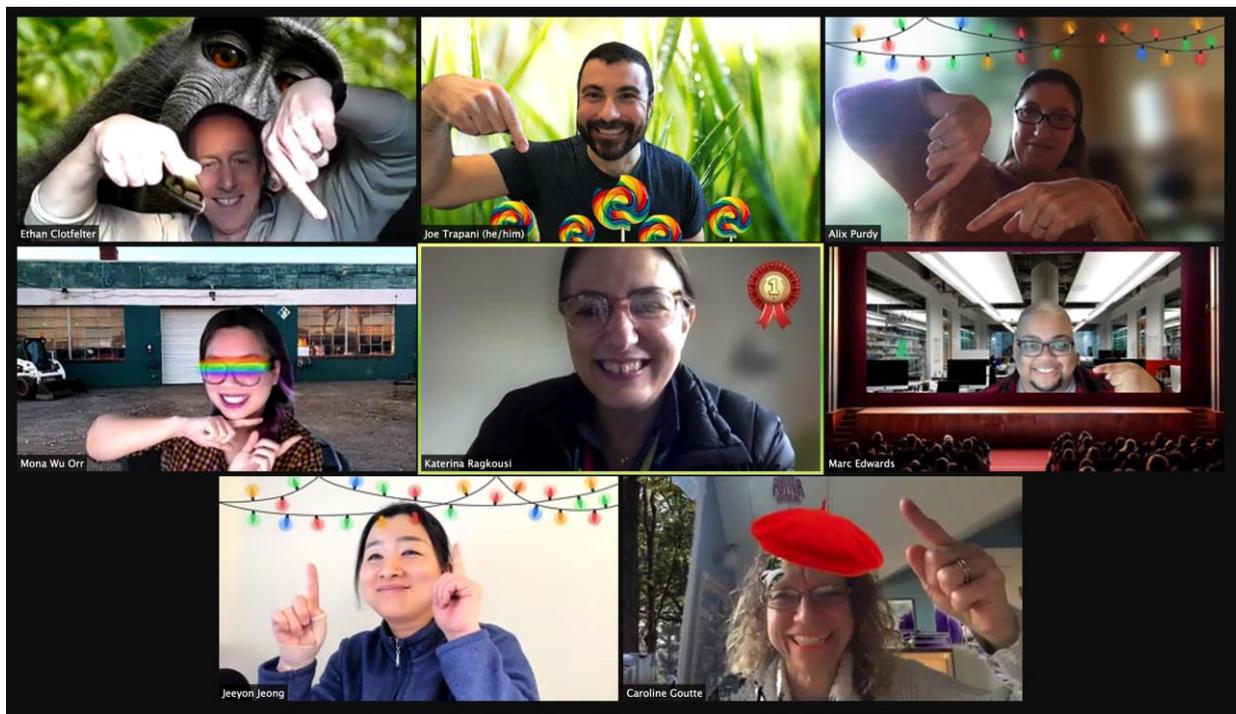


BioNews – March 2021

Ragkousi awarded NIH grant

A huge congratulations to **Prof. Katerina Ragkousi** for receiving an R15 grant from the National Institutes of Health! The grant is titled "Cell Cycle Regulation of Polarity Proteins in Proliferating Epithelia" and will fund research by Prof. Ragkousi and her students on how sea anemones organize their first epithelial tissues and how they maintain them during development and growth. Here are some of us celebrating her on Zoom!



New publication by Levin and Miller

Congratulations to **Profs. Rachel Levin** and **Jill Miller** for their new paper "Molecular signatures of long-distance oceanic dispersal and the colonization of Pacific islands in *Lycium carolinianum*" in *American Journal of Botany*. Read more about it [here](#).



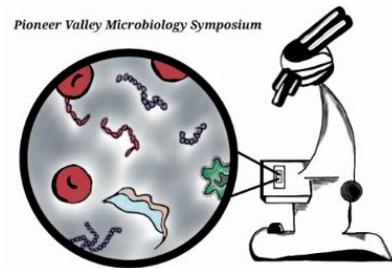
New publication from the Hood lab

Noah Lerner '16, Victoria Luizzi '17 and Prof. Michael Hood are co-authors on a new paper coming out soon in *The American Naturalist*. The paper is entitled "Resistance correlations influence infection by foreign pathogens." A link will be shared in the next BioNews, so stay tuned.



Amherst faculty and students at the Pioneer Valley Microbiology Symposium

Prof. Mona Wu Orr was one of the keynote speakers the 2021 Valley Microbes symposium earlier this year. **Samantha Liu '21** (Biology, Purdy lab) won the award for best student presentation, and **Sam Grondin '21** (BCBP, Wu Orr lab) won the award for best student poster. Congratulations to all!



Student and alumni news

Eleanor Hollers '21 will be starting a new position in the respiratory immunology laboratory of **Dan Dwyer '06** at Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston. And congratulations to Dan for his new position a BWH!

Derek Benson '21 is off to Arizona this fall, where he is starting a Ph.D. program in the School of Life Sciences at Arizona State University. He will be studying the physiological ecology of reptiles in Dale Denardo's lab.

Betsy Black '16 is starting graduate school in Michelle Mack's lab at Northern Arizona University, where she will be studying climate change and wildfire dynamics in the boreal forests of Alaska.

Kellyn LaCour-Conant '15 is the new Director of Habitat Restoration with the Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana, while simultaneously pursuing a Ph.D. in urban forestry at Southern University and A&M College in Baton Rouge. She was also selected recently to be an IF/THEN Ambassador by the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

Furqan Fazal '08 will be starting a new position as Assistant Professor of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology at the Baylor College of Medicine. Some may remember Furqan as a Biology, Chemistry and Physics triple major, as well as [an accomplished photographer](#). Congrats Furqan!

If you have anything to share for the next BioNews, please send it to Ethan Clotfelter (edclotfelter@amherst.edu)!