

BiNews

May 2024

The Commencement Edition

CONGRATULATIONS BIOLOGY GRADUATES!



Lorett Alarcon
Carolina Andrade
Annika Baldwin
Mia Bawendi
Leandro Brantley
Bridget Cassata
Rebecca Cutforth
Isabel Davis
Owusua Ennin
Fariya Farah
Sophie Goldsmith
Agustina Gonzalez
Dan Gonzalez-Kosasky
Jared Gracia-David

Callie Hundley
Seojin Jung
Gabriel Lancaster-Dixon
Grace Lee
Lydia Loof
Evan MacArthur-Waltz
Mufaro Mazambani
Olivia Mezzetti
Joseph Min
Siri Palreddy
Ueese Gregorio Patu
Sarah Quiros
Caroline Stole
Zoe Strothkamp
Phillip Zhou

News from this year's graduates

A few seniors have shared their post-graduation plans. Congrats to everyone in the class of 2024, and best of luck on your next journey!

Isabel Davis '24 will be attending Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine to study to become a veterinarian. Isabel has wanted to be a veterinarian since she was a small child. Congrats, Isabel, on continuing to work towards this dream at Cornell!

Fariya Farah '24 will begin working at a fertility clinic in New York City before applying to PA school. In her free time, Fariya is looking forward to reading and practicing embroidery!

Agustina Gonzalez '24 will be starting a position as a research assistant in Nicholas Stavropoulos' lab at Rutgers University, studying the mechanisms of sleep behavior with *Drosophila melanogaster* as their study model. Following this job, Agustina plans on going to graduate school for animal behavior and behavioral ecology.

Callie Hundley '24 will head west to work as a laboratory research technician studying corals and sea grass at the Bodega Marine Laboratory, Coastal and Marine Sciences Institute, UC-Davis, CA.

Biology Thesis Defense

Biology Honors students presented their final theses on April 29th. Congrats to all the Biology thesis writers on this huge accomplishment!

To celebrate their talks, Profs Clotfelter, Levin, and Miller took their labs out for pizza at Treehouse Brewing Company.



Updates from the Ragkousi Lab

The Ragkousi Lab attended the Northeastern Society for Developmental Biology meeting that took place in Woods Hole, MA at the Marine Biological Laboratory (April 26-28). A total of 7 people traveled to the meeting (Anna Postnikova, Grace Lee, Emily Minju Kang, Phillip Zhou, Maristhela Alvarez, Joseph Min, and Professor Ragkousi).

Two posters were presented:

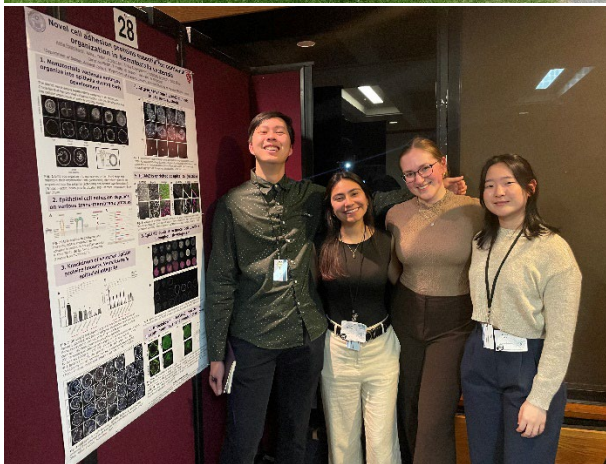
Discovery of cell surface proteins essential for epithelial organization in the basal sea anemone *Nematostella vectensis*

presented by Anna Postnikova, Grace Lee (Biology '24), Maristhela Alvarez (BCBP '25) and Phillip Zhou (Math and Biology '24)

Investigating the role of a conserved tumor suppressor in the cytoskeletal organization of *Nematostella vectensis* epithelia

presented by Emily Minju Kang (BCBP '24) and Joseph Min (Biology '24)

Emily Minju Kang got the second award for the best undergraduate poster!



Student Awards

Emily Kim and Jaden Olsen – James R. Elster Award

- The James R. Elster Award - for research in Biology. Created in memory of James R. Elster '71 by his parents, Dr. and Mrs. Samuel K. Elster. This fund has been established for the purpose of providing support in the summer months for a research project to be undertaken by an undergraduate in the Department of Biology.

Emily Kim and Siri Palreddy – Oscar E. Schotte Scholarship Prize

- The Oscar E. Schotte Scholarship Prize is awarded to a member of the junior or senior class majoring in science to enable them to complete a special project during the summer.

Isabel Davis and Zoe Strothkamp – William C. Young Prize

- The William C. Young Prize, established in memory of William C. Young '21, is awarded to a talented student from the Biology Department to undertake a summer course, a specialized program at an advanced school or institute, a summer field program, or research at a specialized laboratory.

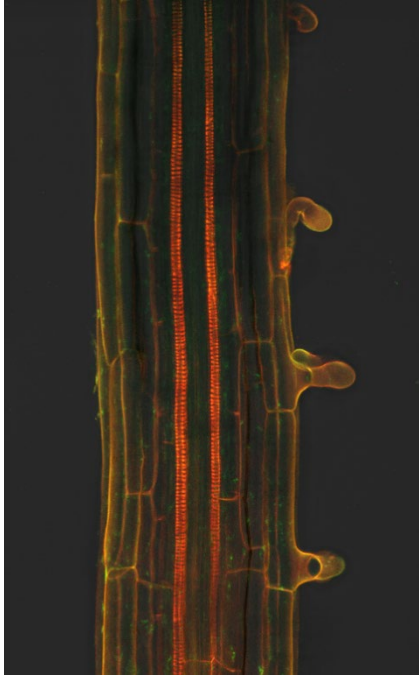
Thomas O'Connor and Ana Ortiz-Gudeman – The Sawyer Prize

- The Sawyer Prize is awarded to that second-semester sophomore who, in the opinion of the Biology Department, has shown the most promise as a student of Biology.

Zoe Strothkamp – Oscar E. Schotte Award

- The Oscar E. Schotte Award (Thesis) is given to that member of the graduating class who, in the opinion of the Biology Department, has done the best independent work in Biology.

Monthly Image from the ABIC

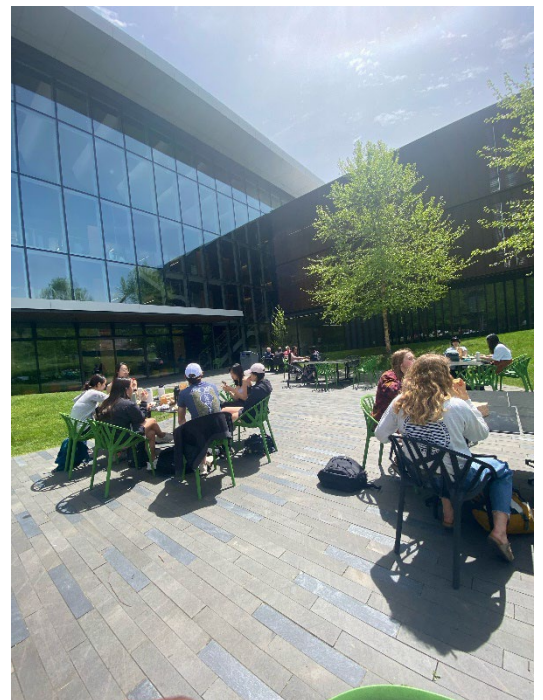


This month's image from ABIC comes from the Jeong lab:

Arabidopsis root: fluorescence (red: propidium iodide staining the cell walls, green: autofluorescence) and brightfield acquired by Ahmed Ali.

Annual Biology Hike and Picnic

On May 9th, the Biology Steering Committee hosted their annual hike to the sanctuary followed by lunch from Chipotle.



Tropical Biology

The amazing group of students in the Spring semester Seminar in Tropical Biology (Biology 454) spent their last day of class communing with the temperate spring flora and fauna at Chapel Brook in Ashfield, MA.



50 Years of Neuroscience at Amherst College

On Saturday, June 1st, Neuroscience majors from the class of '74 will celebrate their 50th reunion, and the Neuroscience Program will mark its 50th anniversary of becoming one of the first programs in the country! Professors Sally Kim, John Roche, Joe Trapani, and Kelly Wallace have made great contributions to the Neuroscience program, along with our amazing Biology staff including Maureen Manning, Kurt Miller, Lori Nichols, and Caroline Towse!

Mammoths in the Wild

This month we spotted the mammoth with Anna Postnikova (Ragkousi Lab) in the mountains in Almaty, Kazakhstan!



If you have any updates for the next issue of BioNews, please send them to Ldavis@amherst.edu.