

March 2023 | Issue 9

# Biomedical Genetics Section

Quarterly Newsletter

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Welcome to the Biomedical Genetics Quarterly Newsletter

## Meet the People

***We are pleased to welcome Vidriana to the Biomedical Genetics team!***



My name is Vidriana Catanzaro, and I am the new Research Administrative Assistant for the Biomedical Genetics Section. I will be assisting anyone in the section that needs it: Dr. Farrer, faculty, staff, and students. My responsibilities include ordering supplies, scheduling meetings/appointments, updating our website, editing research manuscripts, and more.

I graduated last spring with a bachelor's degree in Mathematics from Gordon College. I plan to pursue an MS in Biostatistics next.

On most spring and summer nights, you can find me at what I call "my summer home" — Fenway Park. In the rest of my free time, I enjoy exploring the city on foot, watching/playing sports, and doing photography.

## Biomedical Genetics Section Updates

### Journal Club (biweekly Wednesdays @2PM)

We are excited to announce the start of a new Biomedical Genetics journal club! This is a great resource for anyone who is interested in discovering new methods or trying to keep up with the latest technologies. Meetings are led by graduate students within the Biomedical Genetics Section, but everyone is encouraged to attend. We typically discuss topics related ongoing research in the Biomedical Genetics Section. (e.g. sequencing technologies, GWAS, machine learning). There will be PIZZA!



**Dates & Time:** every other Wednesday at 2pm-- next meeting is April 5<sup>th</sup>

**Location:** Rm E246 of the Evans building (Zoom connection is also available)

Please email [sahelijo@bu.edu](mailto:sahelijo@bu.edu) for more information on upcoming talks in-person, or if you would like to join by Zoom.

### Dr. Farrer's Interview on Age-related Macular Degeneration with COVID-19 Infection



On January 9<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Dr. Farrer was a featured guest of SiriusXM-Doctor Radio's *Internal Medicine* show hosted by Dr. Ira Breite (NYU Langone Health). The talk, along with other guest Dr. Subramanian, discussed the recent study on the relationship between age-related macular degeneration as a risk factor for COVID-19 infection and severe disease.

[Read More](#)

## Updates in Suite E200

We have new artwork hanging in the E200 Suite hallway! In E200, you will also find Vidriana, a new face at the desk.



## Grants

**We want to congratulate Dr. Xiaoling Zhang who is currently a co-PI on a R01 grant with Dr. Ben Wolozin and a co-Investigator on a RF1 grant.**

### [The role of N6-methyladenosine \(m6A\) modified RNA in Alzheimer's disease](#)

12/15/2022-11/30/2027 R01AG080810 (Wolozin/Zhang),

Total Cost: \$3,955,189

This RO1 proposal will investigate a specific type of RNA modification, termed methylation. We will study how RNA methylation changes in Alzheimer's disease by examining both coding and non-coding RNA, and we will determine how m6A contributes to the pathophysiology of tau.

## Identification and characterization of the CD31-ApoE-mCRP pathway for Alzheimer's disease in humans

7/2023-6/2028 R01AG075832-01A1 (Qiu/Stein/Andrew)

Total Cost: \$4,080,624

This RF1 proposal will test our hypothesis that the binding of monomeric CRP (mCRP) and its receptor CD31 (Pecam1) on brain endothelial cells will be associated with increased CD31 phosphorylation (pCD31) and neuroinflammation, with more severe cerebrovascular and AD pathologies, and with cognitive decline in an ApoE sensitive manner (ApoE4 > ApoE3 > ApoE2) in humans; the ApoE-CD31 binding counteracts this pathological process on endothelial cells in the brain.

## BUMC News and Events

### NIH, AHRQ and HRSA Announce FY 2023 Updates to NRSA Stipends, Tuition/Fees and Other Budgetary Levels



Stipend increases were announced for fiscal year (FY) 2023 Kirschstein-NRSA awards for undergraduate, predoctoral and postdoctoral trainees and fellows. Training Related Expenses and Institutional Allowances for predoctoral and postdoctoral trainees and fellows reflect a moderate increase. [Read More](#)

### Why ChatGPT Is Both Exciting and Unsettling for Students, Faculty



The capabilities of ChatGPT offer both opportunity and temptation—driving students, faculty, and administrators across Boston University to talk about the artificial intelligence chatbot's potential as both an enabler of plagiarism and an exciting research tool.

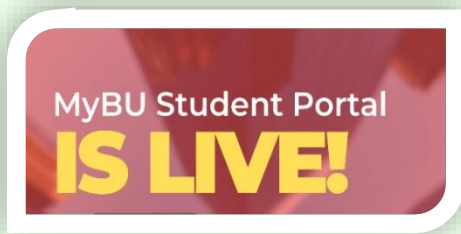
[Read More](#)

## BU Launches Belonging & Culture Survey, First Community-Wide Effort



The Belonging & Culture Survey aims to “assess the sense of belonging and culture at the University for students, staff, and faculty and to identify successes and opportunities for improvement,” using the data to “better enable us to develop programs and policies that will increase a sense of belonging for all at BU”. [Read More](#)

## MyBU Student Portal Launched March 6<sup>th</sup>



MyBU is a modern and user-friendly platform that will allow students to access the features of Student Link and other helpful tools to help navigate life at BU. Students will continue to manage course registration and other campus transactions in familiar ways, but will be greeted by MyBU, the new gateway. [Read More](#)

## Edward Avedisian, Clarinetist and Philanthropist Whose \$100 Million Gift Renamed BU’s School of Medicine, Dies at 85



Avedisian (CFA ’59, ’61, Hon. ’22) made his donation with the agreement that the medical school would be named after himself and his lifelong Armenian childhood friend from their days growing up in Pawtucket, R.I., Aram V. Chobanian (Hon. ’06), BU’s ninth president. The gift for the Boston University Aram V. Chobanian & Edward Avedisian School of Medicine will support scholarships and endowed faculty chairs, along with cutting-edge research and teaching.

For Avedisian’s full obituary, [read more here.](#)

## FY24 DOM Research Accelerator Program



The Department of Medicine Research Accelerator Program provides support to junior faculty who are committed to pursuing a career as a physician-scientist or scientist within the DOM. The program provides funding during the crucial period of career development in the first three years of their faculty position (Instructor or Assistant Professor) within the DOM. [Read More](#)

## Do You Know a STAR?

Nominate a staff member today through the new employee recognition program. [Read More](#)

### Does Your Section Have Performers Destined for STARDoM?

The "STARDoM" Employee Recognition Program, sponsored by the Boston University Department of Medicine, seeks to recognize outstanding non-physician employees who work in all areas, including administration, clinical care and research.

#### The STARDoM Program

Many opportunities for staff to receive awards and be recognized

Selected employees are announced on a monthly basis

Opportunities for physicians, patients and colleagues to nominate

All STAR Performers are honored at an Employee Recognition Party hosted by the department yearly



[tinyurl.com/7wx2nht8](https://tinyurl.com/7wx2nht8)

#### What Makes a STAR?

- ★ Service that is consistently exceptional
- ★ Thoughtful, considerate treatment of others
- ★ Actions demonstrate extraordinary dedication
- ★ Role model of excellence

Scan code to learn about eligibility and how to nominate

Contact: [Maria.Galatis@BMC.org](mailto:Maria.Galatis@BMC.org)

Department of Medicine

# Evans Days

October 19-20, 2023

**SAVE THE DATE**



## Evans Days Speakers:

**Wilkins Visiting Professor**



**Barbara Kahn, MD**

George R. Minot Professor of Medicine,  
Harvard Medical School  
Vice-Chair for Research Strategy,  
Department of Medicine  
Senior Faculty and Former Chief,  
Division of Endocrinology,  
Diabetes and Metabolism,  
Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center  
Institute Member, Broad Institute of  
MIT and Harvard

**Ingelfinger Visiting Professor**



**Gbenga Ogedegbe, MD, MPH**

Dr. Adolph & Margaret Berger  
Professor of Population Health  
Director, Institute for Excellence  
in Health Equity (IEHE)  
NYU Grossman School of  
Medicine, NYU Langone Health

**[View More of the Upcoming BUMC Events Here](#)**

## Biomedical Genetics Section Festivities

### All Together Again! Holiday Party 2022







## Resources

**Don't Forget. 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](#)!