

Short Biographies for the Judges for the Sigma Xi the Student Talks at the Summer Undergraduate Research Symposium, University of Delaware, 13 August 2008

Masaaki Fujiki, Ph.D.

Masaaki is a molecular biologist who received his B.S in applied biological sciences from the Science University of Tokyo, his M.S. in biology from California State University and his PhD in cell and molecular biology with a minor in biochemistry from Penn State. After Masaaki received his Ph.D. from the Penn State, he did a short post-doc at Duke University before returning to Japan where he worked at RIKEN Institute. Upon returning to the USA he completed post-docs at St. Louis, MO (Washington University, and then Donald Danforth Plant Science Center), before joining Fraunhofer Center for Molecular Biotechnology. Currently he works as a research associate in vector development group, trying to build and improve the plant expression vectors based on various plant viruses.

Kenneth J. Leavitt, MS

Ken Leavitt received a B.S. degree in Chemistry from University at Albany – SUNY, Albany, New York in 1994 and a M.S. in Synthetic Organic Chemistry with Advisor: Prof. Robert A. Holton at Florida State University, Tallahassee, FL in 1998. Ken was employed at Bristol Myers Squibb from 1999-2006 as a discovery chemist and worked in numerous therapeutic areas. Currently, Ken is employed at Adesis in New Castle, DE.

Helen Baker, Ph.D

Helen joined Astrazeneca as a senior materials scientist in 2007. She earned her PhD in chemistry/chemical engineering at the University of Manchester, UK in 2007. She was awarded her Masters degree in chemistry, UMIST, UK in 2004 and her Bachelors degree in chemistry, UMIST, UK in 2002.

Jessica A. Chichester, Ph.D

Jessica heads the immunology group at Fraunhofer USA CMB and is tasked with designing, facilitating, and supervising all vaccine validation studies in animal models both in-house and at various contract laboratories. Her lab also focuses on characterizing the use of different adjuvants and delivery routes to improve upon the formulation of our vaccine candidates. Results produced by her lab have been published in peer-reviewed journals and presented at multiple scientific meetings. Jessica did her undergraduate work at Susquehanna University and received her doctorate from Thomas Jefferson University concentrating in the field of microbiology and immunology. There she studied the role of the host's immune response in the pathogenesis of Hepatitis B virus. Her fields of expertise include viral pathogenesis and cellular immunology.