

2014 BRASS Holiday Party



1. Barbara Carroll, Alex Reiss and Phyllis Pittman
2. Ryan McCarthy and Nya Nelson and Les Eckert
3. Linda and Jay Comeaux and Michael Francisco
4. Jo Ann Petersen and Elsie Eckert
5. Carolyn Faulk and Marshall Smith
6. Bill and Debby Leighton, Diana Brown and Lisa Chandler
7. Beth Wolff, Robin Simon and Peter VanDerlofske
8. Jeanette Bocell, Pat McCarter and Dr. Jim Bocell
9. Ed McMahon, Myra Wilson and Don Jordan
10. Judi McGee, Beth Wolff and Leisa Holland-Nelson
11. Robin and Paul Simon
12. Joann and Bill Crassas

BRASS Scholars & Members

Achievements, Awards and Giving



▲ Meagan Barry and Charlene Emerson were selected as the Houston Livestock Show & Rodeo 2014 Outstanding Community BRASS Scholars of the Year. Ed McMahon presented them with their award certificates and cash awards.



▲ Don Jordan's private suite at the Rodeo was the perfect setting for a photo of the \$95,000 check that brought big smiles to everyone's face! BIG THANKS to HLS&R!

2015 Match Results for our BRASS Scholars

Minhtran Ngo-Howard (2008-2009)
Otolaryngology/Head & Neck Surgery
University of Alabama

Phillip Michael Boone (2010-2011)
Pediatrics/Medical Genetics
Combined Residency Program
Children's Hospital Boston/
Harvard Medical School

Matthew Burstein (2008-2009)
General Surgery
Cleveland Clinic Foundation

BRASS Giving

In Loving Memory of Diana Brown
Dr. Scott Basinger
Dr. and Mrs. James P. Bonar
Mr. and Mrs. Les Eckert
Mr. and Mrs. Douglas J. Erwin
Mr. and Mrs. Donald F. Faust, Sr.
Mr. and Mrs. Michael Francisco
Mr. and Mrs. Larry D. George
Mr. and Mrs. Anthony G. Gracely
Mr. and Mrs. David Greeson
Mr. and Mrs. Gary C. Hanna
Ms. Chari B. Koester
Mr. and Mrs. Paul H. Koester
Mr. and Mrs. Carl E. Kuykendall
Ms. Rose Lim
Mr. and Mrs. Harry Mach
Marco Polo International, Inc.
Ms. Judi McGee
Mrs. Trinidad Mendenhall
Dr. Verena Kallhoff-Munoz

Ms. Jo Ann Petersen
Ms. Lori Richardson
Mr. and Mrs. Paul Simon
Ms. Suzanne Sklar Simons
Mr. and Mrs. Jesse B. Tutor, Jr.
Mr. Peter J. VanDerlofske and Ms. Francoise F. Marks
Mrs. Myra Wilson
Mr. and Mrs. Robert C. Wilson III
Mr. and Mrs. Mark H. Wright

In Honor of Myra Wilson
Mr. and Mrs. Paul H. Koester
In Memory of Van McFarland
Mr. and Mrs. Paul Simon
In Memory of Nagy Armanious
Mr. and Mrs. Paul Simon
In Honor of Elsie Eckert
Mr. and Mrs. Paul Simon
Mr. and Mrs. Jesse B. Tutor, Jr.

BRASS Officers 2014-2015

Founder *Myra Wilson*
President *Peter VanDerlofske*
Past President *Diana Brown**
Treasurer *Lisa Chandler*
Event/Membership Chair *Linda Kuykendall*
Second Vice President *Don D. Jordan*
Recording Secretary *Jo Ann Petersen*
Scholar Liaison *Elsie Eckert*
Research Award Liaison *Ed McMahon*
Mentor Liaison *Dr. Jim Bocell*
Member At Large *Jay Comeaux*
Scholar Selection *Dr. James Bonar*
New Scholar Selection Committee Member *Robin Simon*
Baylor Liaisons *Dean Debbie Johnson*

*deceased

BRASS Scholars

Getting to Know Them

Want to host a scholar get together?
Can't make an upcoming arts or sporting event?
Have extra tickets for a gala or a luncheon?

One of the best things about being a member of BRASS is the opportunity to spend time with the BRASS Scholars; you will have the time of your life! Contact **Elsie Eckert** at 713-789-2434 or ejs@elsiesmithdesign.com if you have tickets to donate or you'd like to set something up.

MEMBERSHIP AND PROGRAM INFORMATION
<http://connect.bcm.edu/brassor> Please contact: 713.798.4145 or legler@bcm.edu

The Element

April 2015



▲ Carolyn Faulk, Kenny Rogers and Linda Kuykendall at the 2014 BRASS Holiday party.



▲ Don Jordan, Dean Debbie Johnson and Ed McMahon proudly display the \$95,000 check presented to BRASS by the Houston Livestock Show & Rodeo on March 10, 2015, at the rodeo.



▲ Judi Johnson congratulates scholars Meagan Barry and Robert Seilheimer at the 2014 Scholar reception on their presentations of how beneficial the Wintermann Foundation is to their research efforts.

A Message from the BRASS President

Dear BRASS Members and Supporters:

It is with great sadness that I note the BRASS family recently lost one of its dearest and hardest working members. Diana Brown, our immediate Past President, lost her valiant battle with ovarian cancer on Feb. 22, 2015. She was a kind and gracious lady who lived her life with joy and faith. Always upbeat, she radiated a personal charm that warmed the hearts of everyone who knew her. She worked tirelessly for BRASS, having served two terms as President. We will dearly miss her.

I am looking forward to serving as the new President of BRASS, Diana left everything in perfect order so the transition is smooth. During my tenure as President I'll do my best to lead BRASS in fulfilling its mission of helping the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences in its pursuit of excellence in biomedical research.

Our 2014-2015 world class scholars; Zachary Criss, Paul Fahey, Larissa Nitschke and Jarey Wang officially joined the BRASS family on Nov. 13, 2014 at the Scholars' reception generously hosted again this year by Al Trullenneq and Martha Molina. Linda and Jay Comeaux helped underwrite the evening and everyone enjoyed a chance to visit with both new and old scholars. As always Al and Martha were perfect hosts, so a big thank you to them and Jay and Linda for their generosity!

The annual Holiday party was hosted by Carolyn Faulk on Dec. 9, 2014. It was a warm and welcoming setting for a wonderful event and it was enjoyed by everyone. Guests brought gift cards for all the scholars to add some fun and shopping cheer to their holidays!

One of the annual BRASS social events truly enjoyed by the scholars and which is unique to Houston was hosted by the Houston Livestock Show & Rodeo (HLS&R) on March 10, 2015. A reception honoring the Texas Medical Center was held in the Tejas Room. Highlighting the evening was the presentation to BRASS made by Jack Lyons, HLS&R Chairman, for \$95,000. This funding is crucial in helping support the scholars with equipment to carry out their research, providing funds for trips for them to present their lab findings at educational conferences, and it enables them to support community outreach. I want to thank the HLS&R Board for supporting the BRASS mission. Specifically, I want to thank BRASS Board Members Don Jordan and Ed McMahon for all their efforts to make this event so enjoyable each year.

Following the Tejas Room reception the scholars and Board members enjoyed the Rodeo in Don Jordan's private suite. For the second year Dean Johnson participated in the opening parade on horseback. Ed McMahon has threatened to mount her on a horse named "Widow Maker" but to date he hasn't made good on his promise. Thank you for your continued support! ~ Peter



▲ Peter VanDerlofske

inside

- ▶ 2014-2015 BRASS Scholars
Four Remarkable Students
- ▶ Brass Scholar Reception
Awards & Achievements
- ▶ BRASS Holiday Party
Highlights and Photos

BRASS Scholar Spotlight

BRASS Welcomes Four New 2015-2016 Scholars



▲ **Zachary Criss**
Don D. Sykora
Scholar

Zachary Criss is a proud native Texan raised in Arlington. He attended The University of Texas at Austin where he studied biomedical engineering. During that time he worked in a lab developing strategies to simultaneously visualize and ablate tumors using nanotechnology.

Zachary is a first-year graduate student in the Translational Biology and Molecular Medicine Program, with a research interest in regenerative medicine. He

hopes that one day his thesis work will be translated from the lab bench to the bedside and used into a clinical setting.

In his spare time, Zachary enjoys getting together with friends to play flag football and softball. When Zachary is not in an active mood, he also enjoys playing board games with friends and family.

Zachary is excited about becoming a new addition to the BRASS family and getting an opportunity to share his passion for solving biomedical issues with the Houston community.



▲ **Larissa Nitschke**
Don D. Jordan
Scholar

Larissa Nitschke grew up in a small town near Düsseldorf, Germany, where she discovered her passion for research and science while watching her father work in a microbiology lab. She majored in biology at the Heinrich Heine University of Düsseldorf. After completing her bachelor thesis with honors, she was awarded a prestigious fellowship for an international exchange program with Michigan State University, where she spent her last year of undergraduate education. She earned her bachelor's degree

from the Biology International Plus Program as one of the first and highest ranked students of her class, and was able to coauthor two highly ranked articles from her research at Michigan State University. Larissa first became interested in pursuing graduate studies in the Texas Medical Center while she was working at Rice University for a summer research program. She was fascinated by the great opportunities that the TMC offers with all the clinics, hospitals and schools and got excited to hear about the biomedical research opportunities. Today, Larissa is proud to be a first year Ph.D. student in the Integrative Molecular and Biomedical Sciences Program at Baylor College of Medicine and she is especially interested in understanding the causes of human genetic diseases and developing potential therapies. In her free time, Larissa enjoys reading, volunteering and going to restaurants and theaters. She is honored to be a BRASS scholar and a member of a community that thrives for excellence in biomedical research. Particularly, Larissa is looking forward to sharing her passion and excitement for science with the Houston community and to volunteering at the Squirrel Creek Ranch.



▲ **Paul Fahey**
Sydney Broadfoot Faust
Scholar

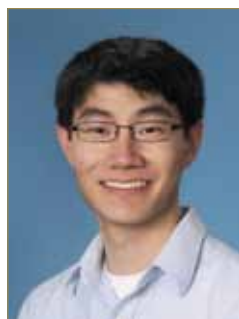
Paul Fahey was born and raised in Miamisburg, Ohio. He graduated summa cum laude from Washington University in Saint Louis with a major in biology and neuroscience. He started working in a neurobiology lab during his freshman year, studying the role of intracellular receptors in a genetic model for autism.

After graduation, Paul moved to Houston to join the M.D./Ph.D. program at Baylor. He completed the first two years of medical school, and is

currently a first-year student in the neuroscience program. His research interests include classifying the components of microcircuits in the brain.

Outside the lab, Paul enjoys amateur bookbinding and flying kites in Hermann Park.

He is thrilled to become a member of the BRASS family and is looking forward to learning more about what this city has to offer. Paul is honored to serve as one of many ambassadors between the scientific and Houston communities.



▲ **Jarey Wang**
Myra Branum Wilson
Scholar

Jarey Wang was born in Heishan, China, and grew up in West Chester, Pa. He attended Duke University as an Angier B. Duke Scholar and graduated magna cum laude in 2012 with a degree in biomedical engineering. During the summer after sophomore year, he discovered his passion for cancer genomics research and has never looked back.

Jarey joined the M.D./Ph.D. program at Baylor College of Medicine two years ago, and is a McNair Student Scholar.

Currently, he is a first-year student in the Translational Biology and Molecular Medicine Program, where he is exploring his interests in applying genomic data to discover driver mutations in cancer and understanding mechanisms of chemoresistance. He intends to pursue a career in oncology and hopes that research in the field will soon allow us to tailor therapies for each individual patient.

Outside of school, Jarey enjoys playing tennis and basketball and is fond of a multitude of board games. He also enjoys working with kids at Texas Children's Hospital as part of the Kidney Coach program. Jarey is excited to be part of BRASS, to volunteer at Squirrel Creek Ranch and to share his passion for research and medicine with the greater Houston community.

BRASS Scholars - They ROCK!

BRASS Scholars Add Spark To Every Event, Embrace Life and Give Back!



▲ The Canova Room at the Uptown Park Montebello Highrise was the beautiful setting for the annual BRASS Holiday party on Dec. 9, 2014. More than 125 members, guests and BRASS scholars were graciously welcomed by Carolyn Faulk. It was a festive and fun evening for everyone!



▲ Volunteering at Squirrel Creek Ranch.



◀ Enjoying the gift of theatre tickets.



▲ BRASS scholars thanked Judi Johnson at the scholars' reception hosted by Al Trullenque and Martha Molina on Nov. 13, 2014. It was the third anniversary of JACK & JUDI JOHNSON DAY, a day respectfully deemed by the BRASS scholars' to salute the Johnsons' and the Wintermann Foundation for their ongoing generous support to research funding.

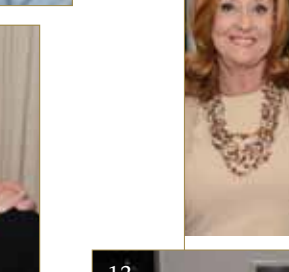
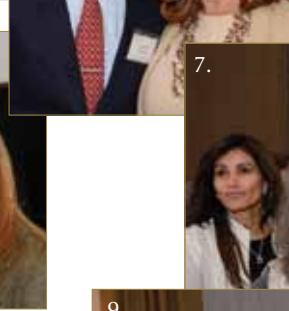
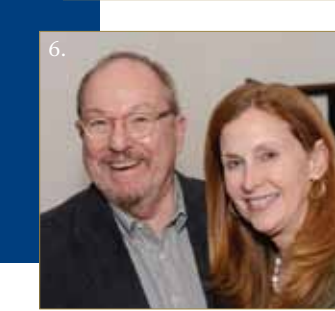


▲ A night at the Rodeo hosted by Don Jordan and Ed McMahon is always one of the highlights of the year.



▲ Midway fun after the Rodeo!

2014 BRASS Scholar Reception



1. Les and Elsie Eckert and Ed McMahon
2. Al Trullenque and Martha Molina
3. Zachary Criss and Linda Kuykendall
4. Leisa Holland-Nelson and Jay Comeaux
5. Jarey Wang and Myra Wilson
6. Archie and Pam Thompson
7. Martha Molina, Mary Ellen and Rod Crosby
8. Suzy Simons and Judi Johnson
9. Jeanie and Marshall Smith
10. Ed McMahon and Scott Basinger
11. Myra Wilson and Diana Brown
12. Dr. James and Tamara Bonar, Paul Fahey and Lisa and Michael O'Leary
13. Robert Seilheimer, Mark Hamilton, Peter VanDerlofske and Meagan Barry

