

June 2022 | Issue 7

# Biomedical Genetics Section

## Newsletter

---

Welcome to the new Biomedical Genetics Section Quarterly Newsletter!

## Meet the People

**We are pleased to feature our Core Lab Tech, Anna Berberoglu, in the Biomedical Genetics Section! Anna has given an amazing introduction about herself and her experience.**



My name is Anna Berberoglu, and I joined the Genetics CORE lab as a laboratory technician in June of 2022. I am completely new to the Boston area and will be attending Boston University School of Medicine this fall to start my Master of Science degree in Biomedical Forensic Sciences with the Graduate Medical Sciences program. I am very thankful to have this opportunity with the Genetics Department under Irene Simkina and Dr. Farrer.

I graduated from Virginia Commonwealth University with my Bachelor of Science degree in Forensic Science and Biology. In my undergraduate research, I researched mutant p53 and studied its

presence in different cancers with the Biochemistry department of the VCU Medical College and Massey Cancer Center. I also researched continuous crystallization using slug flow technology in pharmaceutical production with VCU College of Engineering in the Chemical and Life Science Engineering department during the last year of my undergraduate studies.

As a laboratory technician at the Genetics CORE lab in the Boston University School of Medicine, I extract DNA/RNA from various samples including blood, saliva, placenta, and brain tissues and store them for genetic analysis. I log and map samples using network databases, perform genotyping reactions, optimize PCR-based assays, and operate automated DNA genotyping equipment. Other tasks include sample preparation, data analysis, and quality control. With my previous experience, my current position's experience, and my future master's degree, I plan to become a Forensic DNA Analyst, where I can utilize my extensive scientific knowledge with the law and provide service to my community.

# Boston University News

## Health Insurance 2022 Increase

The health insurance rate is increasing from \$4090 to \$4323 effective August 15th. The full amount is to be covered for first years by GMS and then by their grant funding when moved over to their service stipends.

## Be Vigilant: New MS Word Attack - May 30th, 2022

There is a newly discovered vulnerability in MS Word (and likely other MS Office apps) that could install malware on your computer. All faculty, students, and staff are encouraged to be especially vigilant about opening any attachments.

Because this malicious code is as simple as opening up a Word doc—in preview mode, we the BU community to again, be extremely vigilant making sure you verify the sender of an email, the timelines & context (were you expecting an attachment) and stop and think. Take a moment to verify the validity of the email message can protect you until a patch is released!

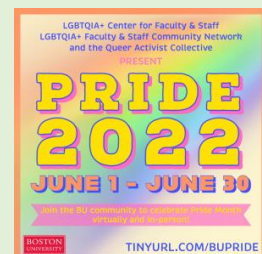
Please read this important [message](#) from BU IS&T Information Security.

## 710 Parking Garage Construction

Please be advised that construction will resume at the 710 Albany Street Garage on Tuesday, April 19. The first phase of this spring's construction will concentrate on the west side of the garage (closest to medical examiner building) and spaces will be blocked on all levels of the garage.

This reduced capacity may cause delays at entry and parkers may be redirected to other parking facilities when the garage reaches capacity. Entry to the garage will be prohibited on weekdays between 2-3:30 p.m. to alleviate traffic issues affecting Albany Street. Parkers with Off-Shift permits will have access to the 610 Albany Street Garage and should go there directly if arriving during that time.

**Fun Facts:** BUMC holds various event in June to celebrate Pride month, find more information [here](#).



## Upcoming Changes to the BU Retirement Savings Program

On June 29th, the following funds will be added to the BU Retirement Savings Program investment lineup:

- PIMCO Inflation Response Multi-Asset Fund Institutional
- Vanguard Target Retirement 2070 Fund
- Vanguard Total Stock Market Index Fund Admiral Shares

On August 1, 2022, the following current existing funds will be removed from the investment lineup.

- Causeway International Value Fund Class Institutional
- DFA Emerging Markets Core Equity Portfolio Institutional Class
- DFA U.S. Small Cap Portfolio Institutional Class

Live webinar, virtual help desk or 1:1 consultation with a Fidelity retirement planner.

- **Investment Lineup Changes Webinar** - [Learn More and Register](#)

Date: July 13<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>

Time: 12-1pm

- **Virtual Help Desk** - [Learn More and Register](#)

Date: July 11<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>

12-1pm

- **1:1 Consultation with Fidelity** - Appointments Available [Daily](#)

Find information about these upcoming changes on the [Human Resources website](#), or contact the Human Resources Service Center at [HR@bu.edu](mailto:HR@bu.edu) or 617-353-2380.

## BU Updates on COVID-19

### **COVID-19 Health Services Transitions**

- The Healthway organization, including the Healthway phone line 617-353-0550 and [healthwayhelp@bu.edu](mailto:healthwayhelp@bu.edu), will close at the end of the day on **May 25, 2022**.
- Students with any COVID-related concerns, including vaccination compliance, should refer to the [Student Health Services COVID-19 website](#) or call 617-353-3575 with further questions.
- Faculty and staff with COVID-related medical concerns should refer to the [Occupational Health Center COVID-19 website](#) or call the Occupational Health Center 617-353-6630 with further questions.
- Employees with *non-medical* COVID-19 concerns should call the Human Resources Service Center at 617-353-2380 or email [covidhelp@bu.edu](mailto:covidhelp@bu.edu) weekdays from 9am-5pm.

### **Symptomatic/Close Contact Exposure Testing for COVID-19**

- Asymptomatic community surveillance testing ends today, **May 23, 2022**.
- Boston University's COVID-19 PCR Testing Laboratory will continue to process COVID-19 specimens for individuals who are experiencing symptoms or who have had a [close contact exposure](#).
- COVID-19 PCR test results will continue to be automatically viewable in the student and employee health portals as soon as they are finalized. Please review these testing pages for more detailed information: [Student Testing](#) and [Employee Testing](#).

### **New BU COVID webpage:**

- The information previously available on the Back2BU and Healthway websites is now available on [Student Health Services](#), [Occupational Health Center](#), and [Human Resources w](#)bsites and can be linked to from a new landing page: <http://bu.edu/covid>

**Fun Facts:** BUMC Dodgeball Tournament Returns to Campus, find more information [here](#).



## Biomedical Genetics Section Updates

### Dr. Shoumita Dasgupta is featuring in a PBS Show

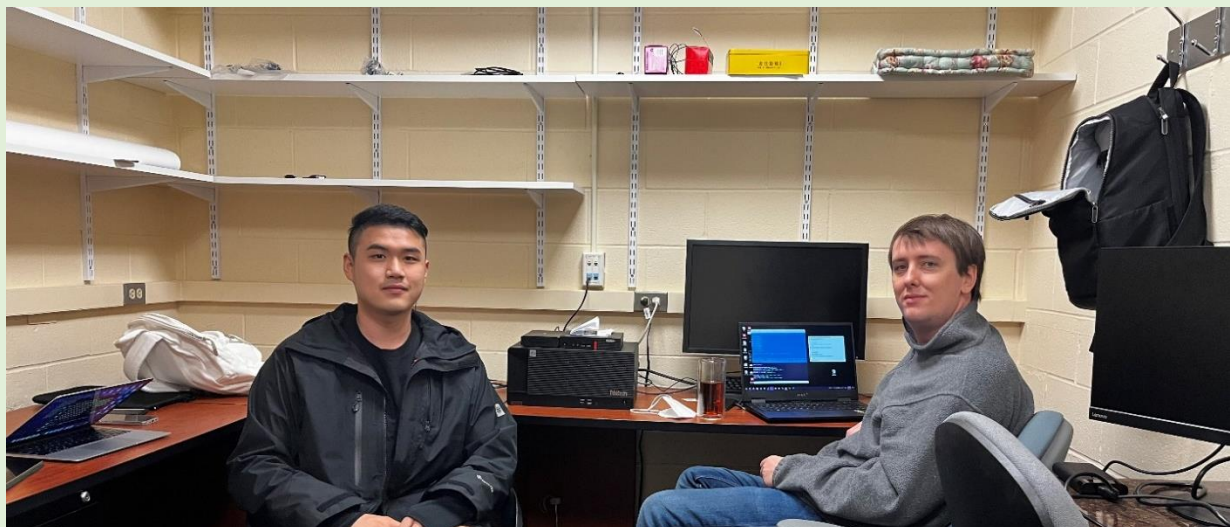
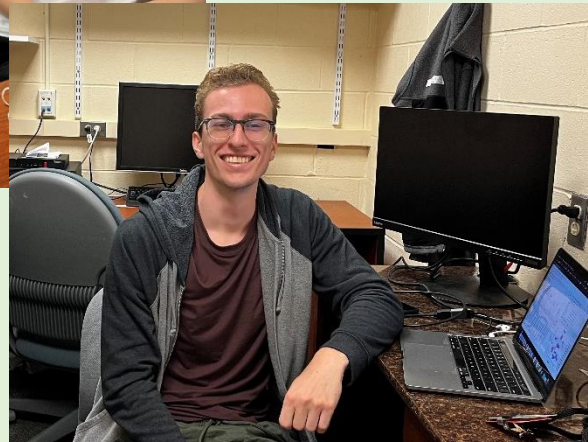
They filmed at her house, anticipated to air in late 2022, called “Your DNA Secrets Revealed” with her cats as little production assistants!



**Congratulation to Dr. Shoumita Dasgupta**



## Our Student Office team



## Student Journal Club Social Activity

This year our Student Journal Club hosted their social Activity event was a great success, unfortunately, we do not have any photos for their event, hope we will have more next year.

## Staff Update

This summer we have some changes with our Staff:

### 1. Leaving or Already left:

Juming Hu - data analyst

Yueh Ting - data analyst

Courtney Thompson - Core lab tech

Grace McNeil - Core lab tech

Xinyu Sun - data analyst

### 2. New Hires

Ann Berboroglu – core lab tech

Caroline Banfi- Core lab tech

Habbiburr Rehman - Post Doc with Dr. Xiaoling Zhang's group

Aiji Guo- temp data analyst under Xiaoling Zhang's group

## Exciting New Offices

We have 5 new offices on the hallway!



## Research News

### New Postdoctoral GMS Stipend for AY 22 – 23



On May 25, the National Institutes of Health (NIH)

BU and many of our peer institutions look to the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Ruth L. Kirschstein National Research Service Award minimum stipend level as a salary and stipend benchmark for postdoc compensation. NIH recently announced it is raising the minimum from \$53,760 to \$54,840, a two percent increase. Therefore, as of September 1, 2022, BU's minimum postdoc salary and stipend level will

be \$54,840. However, new proposals submitted through Sponsored Programs will require postdoc salaries to be budgeted at \$54,840, effective immediately.

GMS Stipend Request form can be found [here](#).

Please see the full message [here](#).

### Sponsored Research Travel

Please note that due to the expected increase in travel, the [Sponsored Program Travel Guidelines](#) including [Fly America guidance](#) has been updated.

For foreign travel on federal funds, the US Government has over one hundred open sky agreements with other countries, but only 4 of them are compliant with [Fly America](#). For Department of Defense awards, it is atypical that any foreign travel is allowed on a non-US carrier. DOD has very strict rules and few allowable exceptions...

View the rest of this [post](#).

### Funding Opportunity: 2022 ADDF-Harrington Scholar Award

Harrington Discovery Institute at University Hospitals and the Alzheimer's Drug Discovery Foundation (ADDF) announce a joint request for proposals for the 2022 ADDF-Harrington Scholar Award. The ADDF-Harrington Scholar Award is designed to accelerate the translation of innovative research that could treat, prevent, or slow Alzheimer's disease or related dementias.

Find more information [here](#).

## Reminder NIH Deadlines and Proposal Submission Policy

The NIH summer deadlines (June 5, June 12, June 16, July 5, July 12, July 16, August 8, etc) are upon us and these are always a high volume proposal time for Sponsored Programs (see the [complete list of deadlines](#)). In addition to the normal high proposal volumes, the majority of these deadlines fall on a weekend, Monday, or after a holiday which historically results in many more proposals being finalized on deadline day.

As a reminder, according to the submission policy we request **all administrative components be finalized 5 business days before the deadline** and the **final and complete proposal be submitted to Sponsored Programs 3 business days before the deadline**. Proposals that become complete on the day of the deadline are at risk of not being successfully submitted given high volumes and system pressures.

## Reminder

### Faculty Annual Review

Please let Phuong ([phvn@bu.edu](mailto:phvn@bu.edu)) know if you have not done the Faculty Annual Review with Dr. Lindsay Farrer, she will help you schedule your Review Meeting, as early as you can, but no later than **Aug. 31, 2022**.

### DoM Evans Days

2022 Evans Days will be held October 13 - 14! Abstract submissions open June 15 - July 15. There will be an award ceremony the day of the event. The event will be held in person with video capabilities for those who cannot attend.

For staff award nominations, abstract information, and Blue Ribbon Panelist information click [here](#)

### Research Core and Service Centers

Department of Medicine Research Cores offer the BUMC and larger research community access to specialty imaging and analysis equipment and expertise. Training and demonstrations are offered by the Cores and time with the equipment can be booked depending on your needs.

Learn more [here](#)

## Resources

### **Submit an Announcement Request Form and share your news in the next issue of the Biomedical Genetics Section Newsletter!**



Do you have exciting news that you want to share in the next issue of our quarterly Biomedical Genetics Section Newsletter? Submit an [Announcement Request Form](#), located on the Resources page of our [website](#)!