

~~RECENT NEWS~~

• Bill Hexter, a professor in our department from 1953-1997, has passed away. Bill came to Amherst directly from his PhD at Berkeley where he studied with Curt Stern. He specialized in fine structure gene mapping in fruit flies. He shepherded the department as chair for many years and served as College pre-med advisor also for very many years. His genetics course with Tom Yost was very popular and his *Drosophila* research projects along with Phil Ives, research professor, inspired many students from the 50's and 60's who subsequently went on to prominent careers in genetics and molecular biology (including two future Nobel Prize winners). Here is a link to his obituary. <http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/gazettenet/obituary.aspx?pid=191069056>

• Profs. Levin and Clotfelter led 12 Biology and Environmental Studies majors on a 2-week field trip to Costa Rica, as part of the spring semester course Biology 454. The group studied the ecology of tropical dry forest, montane cloud forest and lowland rain forest and conducted a comparative study of tree species diversity. Students also mastered the identification of hundreds of bird species, plant families, and arthropod orders. Funding for this course comes from the Dean of Faculty's office.

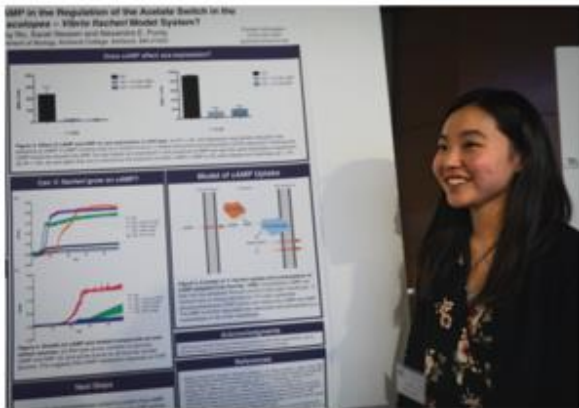
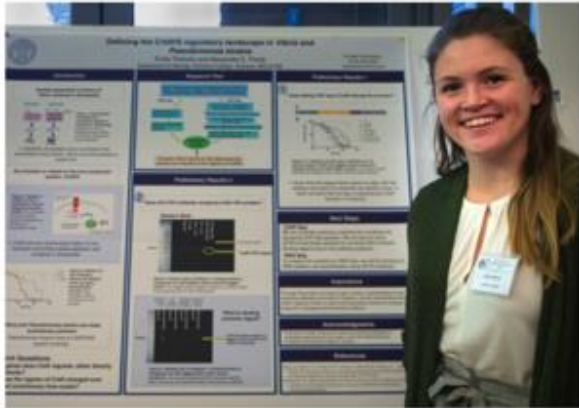


Photo credit: Prof Miller

• Members of the Trapani Lab including former students Hannah Peterson, Eileen Troconis, and Alex Ordoobadi published a teaching article based on a lab from a lab in *Neurophysiology* (BIOL-351).

• Members of the Purdy Lab, including Emily Flaherty, Elisa Bello, Gabby Ro, Kennedy Countess, and Cecilia Prado presented their research at the 2019 Pioneer Valley Microbiology Symposium, held on the UMass-Amherst campus on January 18. Kennedy, Emily, and Gabby each gave poster

presentations, and Elisa had been selected to give a talk. At the end of the day, Elisa was awarded the prize for giving the best talk at the conference, by popular vote of the attendees. Congrats to everyone!



Best wishes for a great February and stay tuned for another edition next month,
-the Biology Department

...have something Department-related to share in the next newsletter? Please email Joe Trapani