Letter from the Chair

Dear Colleagues,

Before introducing this new issue of the Pathology Newsletter, I would like to thank you all for your resilience demonstrated in the last six months. Residents and postdocs spent countless hours assisting the COVID19 screening operation. Labs had to reduce in person work during the spring but used this time to submit grants and apply for new fellowships like never before. Administrative staff adapted to the new situation and assisted our faculty in this task demonstrating that, when we work together, we can overcome any circumstances and succeed. All our events went to a virtual format and, like it or not, we are all becoming new practitioners of Zoom and WebEx! Thank you all for making it happen. My personal view is that the most difficult time is behind us. New York City is doing great when it comes to infections rates and even with the winter ahead of us there are plenty of signs that offer an optimistic outlook. The bigger question for us will be if we have learned or gained anything from this experience and whether we could use some of it for our own benefits. Once more I am optimistic, as I believe that the pandemic made us more resilient, creative and accepting of each other.

I would like to also state that I enjoy reading this newsletter and I thank the editorial team that puts it together. I would actually love to see a print version out soon, especially now that the NYU Pathology footprint is expanding and extending from Manhattan to Brooklyn and Long Island. It is exciting to see this family growing and flourishing. Related to this growth of the NYU Langone Health Pathology family, I would like to “give a shout out” to Dr. Amy Rapkiewicz, the Chair of the NYU Long Island Department of Pathology. She has been extremely busy the last half a year, setting up a new Department and at the same time using autopsy to discovery novel COVID19 pathologies.

Amy is one example of a member of our family assuming significant leadership roles. Another one is Dr. Boris Reizis, Professor in the Departments of Pathology and Medicine. It was recently announced that Boris will be the founding Director of the Translational Immunology Center (TrIC). Let me start by saying that such a Center was a dream for all immunologists at NYUH and the reason that I joined the institution 14 years ago as a starting Assistant Professor. I know Boris for almost two decades now, from the time that we were trainees in Boston, and I admire his scientific excellence, his determination and passion. I am sure that he will be an impressive leader for the immunology community at NYUH. Our Department is here to help him and we are actually starting a combined faculty research starting this fall. You can find information about the Center in the dedicated section in this newsletter and please stay tuned for more to come!

As we discuss about new leaders in our Department, we cannot of course forget the new Leaders of our Residency Program, Drs. Esther Adler and Melissa Guzzetta. I am excited to work with them and make sure that we both recruit the best candidates for our program and we provide to our residents the best education, guaranteeing a future successful career. I should take a moment here and welcome our incoming residents to NYU Langone and our Department!

Although it is tough selecting individual achievements, as all of you are doing an impressive work, I would like to share some of the significant recognitions our investigators and trainees have received during the last few months:

- Dr. Shruti Naik, an Assistant Professor in the Department of Pathology, was named Pew Scholar in the Biomedical Sciences, a prestigious honor that provides funding to young investigators of outstanding promise in science relevant to the advancement of human health.
- Kody Mansfield, graduate student in Naik lab, has been awarded a HHIMI 2020 Gilliam Graduate Fellowship Grant for his studies on “Infantile Atopic Dermatitis: finally, an early-in life murine model”.
- Dr. Fei Chen, one of our PGY-4 residents, was selected as a Blue-Ribbon finalist in this year’s American Society for Clinical Pathology (ASCP) meeting.
- Dr. Christina Glytsou, a postdoc in my lab, received an NIH K99 (Pathway to Independence) Award for her research on “Targeting mitochondrial dynamics in drug-resistant acute myeloid leukemia.”
- Dr. Elena Battistello, a postdoc in my lab, was the recipient of a Swiss National Science Foundation grant for her study “Multimodal single-cell analysis of the Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia immune landscape”.
- Dr. Nicholas Adams, postdoc in Reizis Lab, was awarded a Damon Runyon Postdoctoral Fellowship for his studies on “Elucidating how pDC genome organization regulates IFN production in cancer”.

Finally, I would like to welcome you all to the new academic year. This year will be different than all the previous ones and I am sure one that we will remember. I believe that this will be the year that we will witness the defeat of the pandemic by human ingenuity and a slow return to normalcy. Our Department so far has weathered the storm, due to your hard work and perseverance and I am sure that better days are ahead of us!

Happy reading everybody! Please feel free to contact us with any questions or comments—we would love to hear from you.

Best,
Iannis