

NEW Capacity Building Opportunity: International Trainee Exchange Program

Building on previously successful lab exchanges and the momentum of the *International Partnership Initiative* (IPI) program, AllerGen is pleased to announce a brand new capacity building opportunity for Network HQP's. The *International Trainee Exchange Program* offers funding for AllerGen trainees to spend up to six weeks outside of Canada working with an international investigator and his/her research team on a project that is aligned with AllerGen's research priorities.

future collaborative opportunities. These exchanges will also strengthen AllerGen's international partnerships and enhance global knowledge translation and mobilization in allergy, asthma and related immune disease research.



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For further information or any HQP questions, contact:

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The purpose of this initiative is to provide AllerGen HQP's with new, cutting-edge international research exposure; networking and capacity building opportunities; valuable short-term international training experience; as well as to develop international relationships that can facilitate

As this program is rooted in reciprocity, it is expected that Investigators will make a reasonable effort to develop opportunities for reciprocal trainee exchanges with international institutions. Applications must be submitted by an AllerGen Investigator and will be assessed based on the potential benefits to AllerGen-related research and capacity building opportunities and the applicant. Funding is strictly for travel-related expenses including airfare, transfers, accommodations and meals. AllerGen's total budget for this program is \$75,000, and will be allocated on a "first come" basis between now and March 31, 2012. Ideally, travel will be completed by this date. Applications that propose exchanges to take place beyond this deadline will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

All MSc, MD, PhD and postdoctoral trainees working on an AllerGen-funded research project are eligible to apply and consideration will also be given to ASNPN student members based on available funding, provided research is relevant to AllerGen's research priorities and scope.



AllerGen is supported by the Government of Canada through the Network of Centres of Excellence program.



Take Action! Seek Nominations or Nominate a Candidate for the *AllerGen Students and New Professionals Network (ASNP)* Executive

The ASNP is a student-led organization comprising AllerGen research trainees and new professionals from across the country. The ASNP Executive constitutes a formal committee within AllerGen and acts as the voice for research trainees and new professionals within the Network. The Committee organizes an Annual Trainee Symposium and various workshops, represents ASNP on other AllerGen committees and assists AllerGen in decision-making surrounding capacity building opportunities through direct membership of the ASNP President on the *AllerGen Advanced Education and Training Opportunities Advisory Committee (AETOAC)*.

AllerGen would like to acknowledge and thank the current Executive for extending their terms in office due to recent preparations for AllerGen's renewal application and especially thank Jennifer Protudjer, PhD Candidate, University of Manitoba and ASNP President for her continued leadership of this committee and commitment to the success of AllerGen's HQP program.

AllerGen ASNP members are invited to seek nominations or nominate candidates for the following ASNP Executive Committee positions:

- President
- Vice-President
- Secretary/Treasurer
- Communications and Events Director
- Regional Director - Quebec/Atlantic
- Regional Director - Ontario
- Regional Director - West/Central.

Successful candidates will serve a 16-month term commencing February 5, 2012 and terminating June 30, 2013.

All nominations must be received by December 23, 2011. Subsequent voting and elections will take place prior to January 30, 2012. The incoming Executive will take office during the 2012 AllerGen Research Conference - *Innovation from cell to society*⁷ February 5 - 7, 2012, in Toronto, Ontario.

Apply Today for Undergraduate Summer Studentships Research Training Awards

Are you an undergraduate student interested in allergy, asthma, anaphylaxis or related immune disease research? Then you're the perfect candidate to apply for AllerGen's Undergraduate Summer Studentships Research Training Awards!

These awards are intended to foster interest in allergic and related disease research among students at the undergraduate level of study. The awards will be given out to the top undergraduate students who will have the opportunity to work with established AllerGen research teams and gain valuable hands-on experience. It is our hope that this experience will spark an enduring interest among students in either research or clinical practice in allergic and related immune

diseases and lead to the pursuit of advanced studies in this medical speciality.

This award program is open to all Canadian citizens or permanent residents currently enrolled in a full-time undergraduate degree program in Canada. Applicants must have completed at least one year of undergraduate study in order to apply. Eligible applicants are required to work with an AllerGen-funded investigator on a project aligned with AllerGen's mission and strategic goals.

Competition will be fierce, as only ten awards are available, providing a stipend for each successful applicant of \$6,000 (\$3,000 provided by AllerGen and \$3,000 from a matching partner [non-AllerGen] funding).

Application Deadline: March 4, 2012

3rd Call for AllerGen's Emerging Clinician-Scientist Research Fellowship

AllerGen's flagship Fellowship, valued at \$250,000 over two years, is once again open to receive applications. The Network has launched the 3rd Call for the *Emerging Clinician-Scientist Research Fellowship* with a new application deadline of April 13, 2012. The goal of this Fellowship is to enable Canadian Allergists/Clinical Immunologists to pursue allergy, asthma and/or anaphylaxis academic research training immediately following the successful completion of their Clinical Immunology and Allergy sub-specialty training. Additionally, this Fellowship strengthens the academic capacity, increases Canadian knowledge translation and facilitates enhanced patient care through excellence in basic research in the Clinical Immunology and Allergy sub-specialty.

Applicants are eligible to apply during the period 18 months prior to and 18 months after completion of their Clinical Immunology and Allergy sub-specialty training. Preference will be given to applicants whose host institution can confirm that the applicant has been identified for a junior faculty position following successful completion of the fellowship. Eligible candidates must be Canadian citizens or permanent residents.

Full applications must be received no later than **Friday, April 13, 2012.**

Please visit the [AllerGen website](#) for full details.

AllerGen's 7th Annual Research Conference

*Innovation from cell to society*⁷ is a world-class, three-day event featuring globally renowned Canadian and international experts in allergy, asthma, anaphylaxis and related immune disease research, development, commercialization and knowledge mobilization.

The conference will showcase all areas of Network research with a special emphasis on birth cohort research and its impact on policy, clinical practice, disease management, prevention and commercial innovation.

Specifically, the program will feature:

- Scientific presentations by leading Network researchers, clinicians and trainees on issues and outcomes arising from AllerGen's nationally networked research programme focusing on:
 - The Canadian Healthy Infant Longitudinal Development (CHILD) Study
 - Food Allergy and Anaphylaxis
 - Diagnostics and Therapeutics
 - Gene-Environment Interactions
 - Public Health, Ethics, Policy and Society
 - Mind-Body Interactions and Allergic Disease
 - Occupational and Work-related Allergy and Asthma
- Trainee and ASNPN Networking Event organized by the ASNPN
- Keynote address by an internationally renowned birth cohort expert
Confirmed: **Dr. John Henderson MD**, Professor of Paediatric Respiratory Medicine at the University of Bristol and Bristol Royal Hospital for Children
- Expert panel discussions featuring leading researchers, industry and government representatives

Registration Open



- Unique networking opportunities with AllerGen clinician-scientists, researchers, trainees and new professionals, industry members, research partners, patient advocacy group representatives and AllerGen Board and Committee members
- Trainee research Poster Competition and Awards
- Conference Banquet Dinner and Awards Ceremony

Trainees and ASNPN members are eligible to receive reimbursement for travelling and accommodation* expenses in accordance with AllerGen's travel policy. (*double occupancy)

Visit the AllerGen website for a full overview of the conference and updates to programming as speakers are confirmed.

[Register Now](#)

NEW for 2012 – Mandatory participation is a condition of travel and accommodation expense reimbursement. All Trainees and ASNPN members must not only attend all sessions but also attend the Trainee and ASNPN Dinner and Networking Event taking place Sunday, February 5, 2012.

2012 Poster Competition – Call for Abstracts

AllerGen's Annual Poster Competition takes place during the Annual Research Conference and provides an opportunity for trainees and new professionals to present their research, exchange ideas with Network researchers as well as health care providers and administrators, policy and decision-makers, representatives from industry and government, and other trainees.

Back by popular demand is the oral "lightning round" session that AllerGen added last year as a new capacity building opportunity for students to develop their presentation skills and showcase their work. Students will present a one-minute "elevator pitch" style presentation about the "what, so what and now what" of their research. This format offers all competitors a chance to present a brief overview of their research results to conference delegates in a plenary session. Following the "lightning round" presentations, judges will have the opportunity to visit each

poster/author during the Wine and Cheese judging session, where they will ask additional questions to inform adjudication. The top two poster authors in each research programme area will make 15-minute oral presentations to conference delegates the following day. Cash awards will be given to the top two posters in each research programme area. **NEW for 2012** - the two highest ranking undergraduate posters will also receive cash awards

A poster abstract must be submitted for review by **December 12, 2011** to ensure the poster meets the minimum threshold of acceptable quality and relevance to AllerGen's mission and research focus. All applicants will be notified of their eligibility and next steps after the holidays.

**Application Deadline
Monday, December 12, 2011**

The competition is open to AllerGen-funded trainees and members of the *AllerGen Students and New Professionals Network (ASNPN)*.

Spotlight on AllerGen Travel Awards

AllerGen Travel Awards are available to Network Investigators and Highly Qualified Personnel (HQP's) to support their attendance and participation in non-AllerGen events that are aligned with AllerGen's mission and research priorities. These events must provide opportunities for networking, knowledge

translation, research collaboration, potential new skill development while maximizing learning opportunities. This initiative is based on 50% matching to the requested support by non-NCE, non-AllerGen funds.

In this issue we are pleased to highlight one of AllerGen's HQP's and their travel experience. With the support of an AllerGen Travel Award, **Elaine Fuertes**, PhD Candidate in the School of Population and Public Health, University of British Columbia attended the *23rd International Society for Environmental Epidemiology (ISEE) Congress* in Barcelona, Spain this past September. While at ISEE, Elaine presented the results from the first candidate gene study conducted as part of the AllerGen-funded project *Traffic-related air pollution as a risk factor for the development of childhood asthma*. This presentation was especially rewarding, as in addition to reporting the study's results, Elaine was able to share the project's future activities, which will include examining additional outcomes of allergic rhinitis and eczema as well as expanding the project's focus to include genome-wide association and interaction studies.

Elaine is also a participant in the European Study of Cohorts for Air Pollution Effects (ESCAPE), and was able to attend this project's two-day meeting held prior to ISEE. Attendance facilitated a first-time in-person meeting with one of the international collaborators on the study, Dr.

Ross Anderson from St. George's University of London. This collaboration leverages the rich *International Study of Asthma and Allergies in Childhood (ISAAC)* database to examine associations between air pollution and allergic rhinitis on an ecological level.

As part of her doctoral studies, Elaine is currently completing an internship at the Helmholtz German Research Center for Environmental Health.



Funding for Travel Awards is still available. Should you wish to apply or inquire regarding further details, contact Michelle Harkness at michelleharkness@allergen-nce.ca

Highlights from the Canadian Society of Allergy and Clinical Immunology (CSACI) Annual Conference

On Thursday, October 20, 2011, the Canadian Society of Allergy and Clinical Immunology (CSACI) and AllerGen co-sponsored the *Young Allergy Professionals Networking Reception* in Quebec City in conjunction with CSACI's Annual Conference. This event was hosted by Dr. Anne Ellis, Assistant Professor, Queen's University and an AllerGen Investigator. Invited guests included AllerGen Trainees and Researchers, Fellows-in-Training, National Residents Educational Program (NREP) participants, Sub-Specialty Program Directors and the CSACI Board of Directors. Largest to date, this event was extremely well received with over 50 attendees. AllerGen used this opportunity to promote its *Emerging Clinician-Scientist Research Fellowship* as well as to review the benefits of becoming an ASNPN member.



Canadian Society of Allergy and Clinical Immunology
Soci t  canadienne d'allergie et d'immunologie clinique

Once again this year, AllerGen Trainees and ASNPN members took top honours in the CSACI Poster Competition.

1st Place - Asthma and Allergic Rhinitis
Megan Azad, PhD, University of Alberta

1st Place - Case Reports Category
Philippe B gin, MD, Universit  de Montr al

2nd Place - Basic science/Clinical Immunology
Claudia Hui, PhD Candidate, McMaster University

Congratulations to All!

PHIRNET Fellowship

Congratulations to Dr. Dan Harrington, School of Geography and Earth Sciences, McMaster University, on his successful PhD defense of his research supervised by AllerGen Principal Investigator, Dr. Susan Elliott, Professor and Dean, Faculty of Applied Health Sciences, University of Waterloo as well as his contributions to the AllerGen-funded project titled

Surveying Prevalence of food Allergies in All Canadian Environments (SPAACE). Dr. Harrington is the 2011 recipient of the



Population Health Intervention Research Network Post-doctoral Fellowship and is currently working at the University of Toronto, Mississauga with Dr. Kathi Wilson, focusing on the experience of food allergies from the perspective of vulnerable populations.



PHIRNET is a new Pan-Canadian program which has the objective to create a **NET**work in **Population Health Intervention Research**.

Highlights of Recent HQP Publications

AllerGen ASNPN member, Dr. Irene Fung is currently completing a Clinical Immunology and Allergy fellowship at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia. Dr. Fung completed her pediatrics training at McMaster University and her abstract was recently accepted for publication in the *Journal for Allergy and Clinical Immunology* as

part of the *Letter to the Editor* section.



Dr. Fung's project focused on egg allergic patients and the safety of influenza vaccination for patients with severe allergy to egg, specifically

the safety of influenza vaccination in children with egg anaphylaxis. The team reviewed results of egg and influenza through skin prick testing (SPT) and whether or not the vaccine was administered *via* a graded dose or single dose injection, and if there were any adverse reactions.



Conclusive evidence showed that influenza vaccine SPT resulted in a high number of false positive results, allowing children with egg anaphylaxis to be permitted to receive influenza vaccination without a prior SPT and graded challenges.

AllerGen Renewal Update

Over the summer, AllerGen Programme Leaders, Investigators, Board of Directors, various committees, trainees and the Administrative Centre staff worked tirelessly to put together AllerGen's full application for the second cycle of NCE funding from 2012 to 2019. The application process consisted of written documents: *Progress Report* (2005-2011), *Strategic Plan* (2012-2019) and Letters of Support which were submitted in early August, followed by an in-person International Expert Panel Review on September 20, 2011.

The NCE funding decision is still pending, however, we can share with the Network that the HQP section was considered an area of significant strength within the Network. Presentations regarding the HQP progress and future priorities were led by Jennifer Protudjer, ASNPN President and PhD Candidate, University of Manitoba and Diana Royce, EdD, AllerGen's Managing Director. In addition, Jennifer Protudjer

took part in a *in camera* Question and Answer session with the International Review Panel members. Jennifer received praise from the Expert Panel on her leadership, presentation and continued commitment to the Network and HQP's.

AllerGen would also like to thank all the individuals who contributed written and video testimonials in support of the Network, which were used to support the NCE renewal application.



Yuka Asai, PDF, McGill University - [Yuka Asai.mov](#)

Philippe Bégin, PDF, Université de Montréal - [Phillippe Bégin.wmv](#)

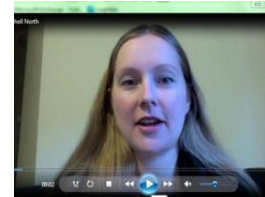
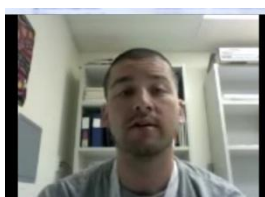
Moshe Ben-Shoshan, PDF, McGill University - [Moshe Ben-Shoshan.mov](#)

Elaine Fuertes - PhD Candidate, University of British Columbia - [Elaine Fuertes.avi](#)

Jeremy Hirota, PDF, University of British Columbia - [Jeremy Hirota.avi](#)

Bianca Malouf, MSc, University of British Columbia - [Bianca Malouf.wmv](#)

Michelle North, PDF, Queens University - [Michelle North.m4v](#)



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