were too full to order two desserts! Dress well and plan to spend at least \$40 per person; the money is well worth the experience and your date will be forever impressed. Their lunches are rumored to be excellent at half the price.

Please e-mail me at wheelan@ncbi.nlm.nih.gov with comments or suggestions of restaurants to review!

# Searching for answers, and finding them...in Minnesota

Jutta Beneken

If you were to ponder the great questions of life and love, where would you go? A deserted island, perhaps? Or maybe alone on a mountaintop, with a breathtaking view of nature's grandeur? How about the vast expanses of the American Midwest, more precisely, New York Mills, Minnesota? OK, maybe not exactly a place where you think you will be alone with your thoughts, but nevertheless, the answers to some very important questions have come out of New York Mills, Minnesota. No, I didn't flip open a map and blindly point a finger to come up with this, and yes, I would like to inaugurate March as Minnesota Awareness Month.

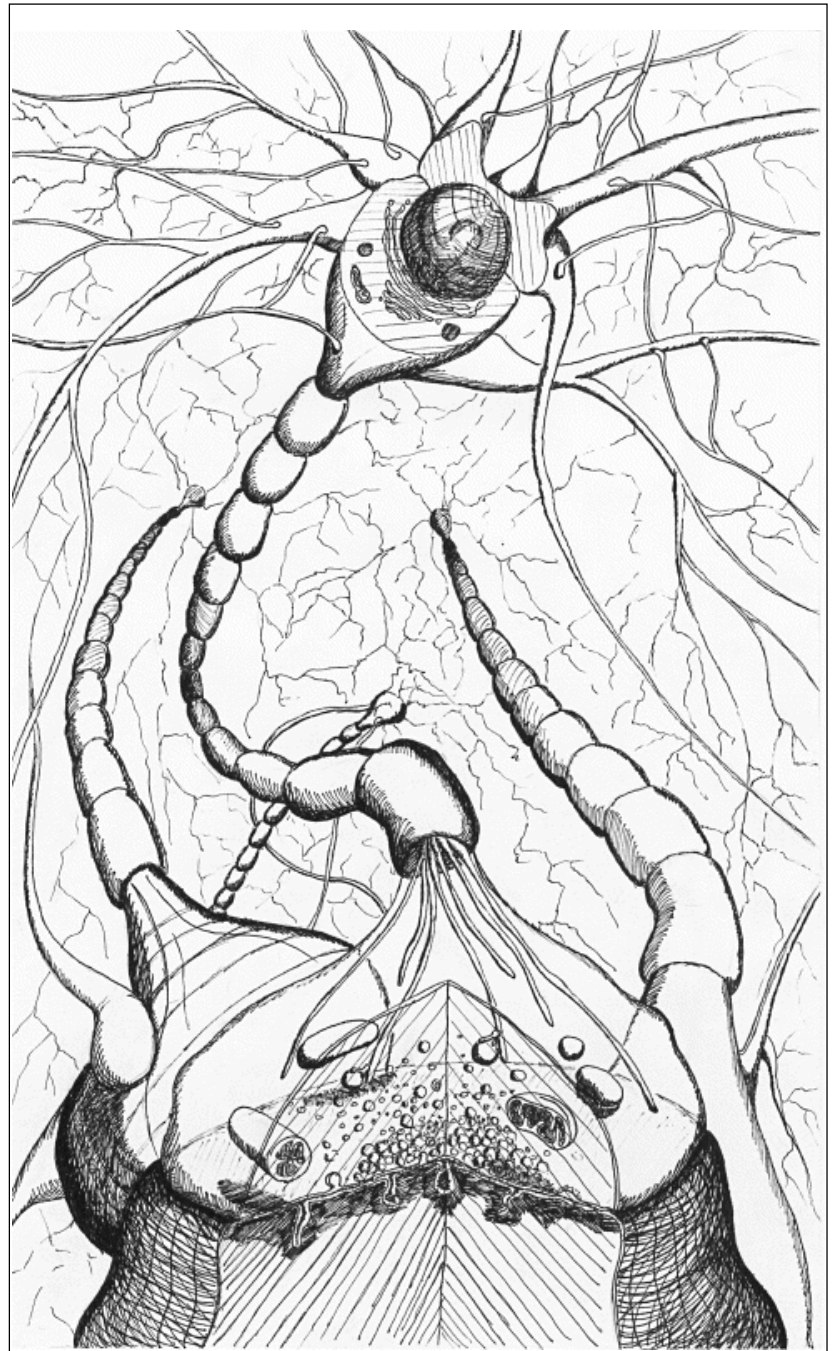
I have never been to New York Mills, Minnesota. I've never even been to Minnesota, for that matter. I was barely aware that Minnesota is, in fact, one of the 50 states. I do know that the Vikings (football), the Twins (baseball), and the Timberwolves (basketball) hail from that general area. (OK, so I know more about sports than about U.S. geography. Can you blame me? I come from a country the size of Montana that won more medals than any other country in the past Olympic games!) The closest I've come to Minnesota was Iowa, the heart of corn country, known among insiders as the land of the larger-than-life bull replicas. (You think I'm kidding...check out <[www.roadsideamerica.com/map/ia.html](http://www.roadsideamerica.com/map/ia.html)>).

New York Mills is a town of 972 souls, situated somewhere between Fargo, North Dakota, and Brainerd, Minnesota. Brainerd is, of course, an unfortunate fusion of the words "brain" and "nerd", which finally brings me to the point of this story. For the past five years, New York Mills has been the home of the Great American Think-Off (brain), an annual event in which arm-chair philosophers (nerds), ages 7 through 97, debate important questions: Does God exist? Is there meaning to life? Is the nature of humankind inherently good or evil? What do Americans value most, morals or money? Is the death penalty ethical or unethical in a civilized society?

Admit it, these are the kinds of questions that you would like to have the answers to, if not  
*con't p. 6, Minnesota*

## GSA Web Page

**Make sure you check out the GSA Web Page at <<http://www.med.jhu.edu/gsa>>. You'll find everything from local happenings to GSA meeting minutes to back issues of the GSA Newsletter. Bookmark it!**



Christopher M.L. Bouton is a second year neuroscience graduate student. He works in Dr. Jonathan Pevsner's laboratory at the Kennedy Krieger Institute on mechanisms of neurotransmitter release.

*ccn't from p. 5, Minnesota*

immediately, at least by the time El Niño blows out the light of your life. Well, feel free to drive your trailer to the tornado belt of central Florida anytime you wish, because, my friends, the answers have been found. God does indeed exist, there is meaning to life, Americans are a greedy people, and the death penalty is unethical. Surprised? The only unresolved issue is that of the nature of humankind.

This year's question to be debated at the Great American Think-Off is the following: Is honesty always the best policy? Although I have to say that that particular issue is not one I'm at odds with (I will answer that question with a resounding "yes" anytime), I am considering a road trip out to New York Mills for the final debate on June 20th. It would be a great way to celebrate Minnesota Awareness Month, albeit three months late. I'm sure the Minnesotans won't notice. In Minnesota the winter doesn't end until June anyway, so June really feels like March to them. I've always wanted to see the world's largest ball of twine in Darwin, or the Paul Bunyan statue in Bemidji.

The 23 hour drive would be a great opportunity to ponder the as of yet unanswered questions in life: If there is meaning to life, what is it? What is love? Is there an end to science? Who was the greater genius, Sir Isaac Newton or Albert Einstein? Who effectively left the most money, Alfred Nobel or Howard Hughes? What would happen if Newton, Einstein, Nobel, and Hughes were all locked in a room together? What would happen if Newton, Einstein, Nobel, Hughes, and Al Mildvan were all locked in a room together? Will the Red Sox ever win the World Series? When is Cal going to retire? Why is there not a single slide projector in this world that works at first attempt? Will I ever get my PhD? And, even more importantly: Will the slide projector work when I give my thesis talk?

Naturally, the Great American Think-Off has a website. If you would like to find out more, you can do so at <<http://www.ties.k12.mn.us/thinkoff/index.html>>. Enjoy your thoughts, for they are your own.

*con't from p. 1, Career Center*

However, what if you are thinking of pursuing an industrial postdoc? Or you want to change fields from your current research? Or you want to get a "real job" and not do a postdoc? Or your advisor does not have the time or inclination to review your CV? These are some situations where you would benefit from some professional career guidance.

The Graduate Student Association has attempted to provide some career information through symposia, workshops, and lectures. A new library containing books on career issues will also be available to graduate student in the very near future. However, nothing can compare with what a dedicated career development office could provide:

- appointments with a professional to rework your resume (which, by the way, is different from a CV!)
- a workshop on skills assessment, where you can learn how to sell yourself and your skills to potential employers
- access to interviews by employers recruiting in the Baltimore area
- contacts at major industrial firms to get your foot in the door
- mock interviews, to prepare for critical questions

None of these services are currently available to graduate student or postdoctoral trainees at Johns Hopkins School of Medicine. The medical school at UCSF has just created an office to provide these types of resources to its graduate students and postdocs. There are so many advantages to having career services available, and I can think of no legitimate arguments to the contrary.

Do you agree? If so, please let me know <[triemer@bme.jhu.edu](mailto:triemer@bme.jhu.edu)> so that your voice can be heard.

*Please visit the companion internet site to this series of articles at <<http://www.bme.jhu.edu/~triemer/issues.html>> for links to related articles.*

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*con't from p. 2, Science Center*

children between the ages of 8 and 12 (and chaperones who deserve kudos) who were extremely excited by the prospect of spending the night at the Science Center. Our job was to greet the groups as they arrived, help the campers move smoothly between the workshops, assist in the workshops, and answer general questions. And of course we had down time to explore the Maryland Science Center on our own. One hears quite a bit these days about the lackluster performance of American students in the sciences. As I sat in on the workshops and saw the enthusiasm of the campers, I could not help but wonder if perhaps these performance issues had been slightly overblown. I saw campers answering questions and giving explanations about the experiments and demonstrations and many were literally jumping out of their seats to participate in the workshops (they were a little less animated at the 8 am workshops, but then so was I). One camper even shared with me that she was a little bored because she knew all the answers! All in all it was a night of big fun; I gave it two thumbs up.