

Impact and Control of Valley Fever - A Workshop

Committee

George Thompson

Chair

George Thompson, M.D., is a Professor of Medicine at UC Davis Health Medical Center with a joint appointment in Internal Medicine, Division of Infectious Diseases and the Department of Medical Microbiology and Immunology. Dr. Thompson specializes in the care of patients with invasive fungal infections and has research interest in clinical trials, fungal diagnostics, and host immunogenetics. His current research focuses on the development of new antifungal agents, mechanisms of resistance, and molecular causes of adverse side effects. Dr. Thompson has published over 180 papers in peer-reviewed journals, and serves as several national and international committees and advisory boards including the Infectious Diseases Society of America, Coccidioidomycosis Study Group and the Mycoses Study Group where he chairs the education committee. He received his M.D. from the University of Missouri.

Bridget Marie Barker

Member

Bridget Barker, Ph.D., received her B.A. in Biology and M.S. in Ecological Genetics from the University of Montana. Dr. Barker started her PhD program as an IGERT Fellow at the University of Arizona in 2004. It was at this time she became interested in working on human fungal pathogens, specifically *Coccidioides immitis* and *C. posadasii*, the causative agents of coccidioidomycosis, more commonly known as Valley Fever. In 2009, Dr. Barker completed her Ph.D. in Genetics with co-mentors Dr. Scott Kroken and Dr. Steven Rounsley, and then started her postdoctoral work at Montana State University, where she worked to characterize the sterol regulatory element binding protein in *Aspergillus fumigatus*, in the lab of Dr. Robert Cramer. In 2013, she joined the faculty at TGEN-North, and returned to working on *Coccidioides* spp. with the assistance of an NIH/NIAID K-22 award. In 2016 she became tenure track faculty at Northern Arizona University (NAU) in the Pathogen and Microbiome Institute (PMI), and a member of the Biology faculty. In 2020, she was promoted to Associate Professor with tenure in the Department of Biological Sciences at NAU.

Gail Sondermeyer Cooksey

Member

Gail Sondermeyer Cooksey, M.P.H., is an infectious diseases epidemiologist whose primary interests include mycotic diseases, emerging infectious diseases, health equity, and epidemiology and surveillance methodologies. Ms. Sondermeyer Cooksey has a Bachelor of Science in biology and peace and justice studies from Villanova University (2009) and a Master of Public Health degree in infectious disease epidemiology from the University of California, Berkeley (2011). Since 2012, Ms. Sondermeyer Cooksey has worked at the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) focusing on Valley fever, other mycotic diseases, and COVID-19. Her Valley fever work at CDPH has included conducting, improving, and reporting on Valley fever surveillance, investigating occupational outbreaks of Valley fever, and assisting with Valley fever health education for the general public, providers, workers, and employers in California.

Karen Ehnert

Member

Karen Ehnert, D.V.M., M.P.V.M., M.S., is the director of the Veterinary Public Health Program at the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health. Dr. Ehnert has over 32 years of experience in the field of public health and is passionate about her work to protect human health through monitoring and controlling animal diseases. After receiving a Master's of Preventive Veterinary Medicine (epidemiology), she completed a residency with the California Department of Public Health. She then became the Monterey County public health epidemiologist and county communicable disease control officer. In 2000, Dr. Ehnert accepted a position as the senior veterinarian with the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health's Veterinary Public Health Program. She was the acting director for 3 ½ years, before becoming the director in February 2014. In addition to her work at the Veterinary Public Health Program, Dr. Ehnert serves as a clinical professor with the Western University College of Veterinary Medicine, and oversees four-week clinical practicums for senior veterinary students. Dr. Ehnert received her Doctorate in Veterinary Medicine, Masters of Preventative Veterinary Medicine (epidemiology), and Masters of Science (animal science) from the University of California at Davis. She is board certified in veterinary preventive medicine and has been on the AVMA Council on Public Health for six years.

John Galgiani

Member

John Galgiani, M.D., was born in San Francisco, received his BA from Stanford University, his MD from Northwestern University, and a fellowship in Infectious Diseases from Stanford. In 1978, Dr. Galgiani joined the faculty of the University of Arizona and currently he is Professor of Medicine. Dr. Galgiani has focused his career primarily on the special problems of coccidioidomycosis (Valley fever) and its impact on the general population and special groups such as organ transplant recipients and patients with AIDS. In 1996, Dr. Galgiani founded the Valley Fever Center for Excellence to disseminate information about Valley Fever, help patients with the severest complications of this disease, and to encourage research into the biology and diseases of its etiologic agent. Several members of the Valley Fever Center for Excellence are currently developing a veterinary vaccine candidate to prevent coccidioidomycosis.

Steven M. Holland

Member

Steve Holland, M.D., received his M.D. from the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine in 1983. He remained at Johns Hopkins for his internal medicine residency, chief residency, and fellowship in infectious diseases. He then came to the NIH, National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), Division of Intramural Research (DIR) as a National Research Council fellow working on transcriptional regulation of HIV. A few years later, Dr. Holland shifted his research to the host side, with a focus on phagocyte defects and their associated infections. His work centered on the pathogenesis and management of chronic granulomatous disease, as well as other congenital immune defects affecting phagocytes, including those predisposing to mycobacterial diseases. He was chief of Laboratory of Clinical Infectious Diseases from 2004 to 2016 until selected as director of the NIAID, DIR in 2016. In NIAID, he continues to lead the Immunopathogenesis Section, a therapeutic and research program taking a fully integrated approach to infectious disease, incorporating the molecular genetics of the host and the pathogen as well as mechanisms of pathogenesis that allow the development and study of novel therapeutics. The integrated bench-to-bedside model is intrinsic to the Immunopathogenesis Section approach and is reflected in the close involvement of trainees (both M.D. and Ph.D.) in laboratory work and in the clinical appreciation of disease, which together add new insights into mechanisms of action and avenues of therapy. New protocols in Coccidioides infections and pathogenesis of mycobacterial infections are in progress.

Meritxell Riquelme

Member

Meritxell Riquelme, Ph.D., M.Sc., is a Research Professor at the Center for Scientific Research and Higher Education of Ensenada (CICESE), Baja California, Mexico. She completed a B.Sc. in Biology at the University of Barcelona, Spain. She received a M.Sc. degree in Plant Pathology and a Ph.D. in Microbiology from the University of California, Riverside. She was a postdoctoral fellow at the University of Oxford, United Kingdom. Her group studies secretory routes of vesicles involved in hyphal growth of *Neurospora crassa*. Additionally, she studies the ecological distribution of *Coccidioides* spp. in Baja California and the fungal diversity of deep-sea sediments of the Gulf of Mexico. She is editor of *Fungal Genetics and Biology*, *The Cell Surface*, and *Communications Biology*. She has served in several committees of the Mycological Society of America (MSA). She was elected member of the *Neurospora* Policy Committee (2008-2012), the Fungal Genetics Policy Committee (2013-2019), the International Fungal Biology Conference Steering Committee (since 2014), and the Executive Committee of the International Mycological Association (since 2014). She is a member of the Mexican Academy of Sciences. In 2018 she received the B. O. Dodge award for her contributions on *Neurospora* research, in 2019 she was elected Fellow of the Mycological Society of America, and in 2020 she was elected Fellow of the American Academy of Microbiology.

Leonard Sacks

Member

Leonard Sacks, MBBCh, received his medical education in South Africa at the University of the Witwatersrand receiving his MBBCH in 1979. He moved to the USA in 1987, where he completed fellowships in immunopathology and Infectious Diseases. He worked as an attending physician in Washington DC and South Africa and he joined the FDA in 1998 as medical reviewer in the Office of New Drugs. Subsequently he served as acting director of the Office of Critical Path Programs and is currently associate director for clinical methodology in the Office of Medical Policy in the Center for Drug Evaluation and Research at FDA. In this capacity he has led efforts to support novel approaches to clinical trials including the use of electronic technology. Besides his involvement in the design and analysis of clinical trials, he maintains a special interest in tuberculosis and other tropical diseases and has published and presented on these topics. He holds academic appointments as Associate Clinical Professor of Medicine at George Washington University, and at the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences.

Elizabeth (Liz) Ashby

Staff Officer