HERE'S TO THE FUTURE
THE INTERVIEW EDITION

Features

PICKING A GRADUATE SCHOOL
Current students and administrators reflect on their graduate school choice

MEETING THE NEW SACKLER FACULTY
With a wave of recent hires, we cover what new Sackler faculty want to do next

A BRAVE NEW WORLD
Sackler is ready to help you achieve your career successes, whatever they may be
You like science. You fell in love with research. You are committed to pursuing a PhD. Now what? Selecting where you will pursue your PhD – and live for the next 5-7 years – is crucial. What is most important to you – Scientific rigor? Broad academic training (open program versus track-specific)? A nurturing environment/sense of community? Supportive mentors/administration? Maybe location? Perhaps all of these?

The purpose of an interview is not only for us to assess whether you are a good fit for our program, but it is also, and perhaps more important, a chance for you to determine whether our program is the right fit for you. What faculty did you enjoy meeting? Could you picture yourself in his/her lab? Do the students seem generally happy? Do faculty make an effort to learn about you? Do you feel comfortable in the community? Once you have determined which aspects are the most important to you, the next task will be to rank each graduate school by these components (Table 1 can get you started!).

HOW DID YOU END UP CHOOSING YOUR GRADUATE SCHOOL?

**Naoko (PhD, Columbia University):** I was on my own when I interviewed at Columbia. I enjoyed the freedom of meeting faculty and exploring the neighborhood. I chose Columbia over another school that wined and dined me and put me up in a nice hotel. It was the excitement I sensed from the research community that led to my decision to attend Columbia. Besides, Richard Axel who interviewed me said, “You should come here”. When I rotated in his lab I met Moses Chao, Dan Littman, among others. Moses in fact supervised my work, but I chose another lab for thesis research. It’s a small world where you make friends for life! I also had a chance to try my hand at x-ray crystallography because the program required one rotation in a lab outside my primary interest. To date I remember the experience and value it.

**Susanne (PhD, Vanderbilt University):** I attended Vanderbilt because I wanted to pursue my PhD with a specific PI. If he had still been at University of Kansas Medical Center, I would have attended graduate school there. I ranked ‘quality of research’ and ‘time to degree’ as the most important factors; my PI was world-renowned in his field and had a reputation for graduating students in 4 years or less. My choice could be viewed as successful, in that I graduated with several publications in under 4 years. By focusing on those two factors, however, I did miss some of the ‘student community’ (socializing!) and other ‘perks’ (honkytonking!), but at the time, those were not as important to me.

**My one piece of advice?** Keep an open mind when choosing schools, labs, and research projects. There is so much out there that you don’t know. Many exciting opportunities are waiting to be explored. It’s entirely up to you to find your passion! Sky is the limit!

**My one piece of advice?** Make the most of your rotations and of all you can learn in graduate school. Try a new animal model, or learn about a different field. Take advantage of all the knowledge around you. There will probably be no other time in your life when you are paid to learn.

For applicants reading this, we hope Sackler is a match for you!
Table 1. Graduate School Snapshot. Perhaps this table can be used as a guide during school visits. What else is important to you?
Hello friends!

We have done great things this past year, and we will do more great things in the one to come. Before we look forward to our plans for this year, let us recap the highlights from the last six months.

Our new graduate student class of 2015 joined us for food, drink, and entertainment during their week-long orientation. A sampling platter of baseball games, karaoke, and barbecues (and lots more) were offered and devoured. We inaugurated Sackler Movie Nights with a Star Wars saga in anticipation of The Force Awakens! We plan to continue these movie nights into the new year, so if you have any movie suggestions please let us know! Our Holiday Party in December was also a huge success. We filled a local bar to capacity and polished off delicious pizzas—all while we were dressed in holiday style.

In the near future, we will be bringing back the traditional Winter Trip to Hunter Mountain. Join us for a weekend of skiing, snowboarding, snowball fights, igloo building contests, and relaxation. Also, look forward to day trips to local hotspots like Rockwood Music Hall, Spanish Harlem, and the Natural History Museum. Are you an artist? Throat-singer? Part-time, spoken-word opera enthusiast? If you are, get excited about the Sackler-wide talent show (coming soon)!

If have any questions, suggestions, or comments, please let us know. If you don’t want to talk to us (even though we’re pretty amazing), reach out to your class liaison and they can relay your thoughts to us. Thanks for all of your support, and we are looking forward to seeing all of the great things you guys will do this year.

Incandescently,
Sackler Student Council

Hari Rallapalli, President
Joshi Frenster, Vice-President
Cassidy Reich, Treasurer
Patty Martin, Secretary
Phillip Thomas, Diversity Chair
Ilona Kats, Social Chair

GREETINGS, SACKLER
A letter from your Sackler Student Council

By Hari Rallapalli
MAKING THE RIGHT CHOICE

Current students reflect on crucial factors that informed their graduate school decision process and offer helpful advice

By Kristen D’Elia

"Selecting a graduate school was the biggest decision that I made in my early 20’s." Most graduate students would agree with this sentiment expressed by Julia Derk, a third year in the Pathobiology and Translational Medicine program. Personally, my decision between three fantastic – but vastly different – schools was far from easy. I eagerly sought advice on how to make “the right choice.” In hopes to help those interviewees who will face this struggle, six current students reflect on how they chose Sackler to propel their career in science.

THE CHOICE ISN’T TOUGH FOR EVERYONE

For Alex Calderon, a first year in the Stem Cell Biology program, the decision was "relatively easy." Taking a rational and organized approach, he used the "process of elimination by comparing two schools at a time and dropping the school that 'lost' the comparison."

For Anthony Bainer, a fifth year in the Molecular Pharmacology program, contacting schools with questions turned a hard decision into a piece of cake. "One school never responded. Another responded with an email tersely addressing each question. It was the Sackler graduate adviser and program director that called me for a three-way conference call to address my questions one-by-one. This made my choice pretty easy."

A FACTOR THAT SIMPLIFIES THE DECISION FOR ONE CAN MAKE ANOTHER’S MORE DIFFICULT

Florante Ricarte, a fourth year in the Biochemistry and Molecular Pharmacology program, quickly narrowed his selection down to NYC-based schools. "It was very important for me to live in a place that I knew would make me happy. I have other interests outside of science that keep me balanced... and I knew that New York would provide me with the space for that."

For Jessie Brown, a fifth year in the Molecular Oncology program, location introduced a complication: choosing between a school close to family on the West Coast or Sackler. "The two programs were very different and in such different parts of the country that I had a hard time deciding." In the end, she opted for "the more challenging program where [she] could do higher impact work."

EVERYONE’S GRADUATE SCHOOL CHECKLIST PRIORITIZES THINGS UNIQUELY

Sophie Dyzensohnau, a first year in the Microbiology program, said, "I wanted to go to a school where I was confident I would find the perfect lab for me... where there was a large community of researchers who were working on things related to what I wanted to do."

Jessie also made sure she had ample choices for potential advisors. "When I interviewed, I spoke with faculty members to get an idea of whether or not our interests aligned and what
"You have different needs and goals, and bring different things to the table than everyone else. Picking a school is extremely personal. Always keep yourself in mind."
MEETING NEW SACKLER FACULTY

Recent faculty hires at NYU School of Medicine discuss their research interests and what makes Sackler such an exciting place to be

By Anjelique Schulfer

Talented scientists open labs at NYU School of Medicine without much fanfare. The paucity of fireworks and welcome parades to announce new faculty creates a situation where hoary graduate students—such as myself—scroll through a list of Sackler faculty and hardly recognize anyone. During this interview season, while students are trying to decide where to call home for graduate school, allow me to introduce you to four faculty members who recently made the decision to call NYU SoM home.

**MARCUS NOYES, PHD**

**What are your primary research interests?**

We are interested in understanding protein interactions at such a level that we could predict interacting partners, even for mutants and proteins that haven’t evolved! We use synthetic and systems biology approaches in the hopes of understanding the functional consequence of a mutation and to allow the selection or design of inhibitors that disrupt harmful interactions.

**Where were you before NYUSoM?**

I was a Lewis-Sigler Fellow at Princeton University. These are independent positions awarded directly out of graduate school with generous funds that allow the scientist to run a small lab for about 5 years. I feel very fortunate to have had the opportunity at Princeton as it gave me 5 years to “apprentice” as a Professor and get some of those mistakes due to inexperience out of the way!

**Why did you choose NYUSoM?**

My work has always balanced between tool building and understanding important biological proteins. I felt the new Institute for Systems Genetics was the perfect fit that appreciates the need for technology development for us to understand biological systems and treat those systems when mutations have led to harmful consequences.

**What excites you most about being part of the NYUSoM community?**

There is a youthful, stimulating energy about NYUSoM with all the young faculty that have been hired recently. So much growth, new research and programs, it creates a “we’re in this together” mentality that I like being a part of. It breeds collaboration, not competition, providing an environment that is exciting to be a part of.

**THALES PAPAGIANNAKOPoulos, PHD**

**What are your primary research interests?**

The goal of our lab is to create and utilize genetically engineered mouse models (GEMMs) to model various types of cancers with a particular focus on lung cancer. These models enable the characterization of the critical steps of tumor initiation and progression at a molecular, cellular and whole organism level. Our lab is using GEMMs of lung cancer in combination with in vivo CRISPR/Cas9 genome editing approaches to address the immediate need to systematically interrogate the complex catalog of mutations obtained from cancer genome sequencing studies.

**Where were you before NYUSoM?**

I was a postdoctoral fellow at Massachusetts Institute of Technology in the laboratory of Tyler Jacks. In Dr. Jacks’ lab, I performed experiments to dissect the genetic and clonal mechanisms by which lung cancer progresses toward malignancy. It was through this project that I realized the power of using sophisticated mouse models to identify and characterize genes involved in lung tumorigenesis.

**Why did you choose NYUSoM?**

NYU has many outstanding basic and clinical research investigators and an excellent graduate program. There are currently ongoing efforts at NYUSoM to expand the schools focus in cancer research and I joined because I want to be part of this growing community.

**What excites you most about being part of the NYUSoM community?**

I am excited to be part of a very interactive and collaborative research community at NYUSoM. I am particularly enthusiastic about establishing new basic and clinical research collaborations with other researchers at NYUSoM. Furthermore, I look forward to the opportunity to mentor postdoctoral fellows and graduate students in my laboratory during
our common efforts to elucidate critical mechanisms in carcinogenesis.

JAYEETA BASU, PHD

What are your primary research interests?
The major goal of my lab is to understand how specific memories are encoded by a given set of neurons. My research examines the synaptic and behavioral correlates of learning-related activity in genetically identified circuits of the mammalian hippocampus and entorhinal cortex (EC). In another major project we are using optogenetics and slice electrophysiology to characterize the much long elusive local circuitry and input connectivity of the EC.

Where were you before NYUSoM?
During my PhD research in Dr. Christian Rosenmund’s lab at Baylor College of Medicine, I studied the molecular correlates of synaptic vesicular release efficacy and short-term plasticity in mouse hippocampal cultured neurons. During my post-doctoral research in Dr. Steven Siegelbaum’s lab at Columbia University, I had the opportunity to implement several multidisciplinary approaches to understand the role of GABAergic circuits in hippocampal gain modulation, plasticity and behavior in the mouse.

Why did you choose NYUSoM?
The Neuroscience Institute is a special place. It has amazing leadership and the expanding program is young and scrappy. When one person does well, everyone does well.

What excites you most about being part of the NYUSoM community?
The many different viewpoints and backgrounds that make up the community make it stronger. "...it’s the collegial environment and the kind of diverse research that is characteristic of NYU. NYUSoM fosters a very open and cooperative environment to perform inspiring research."

DAVID SCHOPIKK, PHD

What are your primary research interests?
Our exquisite sense of balance relies on a nervous system that senses and compensates for destabilizing forces. To define the limits of these neural computations, we build and use cutting-edge tools to dissect, measure, probe, and model brain activity as fish develop balancing behaviors.
Tuberculosis (TB) is a disease worthy of our attention today, despite the fact that it may sound like a disease of the past that belongs in Edgar Allen Poe’s writing. With the emergence of HIV in 1985, TB’s prevalence has increased in the US and since evolved into drug-resistant strains. These drug-resistant strains of TB are also prevalent in underdeveloped countries.

TB is a bacterium that mainly infects the lungs but can also infect other organs in the body. It’s a tricky bacterium that evades our immune system to prevent its own destruction. This evasion involves an interaction between TB and an immune cell called CD4 T cells (also known as T “helper” cells). CD4 T cells help our immune system eliminate foreign pathogens by binding to infected cells and calling in reinforcements to destroy the infected cells. But how do the CD4 T cells know which cells are infected?

The answer lies in antigen presenting cells. Antigen presenting cells (such as macrophages or dendritic cells for immunology aficionados) are cells that survey the body for antigens, ingest these antigens, and then display them on their surface. CD4 T cells will bind to the displayed antigen and determine if it is foreign or natural to the body. In the case of TB, CD4 T cells are needed to control the spread of the infection, but cannot properly call in reinforcements to eliminate the bacterium.

Dr. Patty Grace, a newly minted Ph.D. from Dr. Joel Ernst’s lab, showed for the first time that in vivo TB infection prevents CD4 T cells from effectively eliminating the bacteria due to an issue in antigen presentation. In her recently published paper in The Journal of Immunology, Patty infected mice with TB or BCG, a bacteria similar to TB but not as infectious and used as a TB vaccine. She demonstrated that CD4 T cells are essential for BCG infection control and clearance but only for TB infection control (not clearance). The difference between the two types of infections is that BCG has more effective antigen presentation, as seen by the fact that there is less antigen presentation in BCG infection as compared to TB.

“This is a pretty major finding for the field,” Patty said, “because it is generally assumed that BCG fails as a vaccine against TB because ... it is an attenuated strain [incapable of activating strong or protective CD4 T cell responses] and this assumption has motivated a lot of the current strategies of TB vaccine development, which could use some reassessment moving forward based on the findings I’ve published.”

Patty is currently finishing up another story on the difference between TB and BCG in earlier stages of infection. She will then move on to a post-doc where she will be studying B cell and antibody responses in TB that could be targeted for new vaccines.

Other projects in Dr. Ernst’s lab are further investigating the differences in antigen presentation in TB infection to hopefully improve CD4 T cell responses. •
We are in the midst of a life-science revolution. As research funding becomes increasingly scarce and the biotechnology industry thrives, more PhDs are choosing to leave academia and seek opportunities in the biotech, big pharma, and business sectors after graduation.

This trend was reflected in a recent Stanford University study, which reported that in the early 2000s, over half of life-science PhD graduates were initially employed in the academic sector. A similar group who graduated five years later was 30% less likely to stay in academia.

The trend is dramatic, and universities are taking notice. But how are they evolving to prepare researchers for life outside of the lab, and how can students make sure they have the tools to succeed when they graduate?

NYU students and postdocs have the benefit of access to the new Scientific Training Enhancement Program (NYU-STEP). Keith Micoli, PhD, director of the NYULMC postdoctoral program, received a five-year NIH grant to support the program.

Two years into the grant, Micoli is already seeing “a definite shift in the mindset of trainees and faculty.” He also believes that the program is gaining momentum, noting that there is “an even greater hunger for information about a wider range of career options from our students and postdocs.”

One way that NYU-STEP is promoting career development is by developing workshops, seminars, and classes available to members of the NYU community. Popular examples include the “Business of Science” course offered through SciPhD and science communication workshops taught at the NYU Journalism Institute.

In addition to programs offered through NYU, many students are taking career development into their own hands — and NYU-STEP is supporting them. Groups like the NYU Biotech Association (founded in 2008) and the NYU Consulting Club (2009), have more recently been joined by groups such as “NYU are Women in Science” and the Sackler Diversity Initiative.

While these groups each have their own niche, they share a vision of arming students and postdocs with the knowledge and training they will need once they depart NYU.

NYU Biotech Association president Vangel Trapkov says that the club’s mission is “to open the door of biotechnology, industry, and entrepreneurship to PhD students and postdocs at NYU.” In addition to organizing case studies and seminars with industry professionals, the group also hosts networking events with other biotech clubs in the city. Trapkov believes this is critical “to foster an atmosphere of collaboration and facilitate the exchange of ideas between researchers at different universities.”

Another career path that is garnering increased interest among students and postdocs is consulting. The NYU Consulting Club trains students for the unique consulting interview process, and introduces them to recruiters from consulting firms such as McKinsey and L.E.K.

This past summer, NYULMC hosted a consulting case competition in collaboration with
Cornell University. Student groups from all over North America prepared their Power Points and traveled to Manhattan to present to a panel of professional consultants from 11 top-tier consulting firms.

The competition required teams to work together, break down a complex problem, and communicate their vision — “all tasks that would be expected from them working as consultants,” according to Consulting Club president Julie Diamond. She added that the event gives participants the opportunity to “network with like-minded colleagues and receive direct feedback from potential future employers.”

2015 also saw the launch of a brand-new event, the Healthcare Innovation Makeathon, by the NYU Entrepreneurial Institute. The event was styled after a “hackathon,” during which teams spend a weekend at the NYU Stern Business School campus brainstorming solutions to healthcare challenges and building prototypes.

The Makeathon differed from traditional tech hackathon in two distinct ways. First, instead of a general theme, participants were presented with ten specific healthcare challenges that were identified by members of the NYU community — mostly doctors and nurses who are the front lines in the hospital.

The second difference was in the training backgrounds represented. While there were plenty of engineers and computer scientists, a large number of participants were biology researchers and clinicians. These multidisciplinary groups received mentorship from healthcare veterans, including individuals from IBM, Pfizer, and Stryker.

Amir Moarefi, PhD, a postdoctoral researcher in the Skirball Institute, worked on a project with Pfizer to improve treatment of patients with atrial fibrillation. Moarefi described the event as a “one-of-a-kind experience,” where he worked with students trained in business, healthcare policy, and computer science. “The experience exposed me to new fields, new people, and new ways of looking at problems,” he added.

As the life-science landscape continues to shift, NYULMC and its student groups will continue to evolve to prepare students for the challenges that await them outside of academia. The opportunities are there — it’s up to you seize them.

WASSERMAN: A BRIDGE TO ACADEMIA AND BEYOND

NYU and Sackler are at-the-ready to help students shape their future career endeavors

By Kaitlyn Rinehold

Three years ago, I was in your shoes. From working up the nerve to ask for that third letter of recommendation, to calling my mom at work when I received my first grad school interview, to being completely mortified upon finding a typo in my submitted application — trust me, I’ve been there.

While I seem to remember all of the minor details of the interview process (like when I forgot to pack my “professional” shoes and had to decide between an old pair of sneakers and some RuPaul-esque boots), what I don’t remember is ever asking myself a very specific and important question: “What am I actually going to do with this PhD?” Sure, the question came up in all of my applications, wherein I dutifully wrote some slightly more articulate version of:

“Research. Research. Research. I love research and I want to do research forever. Something about human health... I’m also open to some other stuff.”

Friends and family asked the question numerous times, to which I defensively responded, “There are a million things you can do with a PhD! If I don’t want to stay in academia I can always work in industry!” As if industry were an actual job description. Like, “Hi, my name is Kaitlyn and I do industry for a living.”
AMPLIFYING THE
“VOICES OF THE FEW”

Closing the gap that separates women of color from accessing their full potential

By Julia Derk and Lydia Grmai

While they make up nearly half of the US science workforce, women occupy a much smaller fraction of faculty positions in academia compared with men. Furthermore, countless studies report the alarmingly low percentage of doctorates and faculty positions in STEM that are held by Black, Latino, and Native American scientists.

In an effort to combat these issues, NYU has established two initiatives that bring light to these largely ignored facts.

NYU are Women in Science (NYUrWIS) provides support for women interested in STEM careers. The Sackler Diversity Initiative (SDI) fosters a diverse and inclusive environment for all graduate students at NYU in an effort to increase the strength and retention of our minority PhD and MD/PhD students.

Both NYUrWIS and SDI host research and career seminars, offer mentoring opportunities, and host social events to generate a more safe and empowering work environment for women and under-represented minorities in STEM. Last month, SDI and NYUrWIS joined forces to organize a dynamic and engaging forum titled “Voices of the Few: A Conversation around the Struggles of Women of Color in Science”.

The goal of this event was to raise a collective awareness of the effects our various identities can have on our perceived abilities and to highlight the unique obstacles that face this particular minority group. It was a night of education, enlightenment, and solidarity.

The evening began with a keynote address by Dr. Latasha Wright (a Sackler alumna and the
co-director of the youth science initiative BioBus). Attendees also filled out “identity wheels” where they reflected on their identity holistically (race, gender, socioeconomic class, sexual orientation, religion, etc.) and how those various aspects of their selfhood affected their day-to-day thoughts and interactions.

This reflection fueled small-group discussions where students, postdocs, and faculty from throughout the NYC area discussed issues like micro-aggression in the professional world and their frustration and delight in moments where they felt their identity was diminished or appreciated, respectively. The room was filled with small group conversations that bubbled over with laughter and camaraderie and left many attendees feeling inspired, thoughtful, and heard.

Florante Ricarte, a fourth-year PhD student at NYU who attended the event, commented on its impact to the scientific community: “These events...are imperative to our growth and understanding of each other’s experiences. The discussion of gender, race, sexuality, and the intersection of these are often very raw and sensitive to the point of taboo, but we [must not] value our comfort over the need for discourse. These events not only provide the safe spaces we need to be vulnerable and honest with one another, but they also imbue us with the fortitude to create change within ourselves and the community around us.”

Dr. Naoko Tanese, the Associate Dean for Biomedical Sciences at NYU, also had the pleasure of attending: “I was glad to see the successful beginning of “Voices of the Few” that was indeed heard by a large group of Sackler students. I applaud the efforts of those who reach out to our diverse community to help support each other and create a safe space for everyone to share their thoughts and values.”

Phillip Thomas, a second-year PhD student and the president of SDI, reflects: “Events like Voices of the Few are so important because they push the envelope for academics to move beyond their comfort zone. As scientists, it’s easy to live in a bubble where we think we don’t have to stay socially conscious.

“The danger of getting caught up in the pursuit for success is that we forget that, above all else, we are humans first. These types of programs force us to take a step back and see that there’s more to life than tirelessly producing data. They give us a way to pop that bubble of ignorance and face reality.”

Voices of the Few is one of many efforts by SDI, NYU:WIS, and the Sackler Administration to achieve our goals of diversifying Sackler and STEM fields. These efforts fundamentally aim to provide safe spaces for fellow students to be heard, to discuss human rights issues with their colleagues, and to make more types of people feel welcome within our scientific community.

Science has traditionally been a place wholly dedicated to intellectual pursuits to understanding nature. Here, Sackler has doubled-down on its efforts by providing its brilliant trainee community the opportunity to safely discuss the social implications of our different identities and abounding diversity — and to pragmatically strive towards further empowerment through respect and understanding.

Dr. Latasha Wright is a 2005 graduate of the Cellular & Molecular Biology program at NYU School of Medicine. She is currently an executive at BioBus, an assembly of scientists who provide scientific experiences to thousands of NYC high schoolers through a solar powered “laboratory on wheels” equipped with state-of-the-art microscopes, passionate educators, and immersive learning opportunities. Since joining the BioBus team, Dr. Wright founded BioBase, a building in lower Manhattan that houses various events throughout the week to incite and nurture passion for science in children.
It’s a grueling process... you start off feeling strong and on top of the world. Then the midpoint hits and you ask yourself, “Why the hell am I doing this?” You smash into the wall that everyone talks about and the next thing you know, you are finished. With the elation comes physical, emotional, and mental anguish. You put blood, sweat, and tears into your training and suddenly it’s over. Nonetheless, you did it. You completed something most people don’t do in their lifetime. Oh, you thought I was talking about a marathon? No. I was talking about grad school. Silly you. But in many ways, grad school parallels running a marathon. I, and many of my colleagues, have done both and can attest to this.

When I started my grad school training here at Sackler a little over six years ago, I was excited about all that laid ahead of me. I was planning my lab rotations, making new friends, and attending the numerous social events the school had planned. Just like at the beginning of my marathon training, I wasn’t sure how everything would play out, but I was eager to see where this journey would take me. Classes and lab rotations keep you incredibly busy during the first year. Once I started my second year in my thesis lab, I said to myself, “You’ve got this, Diana. This is practically the midpoint and you passed that hump.” The same held true for the marathon.

After being on a high from completing my qualifying exam, I chugged forth in lab. My focus shifted to gaining enough data for a story that I could publish. As with most things in life, nothing really went according to plan. Certain hypotheses turned out to be true while others did not. Determining what everything meant, formulating new hypotheses, and designing experiments to test those hypotheses took time. I compare this time to mile 20 in the marathon. My calves started going haywire and they clenched with each step. I had never encountered this problem during my training. The next couple of miles involved stretches, bananas, and water. I was trying anything to alleviate my seizing calves. Eventually, the data I collected turned into a story that we were able to publish, and in the marathon, my calves stopped seizing.

As I face the end of my career here at Sackler, I can’t believe that I am about to complete graduate school. It seemed like such a far-off dream and now...it’s here. Crossing the finish line at the marathon felt the same way. As tears streamed down my face, I flashed back to my training and all that I had seen throughout the race. It was hard to process everything at that time, but I did it. I finished a marathon.

As I bring my final article for The Messenger to a close, I will leave you with advice a wise Sackler administrator once told me, “Pace yourself!” This advice not only holds true for running, it also holds true for grad school. Work hard while you are here, but also take time for yourself. [ ]
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* These authors contributed equally

THE SACKLER MESSENGER 15
AWARDS & HONORS

Christopher Bowman
2015 Sackler Dissertation Award

Jessica Chukwu
Diversity Supplement Grant, NIH NINDS

Katherine Eyering
Ford Foundation Fellowship

Phillip Geter
HHMI Gilliam Fellowship

Lydia Grmai
UNCF/Merck Graduate Fellowship

Lamia Harper
UNCF/Merck Graduate Fellowship

Kalman Katlowitz
NYU CTSI TL1 Grant

Russell Ledet
Ford Foundation Fellowship

Qiuling Li
HHMI International Student Research Fellowship

Lea Lough
Diversity Supplement Grant, NIH NCI; Career Development Activities Award

Luis Martinez-Velazquez
NIH NRSA

Carolyn Morrison
NIH NRSA

Karen Ong
SciArt Fall 2014 Data Visualization Grant

Millie Rincon-Cortes
2015 Sackler Dissertation Award

Alejandro Ulloa
Ministry of Science and Technology Fellowship, Republic of Costa Rica

Kirsten Wiens
HHMI International Student Research Fellowship

Kara Zang
NIH NRSA

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GRADUATION DEADLINES

May 2016 Deadlines
Register on Albert (home.nyu.edu) from:
October 5, 2015 to February 5, 2016

Preliminary Thesis due:
March 18, 2016

Final Thesis due:
May 6, 2016

Graduation Ceremonies

Convocation
Friday, May 13, 2016
11:00 am - 1:00 pm
Skirball Center for the Performing Arts

Commencement
Wednesday, May 18, 2016
11:00 am - 1:00 pm
Yankee Stadium