

# RNA SOCIETY NEWSLETTER



Spring 2023 | January 23, 2023

## RNA SOCIETY NEWSLETTER IS BACK

Happy New Year and welcome to the new issue of the RNA Society Newsletter!

We are delighted to present a new, re-designed RNA Society newsletter, a space for our community to share information and ideas and to learn about all of the exciting activities happening in the Society. In this issue, we hear from the former and new Presidents of the Society and the CEO, talk about the success of RNA 2022 in Boulder, look forward to RNA 2023 in Singapore, and hear about our Society awards, Mentoring program, the Spotlight series and much more. We are excited to be back and hope you will enjoy.

Gabriele Fuchs and Katarína Juríková, Newsletter Editors

Daniel Kim, Media & Communications Committee Chair



## UPCOMING EVENT



28th Annual RNA Society Meeting

May 30–June 4, 2023

Registration by March 2023

See more details on Page 11 or <https://www2.rnasociety.org/>

## IN THIS ISSUE

- 1 Welcome
- 2–6 From the Desks of the Presidents
- 7–9 From the Desk of the CEO
- 10–11 RNA 2022 & RNA 2023
- 12–16 Awards
- 17 Mentoring program
- 18 Spotlight Series
- 19 Support for Ukraine and Russia
- 20–21 Officers & Committees

# FROM THE DESKS OF THE PRESIDENTS

## Past President Maria Carmo-Fonseca

Dear colleagues,

At the end of my term as President of the RNA Society, I wish to share with you a few leave-taking thoughts. Two years ago, I was honored to have been elected and I wanted to serve in the best possible way, but I had little idea of what to expect. Today I am grateful for an unforgettable journey. I feel immensely privileged and lucky for being a part of the legacy of all the past leaders of the Society, and for having had the opportunity to contribute to the continuity of its fruitful history.

The one person who deserves special recognition for the multiple accomplishments of the Society in the past years is the Chief Executive Officer, Kristian Baker. Kristian has been instrumental in bringing her knowledge, experience, and organizational skills to the Society. Kristian implemented quality and transparent guidelines that dramatically improved organization and accountability. I have been fortunate enough to work closely with Kristian, with whom I share the same birthday!

I extend my gratitude to the Members of the Board of Directors and Standing Committees Chairs. I also acknowledge the work of the Chief Financial Officer, Wen Ding and the Society's Secretary, Hua Lou.

A key principle that we pursued throughout our leadership was transparency in all decision-making processes. These included decisions on new awards, selection of awardees and recruitment of a new Editor-in-Chief for the RNA journal.

Thanks to the generosity of sponsors and our recognition for a need to recognize and celebrate the

broad achievements of our members, the Society has expanded its award portfolio. To brainstorm ideas about the scope of

new awards, we asked a group chaired by Anna Pyle and composed by Tim Nilsen, Juan Valcarcel, Ling-Ling Chen, Beth Tran, Nils Walter and Eugene Yeo. Based on their recommendations, the Board of Directors created new award categories aiming to highlight the importance of mentorship and research contributions by either under-represented or non-independent scientists. For each award, criteria for eligibility were defined, and open calls for nominations and applications were launched. The Board has further decided to establish a standing committee to administer the RNA Society annual Awards Program. Following a call to membership asking for volunteers interested in serving on this committee, Ambro van Hoof was selected to be the inaugural chairperson.

The Society is extraordinarily grateful and especially indebted to Tim Nilsen for 28 years of dedication and leadership at the RNA journal. When Tim announced that he would step down as Editor-in-Chief, a Search Committee was assembled to identify qualified candidates to fill the position. Given the urgency of implementing a plan of activities aiming to improve the



# FROM THE DESKS OF THE PRESIDENTS

## Past President Maria Carmo-Fonseca

visibility, stature, impact, and revenue of the journal, it was unrealistic to ask a new Editor-in-Chief, whom we expect to be a high-profile active scientist, to be solely charged with all that extra workload. Thus, the Board of Directors decided to restructure the journal leadership to include two Senior Editor positions with equal roles and responsibilities, replacing the current Editor-in-Chief and Deputy Editor posts. It was also decided that the Senior Editor position would have a term limit of no more than 5 years, with the option for a one-term renewal.

We are very grateful to Eric Phizicky, who has adeptly served as Deputy Editor of the journal for the last 5 years, and we were delighted with Eric's willingness to continue to serve as Senior Editor for another 5-year term.

To identify candidates for the additional Senior Editor post, we assembled a Committee comprised of Eric Westhof (chair), Anita Hopper, Mikiko Siomi, Tim Nilsen and Eric Phizicky. Ten candidates were discussed and three were recommended to be further considered. The Board of Directors interviewed the three short-listed candidates and was unanimous in offering the position to Javier Caceres.

Since December 1st, 2022, Eric Phizicky and Javier Caceres have been serving as co-Senior Editors and we wish them the best of success in ensuring continued prosperity for the RNA journal!

The ever-shifting nature of the global pandemic had a strong impact in our Annual Meetings, and words cannot express how wonderful it felt to be able to reconnect face-to-face in Boulder. RNA 2022 was

attended by more than 1150 participants. Some of the highlights of this meeting include the special session organized by our Committee dedicated to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion led by Shobha Vasudevan; the lecture by Gideon Dreyfuss upon receiving the Society's Lifetime Achievement Award in Science; and the tribute to Tim Nilsen at the inaugural Meet the Editors reception recognizing his long-standing service for the RNA journal and tremendous influence on RNA research.

As my term ends, I am excited to welcome Sandy Wolin as the incoming President. I have no doubt that the Society will reach even greater heights in the years ahead under her leadership.

I hope to see you soon at the upcoming RNA 2023 in Singapore.

Carmo  
Past President of the RNA Society  
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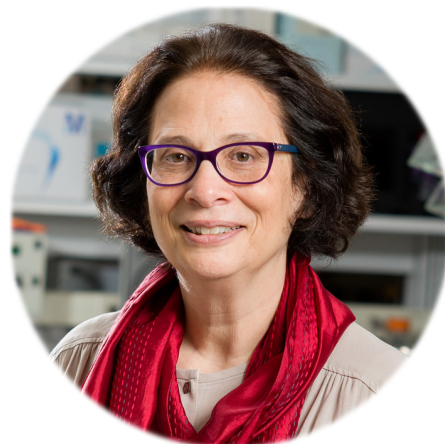
# FROM THE DESKS OF THE PRESIDENTS

## Incoming President Sandra Wolin

There has never been a better time to be an RNA biologist! The spectacular successes of mRNA vaccines, RNA oligonucleotides and other RNA-based therapeutics have made our favorite molecule famous worldwide. The fact that so many RNA Society members contributed to the knowledge needed to make RNA medicines a reality and/or are leading the efforts to treat disease is a testament to both the strength of our community and the importance of our science. It is thus with a mixture of awe for our science and gratitude to our members that I begin my term as President. The RNA Society has been my scientific home since its founding, providing me with friends around the globe and an always welcoming and collegial space to share our science. As President, I will do my best to ensure that our society stays vibrant and relevant. Inclusivity has long been a tenet of our society, and I will seek ways to expand upon this goal, ensuring that diverse voices and perspectives feel welcome.

One of the great strengths of the RNA Society is the vast number of members who generously commit their time for the benefit of our community. These include our CEO Kristian Baker, our CFO Wen Ding and our Secretary Hua Lou, who carry out much of the behind-the-scenes work. I thank Maria Carmo-Fonseca, our outgoing President, who has led and supported our society for the past two years. Luckily, Carmo will now serve for two years as Past President, so we will continue to benefit from her wisdom. I also want to thank our outgoing Past President, Anna Maria Pyle, whose service was recognized with the 2022 RNA Society Lifetime Service Award; our three outgoing

Directors, David Bartel, Alain Laederach and Kristin Patrick; and our returning Directors, Anita Corbett, Jeffrey Kieft and Michaela



Muller-McNicoll. Anita, Jeff and Michaela will be joined by newly elected Directors Julie Claycomb, Katrin Karbstein and Thomas Preiss.

I also want to acknowledge the many committees that oversee important RNA Society functions and initiatives. In alphabetical order, we have a new Awards Committee, headed by Ambro van Hoof, that oversees our growing awards portfolio; a Business Development Committee, headed by Gianpiero Di Leva, that identifies sponsors for our Annual Meeting and other initiatives; a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee, headed by Shobha Vasudevan, that identifies barriers to inclusion in our society and develops mechanisms to alleviate them; a Fundraising and Development Committee, headed by Sean Ryder, that identifies and develops the resources needed to support programs such as our awards program and the Research Presentation Fellowships that cover registration costs for those who would otherwise be unable to present their science at the Annual Meeting. We also have a Junior Scientist group headed by postdoc representatives Doreen Lugano and Gjenni Voss and

# FROM THE DESKS OF THE PRESIDENTS

## Incoming President Sandra Wolin

graduate student representatives Daniel Oh and Jimin Yoon that is advised by Aaron Hoskins and Kelly Nguyen. This committee plans activities and career development events for the Annual Meeting and supports networking activities year-round.

Another new committee is our Media and Communications committee, headed by Daniel Kim, that engages with members and the public through social media. This committee oversees this Newsletter, with Gaby Fuchs and Katarina Jurikova serving as co-editors. We also have a Meetings committee, headed by Benoit Chabot, that evaluates proposals for the Annual Meeting and oversees our Childcare, Dependent Care and Disability Allowance and Research Presentation Fellowship programs. Our Membership Committee, headed by Kristin Koutmou, oversees numerous initiatives, including the RNA Small Meetings grants, our Member Spotlight Series (headed by Neva Caliskan and Daniel Kiss, with a team of 10 volunteer writers), our Individual Mentoring Initiative (led by Nancy Greenbaum) and our RNA Salon program (headed by Ute Koethe).

I encourage you to get involved with those committees that you feel most passionate about. During my term, I hope to establish a new committee dedicated to education. Many of our members are passionate about education in one or more of its forms, including undergraduate education, graduate and postdoctoral training and mentoring, and outreach to the general public. The role of the education committee would be to both lead and support these efforts.

A major way the RNA Society serves its members is through the *RNA* journal. *RNA* has always stood out as a

place where the editors are broadly knowledgeable about RNA science and where the decision to accept is based on whether the work advances our field, rather than on perceptions of impact or trendiness. As a result, quite a few landmark papers have been published in *RNA*! I want to express my gratitude to Tim Nilsen, who established the Journal and served as Editor-in-Chief for the past 28 years. Tim recently stepped down from this position, although he will stay on as Special Issues Editor. The journal is now run by two Senior Editors, Javier Caceres and Eric Phizicky. Javier and Eric are currently establishing their vision for the Journal. It will be exciting to see the new directions that the Journal takes!

A highlight of being an RNA Society member is the opportunity to attend the Annual Meeting. Our meeting stands out for being both broad and broad-minded. The selection of abstracts for oral presentation is about the science, rather than whether an abstract fits into a pre-determined session, allowing work in emerging or less-populated areas to be presented. Our meeting is also impressive for the sheer number of talks and the fact that the talks are largely given by students and postdocs. The poster sessions are vibrant and well attended. The mentoring lunch gives opportunities for trainees to network with scientists representing a wide range of career paths. The newest additions to the meeting, a career panel designed by the Junior Scientists and a DEI panel that highlights diverse voices and identifies ways to increase diversity and inclusion within our society, were both well-received and will recur in 2023.

# FROM THE DESKS OF THE PRESIDENTS

## Incoming President Sandra Wolin

Going forward, what are the challenges for our society?

As the importance of RNA therapeutics will only increase, we need to consider our role in educating the public. As RNA science expands beyond traditional areas, we need to make sure that all who care about our favorite molecule are welcomed and supported by the RNA Society. Our society should also lead in reducing the barriers to participation and inclusion in our science. Here, I commend the DEI committee for their many efforts in this critical area. Due to their work and that of the Membership and Meetings committees, we have several new RNA Salons from parts of the world that were not represented previously and new mechanisms to subsidize Society memberships and access to Annual Meeting content for those lacking in financial resources. There is more to do, and I look forward to working with these and other committees to expand access and opportunities for all.

To support both new and existing programs, our society needs resources. I plan to work with the Fundraising and Development committee to encourage philanthropy, both from our own members and from the many companies whose products build upon our science. I also want to recognize Sean Ryder, the inaugural chair of this committee, who streamlined the donation process and negotiated the funds for two new awards sponsored by Eclipse Bioinnovations. As Sean has decided to step down, we will soon be asking for volunteers interested in taking on this important role.

I hope it is clear that it takes a large village to run the RNA Society. We need everyone's participation and ideas to achieve the strongest possible outcomes.

Please reach out to me with your thoughts as to how

our society can better serve our remarkable community.

I look forward to seeing many of you at RNA 2023 in Singapore.

Sandy

President of the RNA Society

sandra.wolin@nih.gov

# FROM THE DESK OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Kristian Baker

Happy New Year!

Welcome to 2023 and the new RNA Society newsletter!

To say that the last three years have been unsettling would be an understatement; COVID-19 completely changed history—including our daily lives, our work, our science and also how the RNA SOCIETY as an organization strives to accomplish our mission of promoting RNA research and education to scientists around the globe. As we begin to emerge from days when we lacked an understanding of the virus that caused the pandemic and access to the remarkable vaccines (and drugs) to combat it, it seems fitting to look back at the changes that occurred within the RNA Society during this time. The review below showcases how our organization not only met the challenges brought on by COVID-19, but how we actually flourished during this time to provide new and innovative ways to serve our community.

## *Annual Meeting*

COVID-19 prevented in-person meetings and our chance to gather in Vancouver in 2020 and Singapore in 2021; in response, the RNA Society pivoted and made the unprecedented decision to transition our annual meeting to on-line events that, in turn, made our science accessible in ways not previously imagined. The response by the RNA community to this decision was nothing short of amazing—levels of participation in RNA 2020 and RNA 2021 far-and-away surpassed that of any in-person meeting and we witnessed historic growth in membership in our organization. Last year marked the return of an in-person meeting format, but

one that was coupled with full digital access to the entire meeting content for researchers who were unable to be in Boulder in person.

By offering members (and the greater RNA research community) our cutting-edge RNA research advances via a dual platform (in-person and through the Digital Content Library), the RNA Society achieved an important goal by widening engagement and increasing inclusivity within our community.

RNA 2023 is right around the corner and will be held May 30th–June 4th in Singapore—signaling a return to Asia for the first time since we met in Kyoto, Japan in 2016. The meeting will be held at the Suntec Convention Center—a state-of-the art and fully accessible facility named Asia’s Leading Meetings & Conference Centre in 2022 by World Travel Awards. Meeting Organizers (led by Fatima Gebauer and Ling-Ling Chen) have assembled an outstanding meeting program and plan a special treat for meeting participants in hosting the Opening Reception in the Flower Dome at the iconic Singapore Gardens by the Bay (<https://www.gardensbythebay.com.sg>). RNA 2023 will surely be a meeting that should not be missed, but in the event that you cannot travel to Singapore to join us in person, access to the full meeting content will be available again this year by subscribing to the RNA 2023 Digital Content Library!



# FROM THE DESK OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Kristian Baker

## *Expanding RNA Society Committees and Programming*

Over the last three years, four new standing committees have been created to manage increases in programming and to drive new initiatives within our society. The Fundraising & Development Committee serves to ensure the Society maintains strong financial footing and secures resources to support new programming aimed at meeting the growing needs of our members. The Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Committee is charged with ensuring the Society is fair, inclusive and welcoming to all who choose to be a member or engage in our activities. Our Media & Communications Committee is working to expand how the Society communicates with our members and the greater RNA community, including on various Social Media platforms and in launching this new version of our Newsletter (special thanks to Gaby Fuchs, Katarina Jurikova and Daniel Kim for their work on relaunching our Newsletter). Finally, our Awards Committee was recently formed to administer our Awards Program and its newly expanded portfolio of awards recognizing the extraordinary scientific, educational, mentoring, and leadership achievements of our members.

## *RNA Journal*

2023 ushers in a transition in leadership at RNA that includes Eric Phizicky and Javier Caceres in the role of co-Senior Editors, taking over after an incredible and prosperous 28 years with Tim Nilsen at the helm. This change in leadership follows a number of new initiatives at RNA aimed at promoting our flagship journal and the terrific RNA science found between its covers, including the launch of an annual Special Issue (for which Tim will stay on and lead), yearly RNA

Journal Prizes, Meet the First Author features highlighting the scientists behind the science, expanded promotion of published articles on Twitter (follow us at [@RNAjournal](https://twitter.com/RNAjournal)), and increased engagement at Meet the Editors events held in conjunction with our annual meeting. Great things are happening at RNA—if it has been a while since you have read an issue, I hope you take a minute to visit and see for yourself (<https://rnajournal.cshlp.org/>)!

## *Inclusion*

In efforts to increase inclusion and provide widespread access to RNA Society programming, a number of new initiatives were introduced over the last three years. For those who might not otherwise be able to attend our annual meeting in person, the RNA Society now offers both Research Presentation Fellowships (that fully waive meeting registration costs) and Childcare, Dependent-Care and Disability Allowances, and we have increased the number of awards for recognizing outstanding poster presentations five-fold. Access to our Digital Content Library is offered free to underrepresented or financially-disadvantaged scientists under our Inclusion Initiative. We have partnered with the RNA Collaborative to sponsor bi-monthly on-line seminars that are freely accessible to those interested in viewing the great RNA science from its member institutions (see our website for the [link](#)). Through the efforts of our Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Committee, we have expanded the geographical reach of our RNA Salon program and also offer outreach to underrepresented scientists. The RNA Society's current efforts include partnering with RNA scientists (and their students) from primarily



# FROM THE DESK OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

## Kristian Baker

undergraduate institutions to develop ways to increase their involvement and also in the development of an Education Committee within our organization.

*We need you!*

The RNA Society thrives because of the dedicated efforts of our elected members of Council, our officers, committee chairs and their members, Society program administrators, our meeting organizers, the RNA journal editorial team, and junior RNA scientist representatives and their advisors. Without their efforts, the RNA Society would not be enjoying this time of prosperity, opportunity and progress. Please take a moment to recognize these many volunteers—present and past—who drive the Society's mission, and also consider how you might lend your ideas and energy to further our goals.

Together we have come a long way over the last three years, but we are not yet out of the woods. COVID-19 continues to impact our lives (our thoughts go out to our colleagues in China and surrounding areas currently battling increases in infection)—and the work of the RNA Society and its members is more important than ever!

Wishing you all a safe and healthy 2023.

Best wishes,

Kristian  
CEO of the RNA Society  
[ceo@rnasociety.org](mailto:ceo@rnasociety.org)

# NOTES ON RNA 2022

## 27<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL MEETING OF THE RNA SOCIETY

Our annual 2022 meeting in Boulder, Colorado was a return to the very much anticipated in-person conference format. We hit a record attendance for a North American venue (over 1100 participants; 908 from North and South America, and 171 from Europe). Our sincere congratulations go to Roy Parker and his team (Amy Buck, Howard Chang, Kristen Lynch, Stepanka Vanacova and Rui-Ming Xu for organizing 2 keynote presentations, 199 oral presentations, 8 awardee presentations and 566 posters. The Boulder meeting also offered an on-line digital content library that provided original content and access to all in-person presentations for a period of three weeks after the conclusion of the live meeting. The RNA Society awarded over 75 Research Presentation Fellowships and offered 4 Childcare, Dependent-Care and Disability Allowances.

*(Editor's note: See next page for RNA 2023.)*

Then, RNA 2024 will be in Edinburgh, Scotland, from May 28 to June 2, 2024. The organizers are David Tollervey (Edinburgh, lead organizer), Atlanta Cook (Edinburgh), Ben Blencowe (Canada), Markus Bohnsack (Germany) and Yue Wan (Singapore).

The Society will continue to offer Research Presentation Fellowships to offset registration costs. Maayan Salton will continue to administer the Childcare, Dependent Care and Disability Program,



which will be expanded to improve inclusivity.

While the RNA Society is convinced that our annual meetings create an



environment that cultivates synergies, interactions and collaborations, our future objective is to better document the impact, outcomes and legacy of each meeting. The RNA Society is also very much aware that in-person meetings come with responsibilities in terms of sustainability, from environmental (e.g. carbon footprint) to social ones. As part of our goals, we will aim to implement a sound environmental policy and provide our members sustainable options to mitigate the environmental impacts associated with our activities.

I am very grateful to members of the Meetings Committee for their contribution and wisdom in helping select venues, organizers and Research Presentation Fellowships for our meetings. Members of the Meetings committee now include Andrea Berman, Akila Mayeda, Dawn Chandler, Edouard Bertrand, Jerney Ule, Chonghui Cheng, Yoseph Barash, Gracjan Michlewski and Woan-Yuh Tarn.

Benoît Chabot  
Chair of the Meetings Committee  
Benoit.Chabot@usherbrooke.ca

# RNA 2023

## 28<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL MEETING OF THE RNA SOCIETY



We are now gearing up for our future RNA Society meetings. The next one will be in Singapore, from May 30 to June 4, 2023. The organizers are: Ling-Ling Chen, Shanghai Institute of Biochemistry and Cell Biology, CAS, China (co-lead); Fátima Gebauer, Centre for Genomic Regulation, Spain (co-lead); David Bartel, Whitehead Institute, MIT and Howard Hughes Medical Institute, USA; Douglas Black, University of California at Los Angeles, USA; Thomas Preiss, Australian National University, Australia and Yue Wan, Agency for Science, Technology and Research (A\*STAR), Singapore.

The program will include three keynote presentations: Britt Glaunsinger, UC Berkeley and HHMI, USA; Ramesh Pillai, University of Geneva, Switzerland; and Yigong Shi, Westlake University, China

The Opening Reception (Tuesday early evening) will be in the Flower Dome at the iconic [Gardens by the Bay](#).

The fantastic Suntec venue is located downtown Singapore, a city that will provide fascinating opportunities for cultural (and epicurian) discoveries. We thank The [Singapore Tourism Board](#) for helping to prepare our visit.

The RNA Society is pleased to promote 'STEP Ahead Into An RNA World', a two-day workshop held May

29th and 30th at 'University Town' in Singapore and hosted by the National University of Singapore (NUS) and sponsored by Temasek Foundation. Step Ahead into An RNA World organizers invite all junior RNA researchers to attend and will feature scientific talks, posters and visits to local RNA research facilities and local tourist sites in Singapore. This Workshop provides an outstanding opportunity to learn of the exciting RNA science being conducted in Singapore, network with colleagues, and establish future collaborations.

Applications will be accepted starting January 31st on a first-come, first-served bases and registrants will be provided complimentary accommodations and up to S\$1,200 in travel allowance to participate in the event. More information will be forthcoming on the STEP Ahead website and through a link on the RNA 2023 website.

More information on the 2023 meeting is available at <https://www2.rnasociety.org/conferences/rna-2023/meeting-information/>.

Benoit Chabot  
Chair of the Meetings Committee

Fátima Gebauer & Ling-Ling Chen  
On behalf of the Organizers of RNA 2023

# AWARDS

## Ambro van Hoof

### *Honored to award you*

This fall I took on the role of chair of the newly instituted awards committee of the RNA Society. It's been a busy few months. I am very happy that we have an active and diverse committee with representation from diverse career stages and careers and three different continents. The members are Markus Bohnsack, Michaela Dohnalkova, Christine Dunham, Chien-Ling Lin, Ben Montpetit, Bonita Powell, Tatjana Trcek, Yaqiang Wang, and Xuebing Wu. In addition to these committee members many other equally well qualified RNA Society members volunteered to serve on this committee. Thank you to all the volunteers! I spent some time this fall orienting myself on past practices for awardee selection in the RNA Society and talked to volunteers in other scientific societies about their standards and procedures. We are still in the process of translating these into our own procedures. Please let me know if you have any ideas to improve our awards program. However, equally urgent was the evaluation of applicants and nominees for the 2023 awards. We have made progress and you should keep an eye on your email and twitter feeds about the winners. In the next year we hope to publicize these awards more. Before I took on this role I did not realize that most of these awards include complimentary attendance of the annual RNA Society meeting, including travel, lodging, registration, and other costs. There are eleven awards total and many of you are eligible for at least one of these. For faculty, the Early- and Mid-Career Awards and the Elisa Izaurralde Award selected by our committee are in addition to the

awards for senior faculty selected by the RNA Society board, the Lifetime Achievement and Lifetime Service Awards. For



trainees, we award two eCclipse Awards, two Scaringe Awards and a CSHL Press Award. Other RNA Society members are eligible for the Inclusive Leadership, Outstanding Career and Mentoring awards. We are evaluating many qualified candidates for each of these awards and we will have to disappoint some very well qualified applicants. Please start thinking about applying or nominating for these awards the coming year. We are here to award you, but can only do so if you apply or are nominated.

Ambro van Hoof  
Chair of the Awards Committee  
Ambro.Van.Hoof@uth.tmc.edu

## AWARDS PRESENTED AT THE RNA 2022 MEETING

### 2022 RNA Society Lifetime Achievement in Science Award



#### *Gideon Dreyfuss*

Gideon Dreyfuss, the Isaac Norris Professor of Biochemistry and Biophysics at the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine, made seminal discoveries on RNA binding proteins, such as the discovery of the hnRNP protein family, deciphering the role of RNA binding proteins in human disease (SMN complex in snRNP biogenesis and implications on Spinal Muscular Atrophy) and U1 snRNP telescripting and its functional impact. As one of the most influential RNA scientists of his generation, he is celebrated with this award for his immense contributions to RNA science and the training of the next generation of RNA scientists.

### 2022 RNA Society Lifetime Service Award

#### *Anna Marie Pyle*

Anna Marie Pyle, the Sterling Professor of Molecular, Cellular & Developmental Biology at Yale University and Investigator of the Howard Hughes Medical Institute, made outstanding contributions to the RNA Society over the last two decades. She served as the RNA Society Director (2003–2004) and, more recently in 2019–2020, as President of the organization, during the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. For all of her efforts in strengthening the efforts and impact of the RNA Society, she has been recognized with the RNA Society Lifetime Service Award.



### 2022 RNA Society Outstanding Career Researcher

#### *Arthur Zaug*

Arthur Zaug has been a staff scientist in the laboratory of Thomas Cech at the University of Colorado in Boulder for the past 40 years. His research includes the discovery of the first self-cleaving RNA ribozyme and contributions to molecular genetics of telomerase. He has also mentored dozens of trainees, many of whom have gone on to be luminaries themselves in advancing our understanding of RNA. The RNA Society could not be more pleased to present Art with this inaugural award and recognize him as a creative, rigorous, and innovative RNA scientist.



## AWARDS PRESENTED AT THE RNA 2022 MEETING



### **2022 RNA Society/Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory Press Award for Research Excellence by an Underrepresented Scientist**

#### ***Jillian Ramos***

Jillian Ramos is a Postdoctoral Research Scientist in the Kieft Laboratory at the University of Colorado—Anschutz Medical Campus, developing RNA-centric therapeutic tools. During her Ph.D., she published a number of papers including a first author study in *RNA* describing novel pathogenic mutants of the tRNA wobble-position modification enzyme. In addition, Dr. Ramos excels in outreach, teaching, and mentoring, showcasing her all-around track-record of excellence.

### **2022 RNA Society Award for Excellence in Inclusive Leadership**

#### ***Anita Corbett***

Anita Corbett is the Samuel C. Dobbs Professor in the Department of Biology at Emory University, where she has been a faculty member since 1997. She is well known for her long and prestigious research career in RNA biology and for her commitment in training the next generation of scientists. She has devoted herself to teaching students at all levels of their training and promoting a nurturing academic environment for students from various background.



### **2022 RNA Society/CSHL Press Distinguished Research Mentor Award**

#### ***Susan Gerbi***

Susan Gerbi has spearheaded mentoring initiatives broadly within her institution—Brown University, in scientific organizations (such as the American Society for Cell Biology and the Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology), and in our own society. She also served on panels for the U.S. National Academy of Sciences for the establishment of the NIH Pathway to Independence program. We are pleased to present Dr. Gerbi on this well-deserved recognition.



## AWARDS PRESENTED AT THE RNA 2022 MEETING



### 2022 Eclipse Award for Innovation in High Throughput Biology Winners

#### ***Oguzhan Begik***

Oguzhan Begik is a graduate student in the laboratories of John Mattick at the Garvan Institute of Medical Research at the University of New South Wales in Sydney and Eva Maria Novoa at the Centre for Genomic Regulation (CRG) in Barcelona. His research focuses on using long-read direct RNA sequencing to improve prediction, detection, and mapping of epitranscriptomic modifications.

#### ***Aldema Sas-Chen***

Aldema Sas-Chen was recently appointed as a Senior Lecturer at Tel-Aviv University in Israel following Postdoctoral training at the Weizmann Institute of Science in the laboratory of Dr. Schraga Schwartz, during which she studied the epitranscriptome by developing and employing next-generation sequencing techniques to map diverse RNA modifications.



### 2022 RNA Society/Scaringe Young Scientist Award

#### ***Sanne Klompe***

Sanne Klompe, currently a graduate student in the laboratory of Samuel Sternberg at Columbia University, studies the mechanisms of CRISPR-Cas systems with mobile genetic elements. Her work has gained insight into these systems in which nuclease-deficient Type I-F CRISPR-Cas systems serve as RNA-guided targeting modules for transposable elements.

#### ***Margaret Rodgers***

After training with Nils Walter at the University of Michigan and Aaron Hoskins at University of Wisconsin, Margaret Rodgers currently holds the position of postdoctoral researcher in the laboratory of Sarah Woodson at Johns Hopkins University. Using techniques she developed, Dr. Rodgers has made important advances in our understanding of the co-transcriptional assembly of RNPs.



## AWARDS PRESENTED AT THE RNA 2022 MEETING



### **2022 Elisa Izaurralde Award for Innovation in Research, Teaching, and Service**

#### ***Luisa Cochella***

Originally from Argentina, Luisa Cochella started her own lab in 2013 at the Institute of Molecular Pathology in Vienna, where she was a Group Leader until her recent move to Johns Hopkins University. She has made ground-breaking contributions to our understanding of microRNAs in development, cell-type specification and cellular physiology. Dr. Cochella is a dedicated mentor and an organizer of numerous meetings including the annual Small RNA Microsymposium

### **2022 RNA Society Early-Career Research Award**

#### ***Nicholas Guydosh***

Nicholas Guydosh completed his Postdoctoral training at Johns Hopkins University under the mentorship of Rachael Green in 2016 and since that time has lead a research group focusing on translation dynamics and ribosomal recycling. In the short time as an independent investigator, he has made a number of key advances, and is noted for promoting a culture of diversity, equity and inclusion in his laboratory and for his mentoring.



### **2022 RNA Society Mid-Career Research Award**

#### ***Julius Brennecke***

Julius Brennecke is a Senior Scientist at the Institute of Molecular Biotechnology in Vienna, Austria. By elegantly combining genetics, biochemistry, genomics, and bioinformatics, he has made tremendous contributions to the field of small RNAs and demonstrated dedication to education and mentorship, playing central roles in the Vienna Biocenter graduate program and training many successful RNA researchers in his own lab.



# MENTORING PROGRAM

## Nancy Greenbaum

It's been a good year for the Career Mentoring activities of the RNA Society. The Individual Mentoring Initiative is now completing its fifth year-long Cycle. This program pairs junior scientists with senior Society members willing to share their guidance and expertise. Each of our ~40 mentor-mentee pair agrees to meet periodically (on-line or, if geographically possible, in-person) throughout the year-long cycle to assist the mentee in navigating issues relating to career development and transition; mentees have been enthusiastic about the guidance they have received, and almost all mentors have found the experience rewarding. We will soon embark on our sixth annual Cycle. Be on the lookout for an email in the next few weeks describing the program in more detail and containing an application form for mentee candidates; potential mentors are asked only to provide a note expressing interest and including any information that will help in matching them with a suitable mentee. Scientists in the private sector have not been as active in responding as those in academic research—but with a rapidly increasing number of junior scientists seeking careers in biotech, we urge those with experience in industry or other non-academic fields (even if currently holding an academic position) to volunteer. RNA Society members from all parts of the world are encouraged to participate. Once accepted into the program, mentor and mentee participants are provided with information about getting off to a good start and defining mentoring goals and progress—but (unless they specifically request it) are not asked to follow any specific structure regarding mode or frequency of communication. For the first time since 2019, with the return to in-person meetings, we had the opportunity

to hold the Career Mentoring Lunch at the Boulder meeting. Despite challenges posed by large distances between meeting venues and a difficult-to-navigate lunch site, some 375 mentees and mentors (fewer than usual because of space limitations) enjoyed a 90-minute exchange on a range of career-related topics. We look forward to this annual event at the conference center in Singapore at the 2023 RNA Society Meeting!



Nancy L. Greenbaum  
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# FROM THE DESK OF THE SPOTLIGHT SERIES COORDINATOR

Kristin Koutmou

## *Spotlights Shine Light on the Experiences of RNA Society Members*

The RNA Society Member Spotlight program showcases the lives, accomplishments and advice of our members. This popular series of articles is jointly coordinated by Dr. Neva Caliskan and Dr. Daniel Kiss, who work with a team of authors to interview members and craft articles. This year's cohort of authors included Mai I. Baker, Ahmet Bakirbas, Mariela Cortés-López, Dr. Haissi Cui, Dr. Prakash Kharel, Dr. Cornelia Kilchert, Dr. Shriyaa Mittal, Dr. Vidhyadhar Nandana, Dr. Carla C. Oliveira, Paula Petronela Groza, Jennifer Porat, Dr. Anna Sherwood. During 2022, the team published 12 Spotlights of RNA Society members. These pieces revealed a marked diversity among the favorite RNA molecules of our membership, which include (but are not limited to!): tRNAs, 15S rRNA, miRNAs, xrRNA, snRNAs, T-box RNA, lncRNAs, and the hairpin ribozyme. Additionally, Spotlight articles taught us that RNA Society members enjoy making new discoveries, spending time with their families, attending the RNA Society meeting, and playing Pokémon GO. The Spotlight series continue to be widely read by our members, with each article averaging > 875 views on the RNA Society website. Throughout 2023, the Spotlight team will work to continue share the stories of RNA Society members worldwide with varied experiences and workplaces (e.g. RNA Society students, post-doctoral fellows, faculty, industrial scientists, staff scientists, core facility staff, science communication specialists, professional editors, etc).

A nomination process is used to identify members for Spotlight. We encourage all RNA Society members to nominate their outstanding colleagues by emailing the Spotlight team at [RNASpotlight@rnasociety.org](mailto:RNASpotlight@rnasociety.org).



Kristin Koutmou  
Chair of the Membership Committee  
[membership@rnasociety.org](mailto:membership@rnasociety.org)

# RNA SOCIETY SUPPORT FOR RNA RESEARCHERS IN UKRAINE AND RUSSIA



Dear RNA Society colleagues and friends,

In the wake of Russia's invasion of Ukraine, we would like to express profound sympathy for our friends and colleagues affected by the current unthinkable events. Our thoughts are with scientists and students in both Ukraine and Russia.

The RNA Society is open to consider suggestions on how we could help in our capacities. For example, we encourage Society members to maintain their network with Ukrainian scientists who were forced to flee their country and serve, if possible, as potential hosts for these displaced colleagues. Along this line, EMBO has launched a list of scientists who wish to offer assistance to displaced researchers. If you would like to join this list, please visit <https://www.embo.org/solidarity-with-ukraine/>. Please see below for additional initiatives and ways to support our colleagues:

- Science for Ukraine. A volunteer-run initiative collecting information about practical support provided by the global research community to Ukrainian researchers and students. You can add a job offer to their open positions database, or explore the database of Ukrainian institutions' requests: <https://scienceforukraine.eu>.  
Twitter: @Sci\_for\_Ukraine; hashtags: #ScienceForUkraine #ukraine #ukraineconflict #supportukraine
- Labs supporting Ukrainian scientists worldwide: <https://bit.ly/ua-table>

Please, share your ideas!

Sandra Wolin, President of the RNA Society  
Kristian Baker, CEO of the RNA Society

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