

11th RSC BMCS Biological and Medicinal Chemistry Postgraduate Symposium Department of Chemistry, the University of Cambridge on 8th December 2017

This symposium was the latest in the annual series designed to showcase the very best postgraduate research in the fields of biological and medicinal chemistry. There were eight 30 minute postgraduate oral presentations while the lunchtime postgraduate poster session had twenty contributors. The symposium also used the Flash Poster format to invigorate the accompanying poster sessions, where the poster presenters 'pitch' a 2 minute slide to the audience to attract them to their poster; a format which has always generated lots of discussion afterwards. There were also three plenary speakers, all of whom highlighted the key influences in their career path as well as outlining some of the science they are involved in. Two speakers were from industry and presented complementary case histories from drug discovery - Sarah Major from Evotec spoke about the development of dual IGF1R/INSR inhibitors for oncology while Bill McCoull from AstraZeneca outlined the structure-based design of high affinity macrocyclic inhibitors of B-cell lymphoma 6 (BCL6). The third speaker was Youcef Mehellou from Cardiff University who talked about his recent research on 'Mining Kinase Signaling Pathways for Drug Discovery Opportunities'. Interestingly Youcef gave an oral presentation at the first BMCS postgraduate symposium whilst he was a postgraduate student.

Registration for the symposium was free and the meeting was attended by over 160 scientists whose feedback was overwhelmingly positive

NB Look out for information on the 12th BMCS Postgraduate Symposium which will be held in Cambridge on 7th December 2018

Prizes were awarded as follows:

The oral presentation winner was David Fallon from the University of Strathclyde ('The Design and Synthesis of Bromodomain Photoaffinity Probes'). In addition to a cheque for £300, David also received an expenses paid invitation to give an oral presentation at the 5th 'Young Medicinal Chemists Symposium' in Ljubljana, Slovenia on 6th and 7th September 2018. The standard of the presentations was so high that the judges were unable to decide between them and so two oral presentation runners-up prizes were awarded to Oliver Coleman from the University of Oxford ('Cyclic Peptide Inhibition of Epigenetic Reader Domains') and Lewis Turner from the University of Leeds ('Towards Selective FGFR Kinase Inhibitors: A De Novo Design Approach'). Both runners-up were offered bursaries to present their posters at the Mastering Medicinal Chemistry Symposium which will be held on 14th March 2018 at the University of Strathclyde

The poster presentation winner was Ben Graham from the University of Warwick ('Synthetic Mimics of AF(G)Ps; Novel Ice Recrystallisation Inhibitors') who received a cheque for £150 and a bursary to present his research as a poster at the Mastering Medicinal Chemistry Symposium which will be held on 14th March 2018 at the University of Strathclyde. The poster presentation runner-up Prize was awarded to Gina Washbourn from the University of Liverpool ('Synthesis, Computational and Biological Evaluation of Novel Benzimidazoles as Potential Treatments for *Cryptococcus neoformans*') while the participants' prize for best poster was won by Ewen Calder from the University of Oxford ('Hypoxia-Activated Epigenetic Prodrug'). Both Gina and Ewen were received a

cheque for £150 and a bursary to present a poster at the Mastering Medicinal Chemistry Symposium which will be held on 14th March 2018 at the University of Strathclyde



2017 oral presenters

The organising committee gratefully acknowledge the generosity of the MedChemComm editorial board who gave all prize awardees an RSC certificate and one year's free e-subscription to MedChemComm. They also would like to express their thanks to the following organisations for their generous sponsorship of this symposium:

Astex, AstraZeneca, Charles River, Concept Life Sciences, Domainex, Evotec, Heptares, JD Consulting, Johnson & Johnson innovation, ThermoFisher, Vernalis, Vertex

They also wish to acknowledge the generosity of the University of Cambridge who allowed us free use of the lecture theatre and facilities in the Department of Chemistry and the RSC Biological and Medicinal Chemistry Sector who underpinned this symposium financially as well as efficient symposium secretariat support by Maggi Churchouse Events

Organising committee: Dave Alker (David Alker Associates), Anthony Coyne (University of Cambridge), Ashley Jarvis (Domainex), Gordon Saxty (Fidelta) and John Skidmore (University of Cambridge).