



Recent and Upcoming Events

Endowed Awards Ceremony

January 23, 2019
Urbana, IL

DNS Applicant Visit Weekend

February 28 - March 2, 2019
Urbana, IL

ACES Funk Awards Ceremony

April 8, 2019
Urbana, IL

NSGSA Nutrition Symposium

April 17, 2019
Urbana, IL

Experimental Biology Meeting

April 21-25, 2019
Urbana, IL

ACES Spring Commencement

May 12, 2019
Urbana, IL

ASN Meeting

June 8-11, 2019
Baltimore, MD

External Advisory Committee Meeting

Fall 2019
Urbana, IL

*Previous DNS Directors, Director and Associate Director pictured above (l to r):
Drs. Jessica Hartke, Sharon Donovan, John Erdman, Rodney Johnson, and Elvira de Mejia*



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DNS Receives USDA Training Grant

URBANA, Ill. - The USDA and the University of Illinois have announced nearly a quarter million dollars in new funding to support seven doctoral students in the Division of Nutritional Sciences, an interdisciplinary graduate program within the College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences at U of I.

The USDA operates its National Needs Fellowship program to boost expertise in scientific topics of national priority, including, in this case, human nutrition. More specifically, the students will receive interdisciplinary training in the area of nutrition and the gut-brain axis, focusing on development and healthy aging.

"Interactions between nutrition, the microbiome, and cognition are among the most rapidly emerging areas of scientific investigation, driving demand for qualified trainees for positions in academia and industry," says Rodney Johnson, head of the Department of Animal Sciences at U of I, and program director for the training grant.

Scientists are only beginning to understand the links between gut microbial communities and brain function. As microbes break down food, they release chemicals that circulate in the body and influence our brain chemistry, which, in turn, influences everything from our mood to our immune response. Scientists at U of I have found that these relationships can even influence brain development during gestation, as well as healthy aging in the brain.

"DNS is renowned as an outstanding graduate training program – it ranks among the top five nutritional sciences graduate programs in the country. This training grant demonstrates the highly interdisciplinary nature of DNS. It will bring together 13 outstanding faculty members from three different colleges and four

departments to train doctoral students who will become leaders in this exciting emerging area of research," says Elvira de Mejia, DNS director and professor in the Department of Food Science and Human Nutrition at U of I.

During the past 20 years, DNS has trained 38 graduate students and four postdoctoral fellows on seven institutional training grants from the National Institutes of Health and the USDA, totaling over \$7 million. DNS plans to enroll three new doctoral students in fall 2019 and four in the fall of 2020. For more information on the program, prospective students can visit <https://nutrsci.illinois.edu/future-students>.

Are you an alum of DNS? We would love to hear about what you are doing today in the field of nutritional sciences. Contact us at DNS50@illinois.edu to connect.

Written by: Lauren Quinn

Special Edition

50 years DNS

View the event photo gallery on Facebook @DNSatUofI

449 Bevier Hall
905 S. Goodwin Ave.
Urbana, IL 61801
(217) 333-4177

DNS Employees



Dr. Elvira de Mejia
Director



Dr. Jessica Hartke
Associate Director

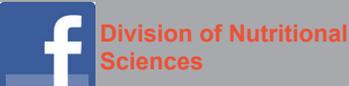


Dr. Anna Keck
Visiting Project Coordinator



Emily Duncan
Marketing Intern
Senior in Marketing

Check us out on social media!



DNS Celebrates 50th Anniversary

The Division of Nutritional Sciences, the interdisciplinary graduate program housed within the College of ACES, recently marked its 50th Anniversary in a weekend-long series of events. More than 160 alumni, faculty, students, and administrators came together to celebrate the program’s long list of accomplishments, including its ranking in the top five nutritional sciences graduate programs in the United States.

“DNS had an enjoyable, informative, educational, insightful two days of celebration of 50 years of excellence training leaders in interdisciplinary nutritional sciences through education, innovation, and discovery,” said Elvira de Mejia, DNS director and professor in the Department of Food Science and Human Nutrition.

Since 1968, more than 500 students have graduated from the program. Alumni now hold prominent positions in academia, industry, and governments around the world. Five distinguished alumni, graduating between 1976 and 2013, spoke during the event and captured the evolution of the program throughout its history.

“Our current students stand on the shoulders of those who came before them,” said Kimberlee Kidwell, dean of the College of ACES, during her remarks. “Our alumni should be very proud of the ripple effect they have created here, as our students continue the legacy of conducting fabulous research with amazing faculty advisors to address the world’s greatest challenges associated with nutrition, health, and well-being.”

The celebration also recognized the major contributions of DNS faculty to nutritional science as a discipline. The interdisciplinary nature of the program has led to important advancements in lipid and cholesterol metabolism; animal nutrition, including commercial diets; the relationship between diet, the gut microbiome, and human and animal health; and many more areas.

Speaker Rod Johnson, former DNS director and current head of the Department of Animal Sciences, pointed to the program’s Vision 20/20 seed grant program as a means of

2018-2019 External Advisory Committee



fostering creativity and interdisciplinary study. The program, initiated by Johnson, has now funded over \$1M in interdisciplinary nutrition-related research, which has resulted in \$16.8M in external funding and \$1.3M in internal funding; an 18.1-fold return on investment.

“Vision 20/20 was established to encourage interdisciplinary nutrition-related research,” Johnson said. “It was intended to foster interaction and collaboration, and with an 18 to 1 return on investment, I’d say it has exceeded expectations.”

Keynote speaker John Erdman headlined the dinner banquet, amusing guests by likening the history of DNS to the plot of Star Wars.

“A long time ago on a campus not so far, far away, it was a period of civil war,” he said. “Departments, colleges, and many labs were operated as silos. But in 1966, a rebel alliance began to form among nutrition faculty across campus.”

He said the university administration – “the Empire” – balked initially, having no previous experience dealing with an interdisciplinary, cross-campus graduate program. But early leaders persevered and the Illinois Board of Higher Education approved the Nutritional Sciences Program in 1968.

Erdman, professor emeritus in the Department of Food Science and Human Nutrition, studies how dietary changes reduce the risk of prostate cancer, among other pursuits. He has been involved with DNS in various roles for 42 of its 50 years, including serving as a past director of the division.

With 50 years behind them, DNS leaders are looking forward to the next 50. “DNS is committed to continuing working hard to maintain and enhance the scientific quality and development of our students to equip them to address complex interdisciplinary problems utilizing traditional and novel biological and sociological approaches,” de Mejia said.

Written by: Stephanie Henry

Joshua Anthony, PhD
Vice President
Global Nutrition, Health, and
Regulatory Affairs
Campbell Soup Company

Tiffany L. Bierer, PhD
Scientific Affairs Manager
MARS Petcare US

Carol Cheatham, PhD
Associate Professor
Department of Psychology &
Nutrition Research Institute
University of North Carolina
Chapel Hill

YiFang Chu, PhD
Director
R&D Nutrition Sciences
PepsiCo Inc.

Dennis Jewell, PhD
Principal Nutritionist
Science & Technology Center
Hill’s Pet Nutrition, Inc.

Susan Johnson, PhD
Professor and Director
The Children’s Eating
Laboratory
University of Colorado

Matthew Kuchan, PhD
Senior Principal Research
Scientist
Center for Nutrition Learning
and Memory
Abbott Nutrition

Ratna Mukherjea, PhD
Director
Global Nutrition
DuPont Nutrition & Health

Amanda Young, BS
Vice President Research &
Development
Shared Development, Cost
Engineering, Nutrition, &
Business Processes
The Kraft Heinz Company

Amirah Burton
PhD Candidate
Advisor: Arthur

Maribel Barragan
MS Candidate
Advisor: Teran-Garcia

Jonathan Cerna
MS Candidate
Advisor: Khan

Angela Dean
PhD Candidate
Advisor: Anakk

Andrew Dinsmoor
MS Candidate
Advisor: Donovan/Khan

Steven Krauklis
MS Candidate
Advisor: Freund

Mindy Lee
PhD Candidate
Advisor: Nakamura

Ruyu Liu
MS Candidate
Advisor: Khan

Allison Louie
MS Candidate
Advisor: Steelman

Susan Mantell
MS Candidate
Advisor: Khan

Christian Maino Vieytes
MS Candidate
Advisor: Arthur

Colleen McKenna
PhD Candidate
Advisor: Burd

Ana Mitchell
MS Candidate
Advisor: Teran-Garcia

Ivan Pinos Cabezas
PhD Candidate
Advisor: Amengual

Clara Salame
PhD Candidate
Advisor: Pepino

Leila Shinn
PhD Candidate
Advisor: Holscher

Nathaniel Willis
MS Candidate
Advisor: Khan



Student Recognition

**2018 ACES Gamma Sigma
Delta Awards Luncheon**

2018-2019 Fellowship Recipients

CONACyT Fellowship: Miriam Aguilar Lopez	Jonathan Baldwin Turner Fellowship: Andrew Dinsmoor Kaylee Hahn Leilla Shinn Colleen McKenna
Commision on Dietetic Registration Doctoral Scholarship: Sharon Thompson	Kraft Heinz Company Human Nutrition Fellowship: Maribel Barragan Amirah Burton Jonathan Cerna Ana Mitchell
Craig Neilsen Foundation Fellowship: Susannah Scaroni	National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship: Lindsey Ly
DNS Excellence Fellowship: Christian Maino Vieytes	NIH T32 Tissue Microenvrionment Predoctoral Fellowship: Catherine Applegate
Egg Nutrition Center Predoctoral Fellowship: Caitlyn Edwards	NIH Predoctoral Traineeship in Endocrine, Development & Reproductive Toxicology Karen Chiu
Graduate College ASPIRE Fellowship: Ashlie Santaliz Casiano	QS Leadership Fellowship: Clara Salame
Graduate College Dissertation Completion Fellowship: Lucy Mailing	
Graduate College Fellowship: Viridiana Luna	

NSGSA 2019 Nutrition Symposium

April 17, 2019
Keynote Speaker Corby K. Martin, PhD Pennington Center for Biomedical Research
Mini-Symposium “Nutritional Neuroscience: The Brian-Plate Connection”
Faculty Presenters: Nu-Chu Liang, PhD Ryan Dilger, PhD Naiman Khan, PhD, RD

Student News



2018-2019 New DNS Students

Pictured Front Row (l to r): Susan Mantell, Allison Louie, Colleen McKenna, Amirah Burton, Ruyu Liu, Maribel Barragan
 Pictured Back row (l to r): Leila Shinn, Andrew Dinsmoor, Jonathan Cerna, Christian Maino Vieytes, Ivan Pinos Cabezas, Steven Krauklis, Ana Mitchell, Mindy Lee
 Not pictured: Angela Dean, Nathaniel Willis

Awards, Service and Personal Achievements

- **Catherine Applegate** received the International Ingredient Corporation (IIC) Pinnacle Award and was an investigator on a DNS Vision 20/20 Grant.
- **Ashlie Santaliz Casiano** was selected as a fellow of the Yale Ciencia Academy for Career Development and attended the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) Annual Meeting in Washington, DC this February.
- **Ashlie Santaliz Casiano** and **Kaylee Hahn** were elected to the Students Advising on Graduate Education (SAGE) Board. Through this position they provide valuable input for Graduate College programs, resources, and events such as welcome materials for new graduate students, professional development resources, and Graduate Student Appreciation Week activities.
- **Jan Lumibao** presented at the MilliporeSigma 2018 Life Sciences Award Prize Event in Darmstadt, Germany where he was selected as one of four international finalists in the MilliporeSigma 2018 Life Sciences Awards Program for Tumor Biology for excellent work in the categories of Innovation, Potential Impact, Communication, and Scientific Rigor.
- **Lucy Mailing** was awarded a Graduate College Dissertation Completion Fellowship.
- **Leila Shinn** was elected the Treasurer of the Illinois Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics and become the Women’s Health Dietetic Practice Group Website Coordinator. Leila was the recipient of the Katherine S. Middleton Memorial, Chicago Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics Scholarship.
- **Susannah Scaroni** became a Research Assistant in the Nutrition and Exercise Performance Lab and a DNS graduate student mentor. Susannah had an outstanding year in her athletic career as a member of the University of Illinois’ Wheelchair Racing Team and the U.S. Paralympic National Team, including setting the World Best at the NYC 10K in June, as well as placing 2nd in Berlin and 3rd in Chicago.

Bridget Hannon
Chair

Kaylee Hahn
Co-Chair

Lindsey Ly
Treasurer

Katie Ranard
Co-Treasurer

Sharon Thompson
Secretary

Erin Davis
Media Representative

Celeste Alexander
Student Representative
to the Faculty

Mindy Lee
Networking Chair and
Professional Development

2018 Quiz Bowl
Winners



Pictured (l to r): Dr. John Erdman, Hania Taha, Andrew Dinsmoor, Christian Maino Vieytes, Ana Mitchell

2018-2019 DNS Executive Committee

Aditi Das

Assistant Professor
Dept. of Comparative
Biosciences
College of Veterinary
Medicine

Sharon Donovan

Professor and Melissa M. Noel
Endowed Chair in Nutrition
and Health
Dept. of Food Science and
Human Nutrition
College of ACES

John Erdman

Professor Emeritus
Dept. of Food Science and
Human Nutrition
College of ACES

Rex Gaskins

Professor of Immunobiology
Dept. of Animal Sciences
College of ACES

Naiman Khan

Assistant Professor
Dept. of Kinesiology and
Community Health
College of Applied Health
Sciences

Michael Miller

Associate Professor
Dept. of Food Science and
Human Nutrition
College of ACES

Kelly Swanson

Professor of Animal and
Nutritional Sciences
Dept. of Animal Sciences
College of ACES

Margarita Teran-Garcia

Assistant Professor
Dept. of Human Development
and Family Studies
College of ACES

Jeff Woods

Professor of Kinesiology
Dept. of Kinesiology and
Community Health
College of Applied Health
Sciences

Celeste Alexander

Nutritional Sciences Graduate
Student

Faculty Updates

- **Aditi Das** was awarded the 2019 Mary Swartz Rose Young Investigator Award from the American Society for Nutrition.
- **Zeynep Madak Erdogan** has been serving as a scientific editor for Scientific Reports and Journal of Steroids and received the following awards: NIH, Health Disparities Research Institute Scholar, National Center for Supercomputing Application, Faculty Fellow as well as the 2019 Bio-Serv Award in Animal Nutrition from the American Society for Nutrition.
- **Kelly Swanson** was awarded the University Scholar Award at the University of Illinois and was invited to present on "Hot Topics in Clinical Pet Nutrition" at the 2018 ASAS-CSAS Annual Meeting in Vancouver, Canada.

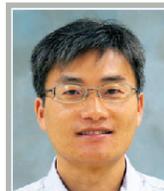
New Faculty in DNS



Melissa Pflugh Prescott, PhD, RD, teaches FSHN 428 Community Nutrition and works to determine the impact of farm-to-school programs on student diet quality and food waste. She promotes health equity and food security through her research on low income families' utilization of fresh fruit and vegetables in food pantries. Dr. Prescott received her MS in Clinical Nutrition and PhD in Public Health from New York University.



Sandra Rodriguez-Zas, PhD, is helping find ways to prevent and cure diseases in both livestock and humans. She uses biostatistics and computational approaches to identify biomarkers and molecular pathways associated with health, reproduction, and performance in livestock species, and cancers in humans. Dr. Rodriguez-Zas received a PhD in Quantitative Genetics from the University of Wisconsin-Madison.



Bo Wang, PhD, is an Assistant Professor, Department of Comparative Biosciences, College of Veterinary Medicine and conducts research on the molecular mechanisms underlying lipid metabolism and human diseases. Dr. Wang received a MS from Peking Union Medical College/Chinese Academy of Medical Science and a PhD in Molecular, Cellular and Developmental Biology from The Ohio State University.

DNS Faculty on the UIUC List of Teachers Ranked as Excellent

Maria Cattai de Godoy
Companion Animal Nutrition
ANSC 422

Anna Dilger
Animal Science
ANSC 101

Ryan Dilger
Regulation of Metabolism
NUTR 511

Brenna Ellison
Food Marketing and Behavior
ACE 335
Agri-Food Strategic Management
ACE 431

Hannah Holscher
Science Communication
FSHN 593

Michael Miller
Food and Industrial
Microbiology
FSHN 471
Advanced Food Microbiology
FSHN 573

Manabu Nakamura
Regulation of Macronutrient
Metabolism
NUTR 511

Justin Rhodes
Applied Science
PSYC/NEUR 302

Hans Stein
Protein and Energy
ANSC 520

Kelly Swanson
Companion Animal Nutrition
ANSC 422

Alumni Updates



Sean Adams
PhD in DNS in 1994
Professor and Center Director, Arkansas Children's Nutrition Center; University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences



Keith Garleb
PhD in DNS in 1990
Chief Science Officer, Garleb Brothers Consulting, LLC



Guy Johnson
PhD in DNS in 1976
Principal, Johnson Nutrition Solutions, LLC



Cheryl Morris
PhD in DNS in 2005
VP of Conservation, Omaha's Henry Doorly Zoo and Aquarium



Krystle Zuniga
PhD in DNS in 2013
Assistant Professor, Texas State University

- **Tory Parker** accepted a new position as the Vice President of Product Development for 4Life Research.
- **Richard Bukenya** has been working with The World Food Programme as a Nutritionist in the Karamoja Region in Uganda. He also attended The 2018 World Food Prize in Des Moines, Iowa under Borlaug LEAP.

August 2018 Graduates

- **Kirsten Harold, PhD**
Advisor: Sharon Donovan
- **Julia Kim, PhD-MPH**
Advisor: Sharon Donovan
- **Vanessa Peters, PhD**
Advisor: John Erdman

December 2018 Graduates

- **Sookyoung Jeon, PhD**
Advisor: John Erdman
- **John Mathai, PhD**
Advisor: Hans Stein
- **Carly Rundle, MS**
Advisor: Hans Stein
- **Diego Hernandez Saavedra, PhD**
Advisor: Yuan-Xiang Pan
- **Patricia Wolf, PhD**
Advisor: Rex Gaskins

Congrats Grads!



Pictured (l to r): Patricia Wolf, Diego Hernandez Saavedra, Carly Rundle

THANK YOU!!

DNS would like to thank everyone who has generously given to support the Margin of Excellence program. In less than 12 months we have raised \$97,000. Will you be the one to help us reach \$100,000? Please contact Matt Smith (msmi@illinois.edu) if you would like to learn more about the Margin of Excellence program.

Margin of Excellence Donors

Pamela Anderson

Josh and Tracy Anthony

Sharon Donovan

John Erdman

George Fahey

Sarah Jaw-Tsai

Barbara Kochanowski

Kathleen Koehler

Bruce Molitoris

William O'Brien

Ken Poirier

Jim Robinson

Kelly Swanson

Giving Options

- **DNS Excellence Endowment Fund (#773001)**: Provides permanent funding for the recruitment and retention of the best graduate students and enhanced research and professional development experiences for all DNS students
- **DNS Annual Fund (#332984)**: Provides unrestricted support for DNS
- **Frontiers in Nutritional Sciences Fund (#339153)** Supports the weekly DNS seminar series for University of Illinois faculty and students
- **Nutritional Sciences Margin of Excellence Fund (#339154)** Provides conference travel grants and research seed-grant funding to DNS students on a competitive basis
- **David H. Baker Nutrition Scholar Award Fund (#771806)**: Recognizes students who display excellence in research as documented through peer-reviewed publications, awards and research grants
- **James L. Robinson Nutrition Impact Award Fund (#772698)**: Recognizes students who display excellence in professional service through activities in the NSGSA or to promote and enhance DNS and/or nutrition at the campus, state or national level
- **Frank W. Kari Memorial Award Fund (#773054)**: Provides travel awards to DNS students to present their scientific findings at professional meetings, such as Experimental Biology
- **Toshiro Nishida Research Award Fund (#772951)**: Provides support for travel to national and international scientific conferences to DNS students
- **William C. Rose Award Fund (#770331)**: Provides travel awards to DNS students to attend scientific conferences in the field of nutritional sciences



Support DNS

We are very thankful to the faculty, students, alumni and friends who have supported DNS through contributions to the Endowment Fund and the Annual Fund. Contributions of all amounts are greatly appreciated. DNS would like to ask that you consider taking this opportunity to help secure our brilliant future by making a new contribution or an additional contribution to your alma mater.

50 years
DNS