

UC Davis Postdoctoral Scholar Association Monthly Meeting

Wednesday, April 8, 2009; 12-1 pm, 148 Briggs Hall

Agenda

- 1) Approve Feb. minutes by consent- Joanna Friesner *POSTPONED
- 2) PSA leaders to meet with UCD Provost – Friesner
- 3) Report from National Postdoc Assn Meeting- Friesner
- 4) Proposal for UCD Postdoc Appreciation Day (proposed: May 28) - Friesner
- 5) Report on external sponsorship- Mark Belmonte
- 6) Announcements
- 7) Open floor

Present

Joanna Friesner (Chair)

Mark Belmonte (Vice-Chair)

Heather Watts (Secretary/Treasurer)

Abinav Bhushan

Jun Liu

Mario Hlacoitschha

PSA leaders to meet with UCD Provost

PSA officers will be meeting with the new UCD Provost later this month. They plan to inform him about activities/accomplishments of the PSA and advocate for financial support of the PSA. There was discussion of what other information/topics should be raised with the Provost. PSA will need to have a clear plan for how any additional funds would be used (if provided). It was widely agreed that the creation of a staff position serving PD should be a priority. Responsibility for PDs is currently widely distributed and faculty/departmental staff are often unsure of many policies/procedures. A dedicated staff person for PDs would create greater efficiency on many levels, including saving time for PI's and departmental staff. PSA should emphasize to the Provost how PD benefit the university, including their role in research and mentoring/supervising of graduate and undergraduate students.

Report from National Postdoc Assn Meeting

Friesner attended this meeting last month. A major topic of discussion during leadership workshop was how to increase PD involvement in PSAs. Suggestions included requesting representatives from each department.

An interesting suggestion on making PSA meetings interesting came from an east coast attendee who said they invite postdoc alums back to present at their PSA meetings.

Following report from Friesner, there was discussion of how UCD PSA could improve PD participation. It was thought that getting departmental reps could be challenging, especially with high turnover rate of PDs. It was suggested that the PSA should emphasize how service with the PSA can help develop "soft skills" and build c.v.'s, which help in future employment.

Mark Belmonte, who has served on a faculty recruitment/review committee at UCD, noted that applicants with experience in University service, mentoring, and other soft skills, obviously rose to the top during the review process, and clearly was of benefit over simply having publications.

Proposal for UCD Postdoc Appreciation Day

PSA is proposing making May 28 Postdoc Appreciation Day. This would fall on the same day as the Excellence-in-Research awards reception. Suggestions for other activities for the day included: panel discussion, keynote speaker(s), networking/social event, joint workshop with Career Services Center. It was decided that this year the goal would be to keep it small and hopefully create a firm foundation for future years. The goal will be to have a workshop/presentation with two speakers prior to the reception. It was thought that the focus should be on how to stand out (e.g. how to build c.v./resume) when applying for jobs (e.g. faculty or industry positions). PSA leadership will propose the appreciation day in the upcoming meeting with the Provost. Other suggestions that arose from this discussion included providing certificates to all nominees for Excellence-in-Research awards at the reception this year to be sure to acknowledge their achievements; it was suggested that PSA could have a table at Picnic Day to increase profile on campus; and that there should be better recruitment of Med School PD for PSA activities, including the appreciation day.

Report on external sponsorship

Belmonte reported that he will be meeting with the Director of the Biotech (Judy Kjelstrom) program later this week to get suggestions regarding sponsorship. It was suggested that sponsors may be interested to be involved in a Postdoc Appreciation Day.

Announcements:

- (a) Excellence in Research Awards: April 10th nomination deadline (<http://postdocs.ucdavis.edu/awards/awards.html>)
- (b) Recent postdoc travel awards were announced in March. Five postdocs received awards; names posted (<http://postdocs.ucdavis.edu/awards/travelgrantrecipients.html>)
- (c) 3rd round travel grants: due June 15, for conferences held Sep 1-Dec 31, 2009 (<http://postdocs.ucdavis.edu/awards/awards.html>)
- (d) Graduate Studies Spring Reception for postdoctoral scholars: late afternoon/evening, May 28, 2009
- (e) Kauffman Foundation Entrepreneur Postdoc Fellowship Program- applications due May 1 (www.kauffman.org/postdocs)
- (f) Lab Leadership and Management Program (UCD Extension)- started April 2, cost: \$1,350 (Call 530-757-8777 and ask to be enrolled in section 084LBL101)

Open floor:

Union update:

UC and PRO/UAW continue to negotiate. Last month's election by UC postdocs to authorize the union to call a postdoc strike has been tallied: 92% of postdocs voting voted 'yes' (Note: only authorized pro-union card-signers were eligible to vote and the union does not make the total # of postdocs who voted publicly available).