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Welcome to Fall!

Does anyone really know what time it is?

Time of day, day of month, season of year, who knows anymore! The second issue of the ASMB e-Newsletter is here to remind you that fall has arrived! Despite the trying times, the ASMB remains hard at work and committed to promoting ECM research and keeping our scientific community informed and connected.

I am hoping that the e-Newsletter can do just that, keep us connected. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Jay Bhave, who has been the driving force behind the launch of the ASMB e-Newsletter, and Kendra LaDuca, Amanpreet Kaur, and Justin Weinbaum for their editorial help. I am picking up the torch and hope you will all enjoy reading this new issue as much as we have enjoyed preparing it.

Be well and stay safe!

Alexandra Naba, Editor-in-Chief

Reflecting on Zena Werb



From Dr. Lynn Sakai, ASMB President ([@LynnYSakai1](#))

We were heartbroken when we heard the very sad news of the untimely passing of our friend and colleague, Dr. Zena Werb, on June 16. The ASMB Executive Committee (Joanne Murphy-Ullrich, Jeff Miner, Ambra Pozzi and I) and the Communication and Outreach Committee e-Symposia planning team (Alexandra Naba, Ryan Petrie, Davy Vanhoutte, and Joan Chang) decided to present a special e-Symposium to honor and celebrate Zena. ASMB's "A Tribute to Zena Werb" took place by Zoom on September 17. The speakers were Dr. Mikala Egeblad (Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory; "Neutrophil extracellular traps as regulators of the microenvironment"), Dr. Sarah Knox (University of California San Francisco; "Rebuilding nerves and matrix in the dry eye damaged cornea") and Dr. Mina Bissell (Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory; "Why don't we get more cancer: the critical role of extracellular matrix and microenvironment in malignancy and dormancy?"). The program was organized around both science and the deep personal relationships Zena cultivated in mentees and colleagues. We recommend the following tributes to her scientific contributions as well as to her humanity, big

heartedness, honesty, creativity, originality, passion, and fearless thinking: [Boudreau and Bissell, Science 369:1059](#); [Egeblad, Coussens, and Weaver, Nature Cancer 1:753-754](#); [Rafii and Lyden, Cancer Res 80:3773-4](#).

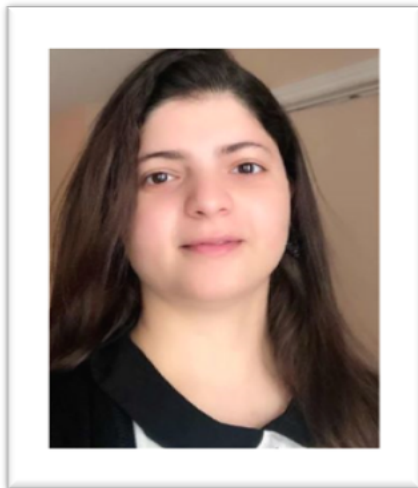
Iozzo Trainee Award Program

I am pleased to announce the official inauguration of the [Iozzo Trainee Award Program](#). These ASMB Awards will be given during two separate e-Symposia scheduled for November 2020. The e-Symposia will afford graduate students and post-doctoral fellows an opportunity to virtually present their cutting-edge research to the community. We will then select and award two outstanding presenters from each group with a monetary prize at the conclusion of each e-Symposium. It is a friendly competition among peers. Having trained more than 100 talented scientists, including undergraduates, PhD and MD/PhD candidates, post-doctoral fellows, and visiting scholars, one of my major desires is to see new and innovative researchers entering our great field. I hope that these new Trainee Awards will ignite their motivation and inspire this new generation of graduate students and post-doctoral fellows to continue investigating the extracellular matrix, a treasure trove of biology, for decades to come. I encourage all of you to submit your recent abstracts to the ASMB Council for consideration.



Renato V. Iozzo, MD PhD (Honoris causa) [@iozzo_v](#)

Founders' Awardee - Heena Kumra



It is an honor and highly motivating for me to receive the prestigious [ASMB Founder's Award](#) at such an early stage of my academic career. I would like to express my immense gratitude to my PhD supervisor Dr. Dieter Reinhardt (who nominated me) and the selection committee for recognizing my contributions to the field of extracellular matrix (ECM) biology. Over the 7.5 years I had spent in the lab of Dr. Reinhardt as a PhD student and a postdoctoral fellow, I got the opportunity to work on many independent and collaborative projects, focusing on diverse aspects of ECM biology. With a great team of scientists in the Reinhardt lab, I defined new roles of fibronectin in postnatal vascular development and in a cartilage and bone associated disorder - spondylometaphyseal dysplasia. I elucidated the function of various elastogenic proteins in matrix assembly and cellular function. In addition, I applied my knowledge of matrix and vascular biology to dissect various factors to improve the construction of tissue engineered blood vessels. Overall, I was able to contribute to the elucidation of ECM mechanisms spanning physiology, pathology to tissue engineering. Now in my new postdoctoral position at Massachusetts General Hospital, Harvard Medical

School under Dr. Rakesh Jain, I am inspired to apply my expertise of ECM and vascular biology to dissect angiotensin signaling mediated mechanisms in the progression and treatment of one of the most desmoplastic (ECM rich) tumor with few functional blood vessels – pancreatic ductal adenocarcinoma.

e-Symposia Schedule

All webinars begin at 11:00am EDT. [Check website for registration links.](#)

November 12 & 19: Iozzo Trainee Award Competition

December 10: *Matrix Remodeling in Metabolic Health and Disease*; Guest Chair Evangelia Bellas, Temple University, [@bellasfatlab%20@bellasfatlab] - **Call for Abstracts** opening soon!

Upcoming Events and Announcements

Biennial Meeting

As you know, the ASMB biennial meeting will be held in St. Louis on **September 12-15, 2021** at the [Hyatt Regency St. Louis at the Arch](#). Most speakers have confirmed availability for the new dates as have our special interest session chairs and guest societies. We know there remains some uncertainty surrounding the pandemic and travel restrictions. We are following this closely and will post any updates or changes as they occur. We are optimistic that we will see you in person, in St. Louis next September!



Upcoming Events:

- ASIP virtual meeting November 9: [PISA20](#) - ASMB members may register at the discounted member rate, Trainees may attend for FREE
- e-Symposia: November 12 & 19, Iozzo Trainee Award Competition - come out and cheer on the competitors!
- e-Symposium December 10 - Featuring a Guest Chair
- [Pan Pacific Connective Tissue Societies Symposium](#) - November 24-26, 2020

Membership Renewal

Renewing your membership is critical to the financial wellbeing of the society during this difficult time. Every membership dollar goes toward the mission of the society. If you are having difficulty paying your renewal fee, let us know. If you'd like to help a fellow member pay their renewal or join, [let us know!](#) ASMB is a community that supports one another.

Stay Safe and Be Well



[Twitter](#) [Website](#) [Calendar](#)

American Society for Matrix Biology

