

NEWSLETTER

SEPT 2026



TSGP NEWS

Welcome back to the Fall 2026 semester! TSGP is excited to begin the 2026/2027 academic year.

In this issue, we recap our Fall Meet & Greet, highlight student accomplishments, and celebrate milestones across the program. We look forward to another year of innovation, discovery, and success.

UPCOMING EVENTS

October 13th*Biogen Panel*October 15th*TSGP Alumni Panel*October 29th*Nick Bellono Seminar*

FALL MEET & GREET

CONTINUED ON PAGE 03



Some of the 2026 TSGP Students sitting together at the Fall Meet and Greet in Alumnae Hall

SEMINAR SPOTLIGHT

ANDA CHIRILA, PHD PRESENTS AT SEMINAR SERIES:

**"SPINAL CORD CIRCUITS FOR
FLEXIBLE SENSORY ENCODING"**



*Anda Chirila, PhD
Assistant Professor of Neuroscience*

On Friday, September 25, 2026, Anda Chirila, PhD, Assistant Professor of Neuroscience at Brown University, delivered a seminar presentation as part of this semester's seminar series entitled "Flexible Encoding of Touch by Spinal Cord Circuits."

Dr. Chirila's talk explored how the spinal cord actively shapes touch perception before sensory information reaches the brain. Drawing on research from her laboratory, she demonstrated how diverse spinal cord circuits integrate and process touch signals, influencing how touch is ultimately represented in the brain.

She also discussed how disruptions in these circuits may contribute to conditions such as chronic pain and sensory processing disorders, highlighting the importance of understanding touch processing beyond the sensory receptors themselves. Following the presentation, attendees engaged in discussion about the implications of these findings for neuroscience research and the treatment of sensory disorders.

Seminars like these provide an important opportunity for faculty and trainees to learn about emerging discoveries in neuroscience and foster dialogue across disciplines.

Thank you to all who participated in this seminar.

EVENT HIGHLIGHT

FALL MEET AND GREET

TSGP CELEBRATES ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL FALL MEET & GREET

The Therapeutic Sciences Graduate Program (TSGP) welcomed students from the Master's in Health Informatics & AI, Biotechnology, and TSGP programs for the annual Fall Meet & Greet. The event brought together new and returning students for an evening of networking, community-building, and fun.

Attendees participated in welcome activities, games, and a spirited round of Jeopardy while connecting with peers, faculty mentors, and program leadership. For TSGP's newest students, the event provided an opportunity to meet their cohort, build relationships across programs, and become part of the broader graduate community.

The Fall Meet & Greet reflects TSGP's commitment to fostering collaboration and creating a supportive environment for scientific learning and discovery.

Thank you to everyone who helped make this year's event a success. We look forward to an exciting year ahead!



Some of the 2026 TSGP Students sitting together at the Fall Meet and Greet in Alumnae Hall



Students playing lawn games outside of Alumnae Hall during the Fall Meet and Greet

EVENT PHOTO ALBUM



Students signing in at the welcome table. Students also received name tags for raffles throughout the event.



Alumnae Hall was transformed for the Fall Meet and Greet Event with various themed tables.



TSGP Co-Directors Sean Lawler and Diana Horrigan introducing the program



Student leaders discuss their programs and the Fall Meet and Greet Event

STUDENT HIGHLIGHTS

TSGP STUDENT SUCCESS: SUMMER 2026



This Summer our TSGP Students represented the program in a number of incredible ways. Program members presented research at national and international conferences, including the World Congress on Infectious Diseases, the New England Association of Gynecologic Oncologists Annual Conference, and upcoming meetings of the American Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene and the Society for Neuro-Oncology. Students also earned recognition through publications, fellowships, and training opportunities.

Brooke Skinner, who matriculated into the program in 2026 spoke at the World Congress on Infectious Diseases in Barcelona with her talk entitled: "Novel antimalarial compound 2741-19 synergistically kills *P. falciparum* in vitro with artemisinin combination therapy partner drug, piperazine" (funded by BioMed, SPS, GSC). Skinner also gave a 'translational malaria research' talk to Brown Pre-College students at Oxford (course: "Basics in Biotech: from genes to innovation").

Further student successes are highlighted on the next page. Together, these accomplishments reflect the breadth of scholarship, professional engagement, and community impact across the TSGP student community.

TSGP STUDENT SUCCESSSES

CONTINUED ON PAGE 03

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT



TYLER OWENS

- Completed the AAI Advanced Course in Immunology in Boston in July



AIDAN BIONDI

- Presenting poster at ASTMH (American society for tropical medicine and health) in November



KATIE NEWTON

- Attended The Protein Society Annual Symposium in Boston, MA.
"Biophysical Characterization of Engineered Variants of the TDP-43 CTD Conserved Region."
- Accepted into the T32 Chemical Biology Interface Training Program



IZ VARGHESE

- Cui, J.Y.#, Varghese, I.#, Bock, A.S., Floody, M., Zhang, F., Rubenstein, B.M., Lisi, G.P. "Exploring Solvent Exposure of a Histidine Triad as a Modulator of Structure, Molecular Motion, and Ligand Binding in GM-CSF." Royal Society of Biological Chemistry. DOI: 10.1039/D6CB00019C



ALAN ARDITO

- Two accepted oral presentations in the forthcoming American Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene's 2026 annual meeting
- Invited and presented a poster at the World Malaria Day Symposium 2026, hosted by the John Hopkins Malaria Research Institute



ANGELICA SALAVERRIA

- New England Association of Gynecologic Oncologists (NEAGO) Annual Conference Meeting, Manchester, Vermont "Amphiregulin neutralization reduces tumor burden and induces an immune activating profile in the ovarian tumor immune microenvironment"



SAMANTHA MAGUIRE

- H-EIDS Fellowship



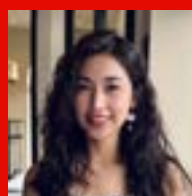
MICHELLE SHUB

- Became a Brown Innovations Fellow for the BTI office
- Abstract accepted to the Society of Neuro-Oncology Conference in November at which she will be presenting a poster



SAADI EL-SAAD

- NSF GRFP Honorable Mention
- Taught summer organic chemistry lab at Harvard Summer School



LAURA WU

- Bio Venture Capital Fellowship at Insight Partners

YOU'RE INVITED TO TSGP'S

ALUMNI REUNION

Where can a TSGP degree take you? Meet TSGP alumni as they share their career paths, lessons learned, and insights into navigating life after graduate school during this interactive panel discussion.

Thursday, 15 October | 4pm - 6 pm

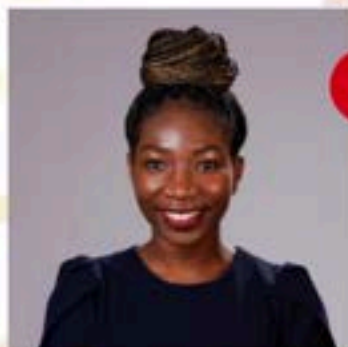
Auditorium Room 107
70 Ship Street, Providence RI

Light refreshments will be served following the panel, with additional time to network and connect with fellow attendees.



MEET TSGP'S ALUMNI PANELISTS:

Where can a TSGP degree take you? Meet TSGP alumni as they share their career paths, lessons learned, and insights into navigating life after graduate school during this interactive panel discussion.



Blessing Akobundu, PhD

Biopharma R&D | Cross-functional leadership | BSCP Alumni | Project Lead/Postdoctoral Fellow Merck



Xien Yu Chua, PhD

Principal Scientist/Team Lead at Alnylam Pharmaceuticals



Hilary Nicholson, PhD

Associate Director, Discovery Biology at Tango Therapeutics

Thursday, 15 October | 4pm – 6 pm

Auditorium Room 107

70 Ship Street, Providence RI

BIOGEN @ BROWN

As a reminder, BIOGEN and TSGP will be partnering for the first in a series of required seminars on Tuesday, October 13, 2026 from 12-1pm.

This professional development partnership connects Brown students with Biogen professionals through workshops, career discussions, and industry networking opportunities designed to prepare trainees for careers beyond academia.

 [**RSVP HERE**](#)

CONGRATULATIONS, DR. PUTERBAUGH!



Dr. Ryan Puterbaugh

As a member of Dr. Nicolas Fawzi's laboratory at Brown University, Ryan Puterbaugh focused his research on understanding the molecular mechanisms that govern the behavior of the disordered TDP-43 prion-like domain. On August 4, 2026, Ryan successfully defended his PhD thesis entitled "Understanding the Biomolecular Interactions of the Disordered TDP-43 Prion-Like Domain in the Context of both Health and Disease" in Room 107 at 70 Ship Street.

Following the defense, Ryan celebrated this significant milestone with his advisor, Dr. Nicolas Fawzi, as well as Brown students, faculty, family, and friends.

Congratulations, Dr. Puterbaugh!



THERAPEUTIC SCIENCES SEMINAR SERIES CO-SPONSORED BY NEUROSCIENCE

Dr. Nicholas Bellono

DEPARTMENT OF MOLECULAR AND
CELLULAR BIOLOGY
HARVARD UNIVERSITY

2015 GRADUATE OF BROWN PHD



THURSDAY

10 | 29 | 2026



4:00 - 5:00 PM



MARCUVITZ AUDITORIUM
SIDNEY FRANK HALL, ROOM
220

“The Evolution of Sensation”



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Anything else you want to add for future issues of our Newsletter? Any photos to post to our Instagram page? Email Program Coordinator, Gregg Casazza for more information.

Gregg_Casazza@Brown.edu



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