



2021 Fall Newsletter

Dear Members,

After trying times, the past few months have brought much excitement, from our first in-person meeting in over two years to the launch of new initiatives to support trainees and enhance diversity and inclusion. We have also received a record number of applications to join the leadership of our society.

Thanks to you all, our ASMB family is more vibrant and more connected than ever.

Wishing you and your loved ones happy and safe holidays!

Alexandra Naba - Editor-in-chief

2021 Biennial Meeting a Hybrid Success!



The ASMB Biennial Meeting, chaired by ASMB President-Elect Jeff Miner (Washington University), was held September 12-15, 2021 in St. Louis, Missouri at the Hyatt Regency located at the base of the iconic St. Louis Arch. The event drew over 300 participants, half attending in-person and half remotely. The meeting included scientific sessions as well as networking and career development events. The ASMB Communication and Outreach Committee wrote a report on the meeting which has been accepted for publication in *Biology Open*! Look for an announcement when the review is published. This first of its kind “hybrid” meeting for the ASMB was a success!

The Hybrid American Society for Matrix Biology Biennial Meeting in St. Louis, Missouri

By Jeff Miner, with assistance from Cindy Ritter

The biennial meeting of the American Society for Matrix Biology (ASMB), which was postponed from November 2020 because of the pandemic, was held September 12-15 both in person at the Hyatt Regency St. Louis at the Arch and virtually via live and recorded streaming. The meeting was chaired by ASMB President-Elect Jeff Miner of Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis and drew approximately 160 in-person attendees and 160 remote attendees. This event satisfied the hunger of

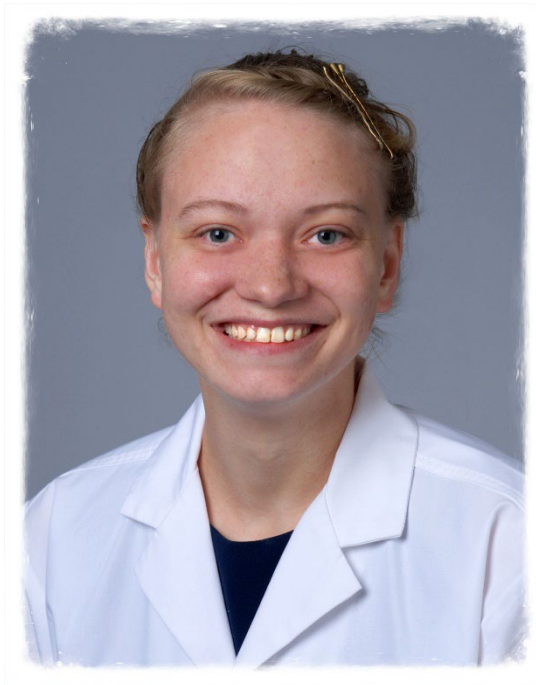
matrix biologists for a live meeting. There were many graduate students present who had never attended a live scientific conference before.

The sessions highlighted the latest advances in extracellular matrix biology research. Ken Yamada from the National Institutes of Health provided an outstanding Keynote address. Many of the invited speakers, particularly those from Canada, Europe, and Asia, participated via Zoom. All attendees were vaccinated, and masks were required unless lecturing, eating, or drinking.

An emphasis of the meeting was to support the career development of junior faculty and trainees and to enhance diversity within the matrix biology research community. Junior scientists co-chaired the 17 concurrent sessions and had access to mentoring and networking opportunities. In addition, the new Iozzo Trainee Awards endowed by a generous gift from Renato Iozzo, were established for a graduate student and a postdoctoral fellow who demonstrate outstanding contributions to the field. The inaugural winner of the 2021 Iozzo Trainee Award for a graduate student was Sarah Lipp from Purdue University, and the winner in the postdoc category was Nandaraj Taye from Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai New York.

In addition to the Iozzo Trainee Awards, there were five other awards presented. The ASMB presented its Senior Investigator Award to William Parks of Cedars-Sinai Medical Center; its Junior Investigator Award to Ashley Brown of North Carolina State University and the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill; its Iozzo Award to Jessica Wagenseil of Washington University in St. Louis; and its Founders Award to Heena Kumra of McGill University. The ISMB Distinguished Investigator Award was presented to Robert Mecham of Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis. (View all awardees on the ASMB website.)

In a special session, Nikki Doughty of Washington University in St. Louis's Institute for School Partnership lectured about the importance of diversity equity, and inclusion in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields. Ms. Doughty brought six St. Louis area underrepresented minority high school students to the meeting to interact with matrix biologists at Monday's poster session. Regarding non-scientific activities, attendees took part in an early morning 5K run/walk around the Gateway Arch grounds. In addition, there was a well-attended social event at Ballpark Village's Crown Room overlooking Busch Baseball Stadium on Tuesday evening, where corn hole, Jenga, and Connect4 games were enjoyed by many.



Congratulations to our Iozzo Trainee Awardees!

Iozzo Trainee Award - Student
Sarah Lipp, *Purdue University*

I am honored and thrilled to receive the Iozzo Trainee Award and have had the opportunity to present our work at ASMB 2021. I want to thank my mentor, Dr. Sarah Calve, PhD who provides helpful feedback and encouragement to become a stronger scientist. With the support of Dr. Calve and Calve lab members, I am using 3D imaging techniques to image deep within tissues to visualize the morphology of the extracellular matrix (ECM). In looking at musculoskeletal development, we are assessing the morphology of the developing myotendinous junction (MTJ) ECM and how the absence of muscle or muscle contraction and the muscle-tendon-bone complex affects MTJ formation. Additionally, Dr. Calve has provided me the flexibility and support to pursue studies in the kidney. We have mapped the dynamic 3D structure and composition changes in the developing kidney ECM and observed intricate 3D interstitial matrix structures. Receiving the award encourages the pursuit of my long-term interest in understanding the 3D structure-function relationship of the interstitial matrix in kidney development, physiology, and pathophysiology.



Iozzo Trainee Award - Post Doc
Nandaraj Taye,
Ichan School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, New York

I am delighted to have been selected the Iozzo Trainee Award winner in the postdoctoral category for the year 2021. This is one of the most important events of my career and it is truly an honor for me to have received it. I attribute my success to the excellent mentorship of my supervisor and nominator Dr. Dirk Hubmacher, my colleagues for their support, and ASMB for recognizing my work as a vital contribution to matrix biology. My research as a fourth year postdoctoral fellow in the Hubmacher lab at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai has focused on the role of the matrix protein ADAMTSL2 during skeletal muscle regeneration following injury. I am particularly interested in how ADAMTSL2 deficiency can delay myofiber repair in a mouse model. This investigation will help in the understanding of the biology associated with skeletal muscle injuries in geleophysic dysplasia patients, which is caused by mutations in the Adamtsl2 gene. Delineating the mechanism by which ADAMTSL2 is involved in regeneration will allow us to uncover potential therapeutics to target the disease. Currently, I am assessing whether the use of in-house prepared recombinant ADAMTSL2 can be used to enhance muscle myofiber regeneration following injury. The support of the ASMB committee and the Iozzo Trainee Award will continue to inspire me to carry forward my research in ECM and skeletal muscle biology.

Remember ASMB on *Giving Tuesday*, November 30, 2021.
Support ASMB with your tax-deductible donation.

[Make a donation of any size here.](#)



Elections are underway!

ASMB Council election is in progress. Candidates for President-Elect, Secretary-Treasurer, and Council are highlighted on the [website](#). You must be logged into the website to view the election information. Current members should have received a ballot link. Email the business office if you did not receive yours. Deadline to vote is approaching quickly! The election closes November 30, 2021.

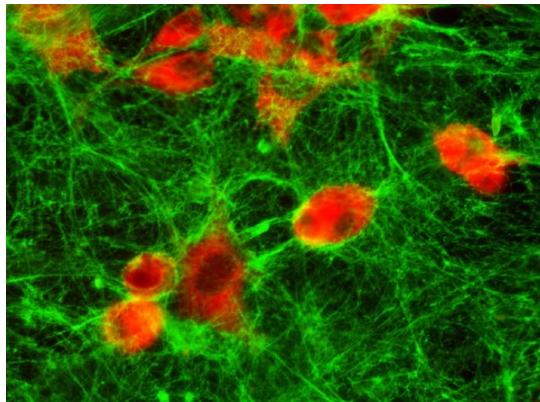


Image Contest Will Open in January!

Back by popular demand, the ASMB image contest returns in 2022. Get ready to submit your beautiful images! To participate you must be a member of ASMB and have full rights to the image. A panelist of ASMB Council and Committee members will serve as contest judges. Winning images will be showcased

on the ASMB website. Top awardees will be featured in the rotating banner on the ASMB homepage for the coming year. Start gathering your images now! Look for complete details coming in January.



Letter from Matrix Biology Editor-in-Chief

Matrix Biology recently welcomed a new Editor-in-Chief, John Whitelock. John is an Emeritus Professor at the University of New South Wales in Sydney, Australia, a longtime member and supporter of ASMB, and the Secretary of the [ISMB](#). We look forward to seeing John's vision for the Journal come to fruition!

Dear Fellow Matrix Biologists,

As the new Editor-In-Chief of Matrix Biology and Matrix Biology Plus, I want to reach out to you all with an update on the changes and plans for Matrix Biology and Matrix Biology Plus. First, I wanted to thank and acknowledge the extraordinary efforts of the previous Editor-in-Chief, Renato Iozzo, and the Deputy Editors, Liliana Schaefer and Nikos Karamanos, for moving and growing Matrix Biology to where it is now, in such a strong position. Since taking the helm, I have had the great fortune to be joined on the Editorial team by three eminent matrix biologists and I would like to take this opportunity to welcome Joanne Murphy-Ullrich, Sylvie Ricard-Blum and Suneel Apte as Editors. In the coming months we plan to expand the Editorial Board in a way that represents our demographics, geography, and diversity of scientific disciplines to support our goal of increasing the number of research articles submitted to the journal whilst maintaining the quality of all published papers. The Editors and Editorial Board are receptive to all relevant research that involves the extracellular matrix in biology, disease, cell-matrix interactions and bioengineering and are focused

above all on quality, originality, and value of the work. I would like to encourage colleagues from the matrix biology communities around the world to express an interest in joining the Board and be willing to provide expert reviews when sought by the Editors.

The Editorial team is also looking for feedback regarding the on-line companion journal, Matrix Biology Plus, particularly with respect to the types of articles and content. Some suggestions that we have had so far include detailed methods papers, new transgenic models, biomaterials or theoretical/computational models, letters, commentaries and short communications, interdisciplinary research results and large data sets from genomic and proteomic studies focused on matrix biology.

I am looking forward to working with the Editors and Editorial Board into the future to continue to publish high-quality manuscripts that are of significant scientific value and interest to the international matrix biology community and readership of the Journals. I would like to encourage you all to submit your next paper focused on the matrix for review at Matrix Biology or Matrix Biology Plus.

Yours sincerely,

John Whitelock
Editor-in-Chief
Matrix Biology and Matrix Biology Plus

Save the Date! July 10-15, 2022.

Join ASMB members Liliana Schaefer and Charles W. Frevert at *Frontiers in Basic and Translational Proteoglycan Research to Improve Human Health*. [Click here for more information.](#)



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