On June 5, BRASS members and BRASS Scholars attended Joanne Hsu’s Ph.D. defense, a 2015-2016 M.D./Ph.D. BRASS Scholar. Her topic, “The Role of PPP1D in Clonal Hematopoiesis and Therapy-Related Myeloid Neoplasms,” was presented to a scientific panel in the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences. Joanne completed her Ph.D. in just 4 years, and she is now back in medical school. The accelerated completion of her Ph.D. was enhanced by the purchase of a very sophisticated and crucial piece of research equipment for her lab with funding from the Houston Live Stock & Rodeo. She is an inspiration to all of us in BRASS, both for her amazing intellect and her wonderful outlook on life. We all lovingly referred to her as “Sunshine” because that’s just what she is! In a note to BRASS, she thanked all of us for coming to be a part of her Ph.D. defense and wrote, “your support and encouragement means so much to me, thank you for always going the extra mile for me and for all the BRASS Scholars. It truly has been privilege to be a part of the BRASS family. I know that BRASS has not only enriched my Ph.D. journey, but has also contributed so much to our lab’s research progress. Thank you for your friendship and support.”

**Welcome New Members**

- **Myra Wilson**
  - Professor, Elsie Eckert
  - Tamara Kimoto Jordan, Linda Kuchnicki, Michael Sandusky (2013-2014)
  - Back: Les Eckert, James Bonner, Jo Ann Peterson, Peter VanDerlofske

**BRASS Officers 2019-2020**

- **Myra Wilson**
  - President
- **Elsie Eckert**
  - Vice President
- **Vicki Mercado**
  - Secretary
- **Dr. Margaret Goodell**
  - Scholarship Liaison
- **Elsie Eckert**
  - Research and Development
- **Ed McMahon**
  - Treasurer
- **Baylor Liaison**
  - Dr. Matt Baker
- **Chairman**
  - Patrick Hoffman

**BRASS Scholars**

- **Want to host a scholar get-together?**
  - Can’t make an upcoming arts or sporting event? Have extra tickets for a game or a luncheon? Contact Elsie Eckert at 713-799-2424 or elsie@smithdesign.com if you have tickets to donate or you’d like to set something up.

**BRASS Giving**

- **Jo Lynn and Gregg Fekry**
  - In honor of Elsie Eckert
- **Carol C. Hopkins**
  - In honor of Dr. Matt Baker
- **Robin J. Simon**
  - In honor of Dr. Mike Young
- **Ashley Hayden**
  - In honor of Joe Petersen
- **Chinua Kpala**
  - In Memory of Doris Hill
- **Myra Wilson**
  - In Memory of Mike Young

**BRASS Angel of the Year**

- **Myra Wilson**

**In Memory of**

- **Mike Young**
- **Doris Hill**
- **James Currie**
- **Robert A. Hunter**

**A Message from the BRASS President**

Dear BRASS Members and Supporters,

Welcome to fall and another season of celebrating the outstanding work being done by BRASS and our BRASS Scholars. The continued and dedicated support of our generous donors and their belief in BRASS has created countless research opportunities and breakthroughs for these brilliant student scientists.

My special thanks to:

- Houston Livestock Show and Rodeo for their continued support of BRASS and their $95,000 donation for 2021 that funds research equipment and travel to scientific meetings and forums for our BRASS Scholars.
- Andy and Jack Johnson and the David and Eula Wintersmann Foundation for again contributing a $30,000 gift to their endowed that continues to fund discretionary research stipends for each BRASS Scholar while they are in the lab and working to complete their Ph.D.
- Ed McMahon for presenting $800 of unclaimed funds to each BRASS Scholar currently in the Ph.D. program.

New members Anne and Chris Richardson for surprising BRASS with a gift donation of $25,000 that helped supplement the grant requests submitted by our BRASS Scholars for research equipment and scientific travel, that was unable to be funded by BRASS in that fiscal year.

The BRASS Executive Committee for their continued support and insight.

It is with great enthusiasm we welcome to the BRASS family our four new 2019-2020 BRASS Scholars, recently introduced at our Scholars Reception at Dr. Kelly Lackner and Fernando Parra’s beautiful home. You will definitely enjoy meeting these four gifted and talented BRASS ambassadors whose goals and ideals are the heart of our organization. Look for detailed stories for each of them in our current newsletter.

- **Ashley Hayden** – Ph.D.
- **Vicki Mercado** – M.D./Ph.D.
- **Chinua Kpala** – M.D./Ph.D.
- **Randall Potter** – M.D.

These outstanding scientists bring to us a total of 66 scholars since our inception in 1995. BRASS Scholarships are increasingly effective in attracting the best and the brightest students who add to the College’s ever-growing expertise in biomedical research. We could not do it without your support, so it is with heartfelt appreciation I once again say THANK YOU!

—Elsie
BRASS Highlights

BRASS Welcomes the New Dean

Dr. Carolyn L. Smith has been named Dean of the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences at Baylor College of Medicine, where she is also professor of molecular and cellular biology, and urology. Dr. Smith attended the University of Toronto for her bachelor of science, and completed her Ph.D. biochemistry training at the University of Western Ontario, before undertaking postdoctoral training at Baylor College of Medicine and then joining the faculty as an assistant professor in 1996. Dr. Smith’s research interests focus on the molecular pharmacology of estrogen receptors, regulation of gene expression by transcriptional coactivators and corepressors, tamoxifen resistance in breast cancer, and steroid hormone action in urothelial carcinoma.

Dr. Smith has served as the director of the Tissue and Cell Culture Core for the Center for Reproductive Biology and the Department of Molecular and Cellular Biology since 1994, and has extensive experience in culturing established cell lines, isolation of primary cell cultures, and development of cell culture models (e.g. 3D culture models). She has published over 100 papers and been continually funded by the NIH and other agencies since 1996. She has served on numerous study sections for the NIH, Department of Defense and the American Cancer Society, most recently as a member of the Estramural Grants Council.

Dr. Smith has mentored six Ph.D. students and 24 postdoctoral fellows in her laboratory. She previously served as the director of the Quality Enhancement Plan for SACSOCOC, Associate Director of the Translational Biology & Molecular Medicine graduate program, Assistant Dean for Curriculum, and Senior Associate Dean for Graduate Education and Academic Program Development. She currently serves as the Director for Responsible Conduct of Research training for all Baylor College of Medicine graduate students and postdoctoral fellows. Her current interests include administrative and academic approaches to modernizing graduate education and postdoctoral training programs.

We are delighted to welcome Dr. Smith to the BRASS family.

2019 BRASS Tea & Toddies - Celebrating 24 Years

A Celebratory Evening of Fundraising and Fun

April 16, 2019 found Baylor Research Advocates for Student Scientists once again raising their glasses to toast the bright future of biomedical research at our annual Tea & Toddies fund raiser. The Wishmaker Ballroom at the Hotel ZaZa-Memorial City was the perfect setting for celebrating our endowment donors, presenting awards, visiting with friends and getting to know the BRASS Scholars, learning more about their research. Steve Brown was awarded the 2019 Angel of the Year Award. Dr. Margaret Goodell was honored with the 2019 Diana Brown Memorial Mentor of the Year Award. Underwritten by the Hotel ZaZa and Jo Ann Petersen, more than $50,000 was raised to help support and further the BRASS mission of “the pursuit of excellence in biomedical research” for the Graduate school of Biomedical Sciences at Baylor College of Medicine.

A Salute to the Incredible Generosity of Our Donors

We are grateful to have these individuals and foundations as our BRASS partners. It was an honor to recognize them at our 24th Annual Tea & Toddies and have them share with everyone why they believe in the BRASS mission and why they are BRASS research partners and benefactors.