

## **NIEHS fellow to receive achievement award at upcoming SOT conference**

*By Kelly Lenox*

The Society of Toxicology announced in late January that NIEHS postdoctoral fellow Erin Quist, D.V.M., was this year's recipient of the Roger O. McClellan Student Award. Quist is an Intramural Research and Training Award fellow in the National Toxicology Program (NTP) Reproductive Endocrinology Group, led by [Sue Fenton, Ph.D.](#), and the NTP Pathology Group headed by [David Malarkey, D.V.M., Ph.D.](#)

"Erin is an incredibly hard worker, and very deserving of this recognition," Fenton said. "The depth of experience she brings to this lab has really enhanced our work."

Quist is a Ph.D. candidate at North Carolina State University College of Veterinary Medicine, studying comparative pathology. She earned her D.V.M. from Colorado State University and completed a three-year residency at Texas A&M University in anatomic veterinary pathology before joining NTP in 2011.

Roger and Kathleen McClellan established the award to encourage individuals with a D.V.M. degree to pursue careers in biomedical research, including comparative toxicology and pathology. The award is based on the scientific merit of research proposed for presentation at the Society of Toxicology (SOT) annual meeting (see [text box](#)). Special consideration is given to research abstracts that exemplify the role of comparative medicine in evaluating the effects of exposure to chemicals or physical agents.

"It's wonderful to receive recognition indicating that my work has the potential to significantly impact the scientific community," Quist said. "[It also] represents the effectiveness of the NTP training program, as well as my commitment to the fields of comparative and toxicologic pathology."

### **PFOA and liver toxicity**

Her award-winning abstract is titled "Hepatic mitochondrial alteration in CD-1 mice associated with prenatal exposures to low doses of perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA)." Quist and her colleagues found increased numbers of mitochondria, the power plant of cells, and alterations in their function in the liver tissue of PFOA-exposed mice. They are conducting further studies to determine the precise mode of action involved in PFOA-induced liver injury.

PFOA is used in the manufacture of fluoropolymers, which have thousands of important manufacturing uses. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency nominated PFOA for [NTP study](#) (<http://ntp.niehs.nih.gov/testing/status/agents/ts-m910070.html>) in 2003. Since then, NTP scientists and contractors have performed short-term toxicity, long-term carcinogenicity, and other studies on the compound.



*"I am extremely honored to receive this award and am very grateful to the Toxicologic and Exploratory Pathology and the Comparative and Veterinary Specialty Sections of the SOT for selecting me as this year's recipient." Quist said. (Photo courtesy of Steve McCaw)*



*Fenton's group focuses on the developmental impacts of numerous environmental chemicals. (Photo courtesy of Steve McCaw)*

## Society of Toxicology meets March 22-26 in San Diego

By Robin Mackar

About 6,500 toxicologists representing 50 countries will participate in the 54th annual [meeting](http://www.toxicology.org/AI/MEET/AM2015/am.asp)

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of the Society of Toxicology. Scientists from NIEHS and NTP will be involved in workshops, poster sessions, symposia, and other activities featuring a broad range of advances in toxicological science (see highlights below).

The meeting offers something for everyone, from the annual awards ceremony on Sunday evening, to the opening plenary session Monday morning featuring one of the world leaders in genomics research, Craig Venter, Ph.D., founder, chairman, and CEO of the [J. Craig Venter Institute](http://www.jcvi.org/cms/home/)

(<http://www.jcvi.org/cms/home/>)

**Monday, March 23, 1:30 p.m.** — The Meet the Directors session is always popular at SOT. This year's session features Linda Birnbaum, Ph.D., director of NIEHS and NTP, and Jim Jones, assistant administrator of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Office of Chemical Safety and Pollution Prevention. The informal event lets attendees ask the two government leaders questions about scientific directions, priorities, training opportunities, and more.

**Tuesday-Wednesday, March 24-25, 9:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.** — Another popular event is the Research Funding Information Room, staffed by NIEHS Division of Extramural and Research Training ([DERT](#)) staff. Attendees, especially new researchers, can stop by for one-on-one conversations about scientific review or grant opportunities.

**Monday, March 23, noon** — A brown bag luncheon with DERT staff will be held on strategies for submitting successful grant applications.

**Thursday, March 26, 9:00 – 11:45 a.m.** — The Comprehensive Analysis of Nano Silver Toxicity Profiles: Known, Unknown, and Surprises session, led by DERT staff, will provide updates from NIEHS grantees.

Sessions on the importance of *in vitro* data include:

**Monday 9:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.** — The U.S. Tox21 Collaboration: Advances Made and Lessons Learned

**Tuesday 1:30 - 4:15 p.m.** — Incorporating *In Vitro* Pharmacokinetic Data and Tools into Toxicity Testing and Risk Assessment: State of the Science.

Don't forget to stop by the **NIEHS/NTP exhibit at space 2228** to meet program staff, pick up new science materials, and learn more about free resources on our websites, such as the [NTP Nonneoplastic Lesion Atlas](http://ntp.niehs.nih.gov/nnl/)

(<http://ntp.niehs.nih.gov/nnl/>)

(Robin Mackar is the news director in the NIEHS Office of Communications and Public Liaison, and a frequent contributor to the Environmental Factor.)

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