

## **Minutes of Meeting Announcing Formation of the UB PDA University at Buffalo, May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2007**

The first meeting of the UB Postdoctoral Association (PDA) was held on Wednesday, May 2<sup>nd</sup>. Dr. Marilyn Morris, Associate Dean for Graduate and Postdoctoral Education, spoke about what has been happening in the Office of Postdoctoral Scholars, which aims toward introduction of standardized conditions for postdocs at UB. So far the office has been working on finding postdocs in the university, trying to establish a consistent job title for postdocs, establishing a website and trying to raise awareness amongst the university community about issues associated with postdocs.

Dr. Jessica Zhang and Dr. Janet Waterhouse then spoke to us about their progress so far with establishing a Postdoctoral Association at UB and their experiences at the National Postdoc Association meeting at Berkeley. They have both gained some valuable insight about both administrative tasks involved in the running of a PDA and also heard from leaders of PDA's at other schools about their experiences in establishing a PDA. Jessica and Janet were also assigned a mentor during this meeting, Dr. Chris Blagden, who has been involved both in his institutional PDA but also in the establishment of the NPA. They have been able to discuss various issues that have arisen during the initial start up of the PDA and will continue to have monthly teleconferences with him to discuss issues as they occur.

We also discussed the results of the survey that was conducted at the end of last month. It was noted by some that the return on 27 surveys from nearly 300 postdocs was a statistic that could do with some improvement! On the whole, everyone said that they were interested in having a PDA at UB and they would like events to be held in the late afternoon and evening and towards the end of the week. There were several good suggestions for workshops, such as grant writing, career development, writing and presentation, teaching and lab management. People also indicated that they would be interested in social events such as a picnic, orientation for new postdocs and sporting events. Among the 27 respondents, six postdocs indicated that they definitely would be interested in a leadership role within the PDA. Seven other postdocs indicated they may want to be involved in the leadership.

So the next step is to set up an executive committee from those interested in leadership and to start organizing some events!

This summary is particularly for those of you who did not or could not make it to the meeting. We understand that the postdoc is a busy time, and that you cannot attend every meeting. But we would like to think that this PDA will continue after our time as postdocs and that our work will make life a little easier for those who come after us. In order for this to occur, we need your support. Please help us out by attending events that interest you, contributing your thoughts and spreading the word to those who we may not have 'found' yet.

-Submitted by Elizabeth Liberts