

StuCom

Cancer, Stem Cells & Developmental Biology

October 2019

New students, be welcomed!

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An Experience Abroad

Marit de Kort

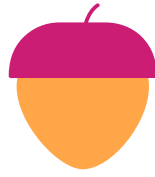
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Social Activities Recap

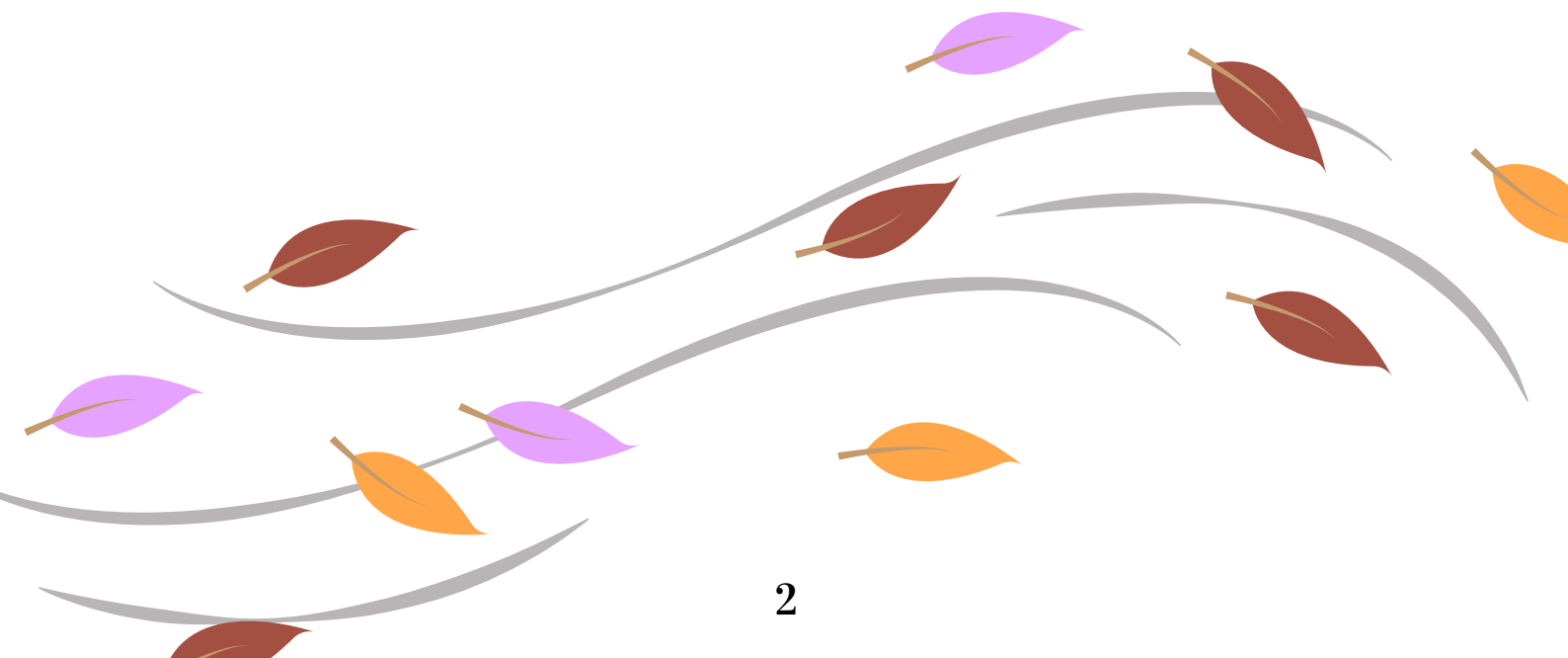
Tour, Pub Quiz & BBQ

OCTOBER 2019

Fall



- 3** Welcome!
Current CSDB students about CSDB
- 4** Once Upon an Internship...
Internship tips & tricks
- 5** Alumnus Talks
Jeff DeMartino, PhD student
- 7** An Experience Abroad
Marit de Kort @Boston
- 9** StuCom Activities
Summer recap
- &** Favorite Science Stuff
Hall of Fame n Shame



CSDB September starters:



Front row: Tessa Remmers, Carlijn Friedrichs, Annelot Staes, Sabina Jašarević, Anaïs van Leeuwen, Titine Ruijter, Dana Amer, Elena Guido Vinzoni, Sara Ciccone, Erica van der Maas

Second row: Louise van Bergen, Severina Pociūnaitė, Myrna van den Bos, Irene Zaalberg, Kees Blijleven, Shelby Jansen, Iris Gooijers, Eveline Ilcken, Laura Schwarz, Tijn Vleeshouwer

Third/fourth rows: Apostolis Nikolakopoulos, Gerard Llibre Palomar, Mirjam Verbeek, Marlinde Schoonbeek, Lianne Suurenbroek, Inez van Miltenburg, Linda van Seters, Marjet van den Hoek, Ewan van der Vlist, Anneloes Keijzer, Sabine Bosman, Jessica van der Hoek, Onur Mert Batmaz, Sophie van der Leij

Back row: Luuk Broeils, Dionne Blangé, Laura Hofman, Daniel Iglesias van Montfort

What you may expect from your internships...



comic by Niels Tjoonk

Once Upon An Internship ...

Tales have travelled far and wide that the internships can be quite a journey. But it's a great one! The treasures are vast. Herein we humbly made a collection of CSDB's previous students' wise words about their conquests. We hope these guidelines help you conquer your own. Bon voyage!

THE KNIGHT: YOU!

- Find a balance internship vs life. You should also enjoy life and not be working on your internship during weekends and late evenings
- If you don't like something, say it. Also, ask for feedback and work on it

THE COURT: LAB ENVIRONMENT

- Make sure you know what is expected of you.
- Try to figure out the dynamics of your specific lab (see if you can ask around about this among the other lab members or ask students who finished their internship there).
- Pay attention to how your daily supervisor and PI get along, and make sure that they're on the same page regarding the content of your research project.
- Your research facility is chock full with brilliant and kind people, so get to know them! This might be more important to your future than anything else during the internship
- Make sure you always clearly discuss and plan things with your supervisor and examiner. It will make things very easy.

THE CONQUEST: RESEARCH PROJECT

- Be critical on the experimental design, even though your supervisor designed it.
- Work hard
- Don't overthink protocols too much
- Prepping for experiments is a must and saves time.
- Last, try to be assertive and independent and participate during the lab meetings.

THE SCRIPT: REPORT

- START ON THE REPORT EARLIER AND FOCUS ON THAT WITH ALL YOUR LIFE
- Try to get started on your Materials & Methods section of your report while you're doing experiments as it saves time later.

More stories?

How to Pick a Graduate Advisor,
Barres B.A. , Neuroview, 2013



AN ALUMNUS' TALES

CSDB ALUMNUS **JEFF DEMARTINO** IS IN HIS
THIRD YEAR PHD AT THE **HOLSTEGE GROUP** IN
THE PRINCESS MÁXIMA CENTER

HOW CSDB COULD LEAD TO PHD

Jeff DeMartino is doing a PhD in the group of Frank Holstege at the Princess Máxima Center for pediatric oncology. He went to high school in West Hartford, Connecticut (his hometown): William H. Hall High School. Then he went on to the University of Connecticut (UCONN). We interviewed him via e-mail about his experiences there and how his life led to this.

"I first came to visit the Netherlands when I was living in Spain during University. As a place for science I learned about the Netherlands while reading papers for a University project." After finishing

university, Jeff applied for CSDB in Utrecht. "I heard about Utrecht while visiting Amsterdam, namely that it had an old and tall tower in the center [the Martini tower, obviously, red.]. I heard about Utrecht as a place for science during a seminar from a researcher at my University."

What are the main objectives of your PhD?

"The main objective of my PhD is to advance our knowledge of Rhabdomyosarcoma through molecular and single-cell genomic studies of tumor samples, with the goal of finding new therapeutic vulnerabilities."□

Have you already been able to produce some results?

"We have produced a lot of genomics data which I'm currently analyzing, and have other projects in the works which should come to fruition soon (knock on wood)."

What was your personal goal for the PhD?

"My personal goal for the PhD was to contribute something to society through my research. On a more professional level, I wanted to increase my set of scientific skills, particularly when it came to data analysis and other bioinformatics proficiencies."

Did your Master's internships prepare you for the PhD?

"My internships prepared me very well for the PhD; they taught me to be an independent researcher, how to fend and advocate for myself in a large institute and also how to deal with the adversity/disappointment that inevitably comes with work in biomedical research."

Why did you choose a PhD instead of e.g. business life?

"I found the prospect of getting a PhD more fulfilling, personally, than getting a job for a company. I also found the atmosphere and (relative) freedom of working in academia

more intellectually stimulating. I knew for sure I wanted to do a PhD during my first Masters internship. When I started getting results from long, arduous experiments, I was hooked."

Remember young, innocent Jeff before you started your PhD? If you could tell him one thing to prepare for the PhD, what would that be?

"Start saving money for vacations. You'll want to spend a few weeks on the beach after a winter of being stuck in the lab."

Put in order of importance: research group dynamic, PhD subject, publication potential, city.

"Actually, I think you put these in the proper order: Group dynamic (especially a good relationship with the PI), PhD subject (must be something that motivates you), publication potential and city."

What do you wanna do next?

"Not a clue. I have the next 2-3 years to figure that out."



Jeff DeMartino
PhD student at Princess Maxima Center



AN EXPERIENCE ABROAD

**MARIT DE KORT JUST FINISHED UP AN INTERNSHIP
IN THE MASSACHUSETTS GENERAL HOSPITAL IN
BOSTON**

Hey, how are ya? - Is how everyone greets you here in the US. It's not like they really want to know what's up though, just ask them how they are and they're happy. But in case you are interested, I'm doing well! While I'm writing this, I have just finished my minor internship in Boston, and am currently hanging out in the picturesque city of West Hartford, Connecticut for a two-week vacation.

From January until August, I worked in the lab of prof. Konrad Hochedlinger at the Massachusetts General Hospital. Our group works on molecular mechanisms of pluripotency, specifically the role of chromatin in regulating this state. It is a pretty small group, with 5 postdocs and a technician. I was supervised by a super smart postdoc from Italy, named Bruno. He definitely was a major contributor to making this experience so fruitful, as he took a lot of time to mentor me about the ways of science.

What also really made my stay in the Hochedlinger lab, is that they allowed me to really manage my own project. I studied the role of a big chromatin modifying complex, called SAGA, during the first steps of differentiation in human embryonic stem cells. And I got some pretty cool results actually! It appears that different components of the complex have opposite roles in regulating pluripotency. Some of them are important to maintain the pluripotent state, whereas others are needed to actually differentiate: SAGA creates a balance!

I WANTED TO GO TO THE US FOR AN INTERNSHIP, BECAUSE I FELT THAT I WOULD REALLY BE CHALLENGING MYSELF

I wanted to go to the US for an internship, because I felt that I would really be challenging myself. My main reason, I think, was that I wanted to leave the comfort of the city I was born and raised in and give science a try in a high-pressure and high-performance environment, such as Boston. And people definitely work very hard here, but it was very cool to see how much progress I was able to make in such a short time. And it doesn't hurt that it is a Harvard lab either; they let me spend quite some cash to try out new things in my project.

Over the past 8 months, I've fallen in love with this city. I love how diverse the city is, the many

communities, the history, the breweries (especially), the Boston sports teams and of course I've enjoyed my fair share of American staple foods. The things I will probably miss most are the Trader Joe's supermarket, and the beautiful Boston skyline reflecting in the waters of the Charles river that I got to enjoy every morning and every night on my train rides.

THE THINGS I WILL PROBABLY MISS MOST ARE THE TRADER JOE'S SUPERMARKET

My lab actually asked me to stay on for a PhD, but over the past couple months I've learned some things that made me choose not to. I realized that for me it's really important to be more personally involved with my lab mates. Organizing game nights, joining the pubquiz team and making friends, combined with passion for the science is what will make the job. In the US labs there were a lot of postdocs, there was a lot of pressure and everyone is very career focused. This makes for some really cool and productive science, but I realized that such an environment during my PhD would not make me very happy, which is why I am currently interviewing for a job in the Netherlands!





RECAP

THE STUCOM SOCIAL ACTIVITIES IN MAY (CITY TOUR PUBCRAWL) AND AUGUST (BBQ)



Utrecht 'City' has history bleeding from between its bricks and cobble stones, you just need to know where to look. Luckily, StuCom '18-'19 had a professional tour guide in their midst who's been studying the ins and outs of the streets for months now, and who sure loves to talk.

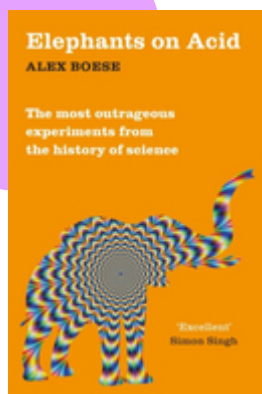
Interspersed with beers at several iconic Utrecht bars, some participants may still remember the Utrecht-born Dutch pope, the bar in the Dom Tower and our famous fat dog.

Fortunately, the rest of the StuCom proved to be talented barbecue masters in the August CSDB barbecue. Many people showed up and the evening turned them into happy, full-bellied individuals who could forget about their imminent internship deadlines, if only for a few hours.

YOUR FAVORITE SCIENCE STUFF

ON THIS PAGE
WE SHARE SOME OF OUR
FAVORITE SCIENCE CONTENT
ON THE WEB OR ELSEWHERE.
BUT WE WANT TO KNOW
WHAT YOU LIKE! SO PLEASE
SHARE WITH US YOUR
FAVORITE STUFF AND GET IT
ONTO THIS PAGE IN THE NEXT
NEWSLETTER!

MAIL TO STUCOMCSD@GMAIL.COM



Elephants on Acid

From zombie kittens to tickling machines: the most outrageous experiments from the history of science

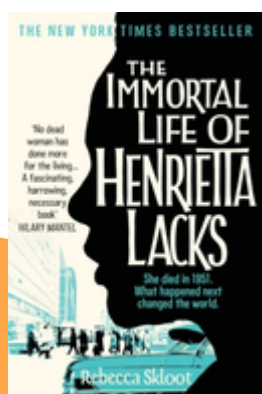
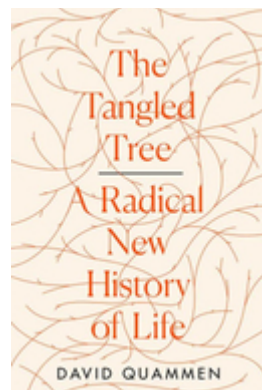
Alex Boes (suggested by Lucca Derks)

Have you ever wondered if a severed head retains consciousness long enough to see what happened to it? Or whether your dog would run to fetch help, if you fell down a disused mineshaft? And what would happen if you were to give an elephant the largest ever single dose of LSD? The chances are that someone, somewhere has conducted a scientific experiment to find out...'Excellent accounts of some of the most important and interesting experiments in biology and psychology'

The Tangled Tree: A Radical New History of Life

David Quammen

In The Tangled Tree, "the grandest tale in biology....David Quammen presents the science—and the scientists involved —with patience, candor, and flair" (Nature).



The Immortal Life o Henrietta Lack

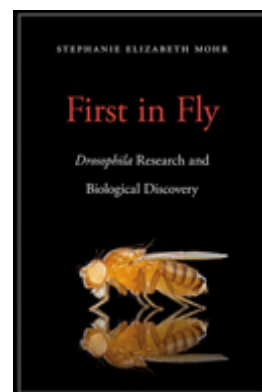
Rebecca Skloot

Depicting the life before and after death of the lady who unknowingly changed the scientific world. You've worked with her cells, probably...

First in Fly

Stephanie Elizabeth Mohr

A single species of fly, *Drosophila melanogaster*, has been the subject of scientific research for more than one hundred years. Why does this tiny insect merit such intense scrutiny?





WALL OF FAME & SHAME

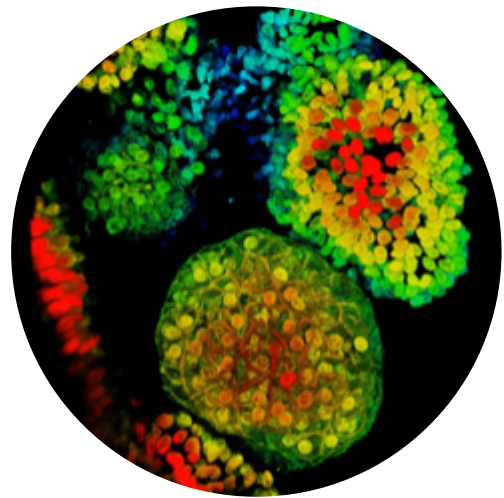


Nothing in science is more important than sharing your knowledge. Here at StuCom we take that very seriously. On here, for every newsletter, we are going to showcase some of the best and some of the worst that we, CSDB students, have produced during our internships. Together on one page, so that you can determine for yourself what is successful and what is.... less so.

The best picture we get will be featured on the front page. Share your own achievements with **stucomcsd@gmail.com**



Sometimes I wonder if I'm culturing mouse gastruloids or worm gastruloids ...
by Lauren de Haan



This is a confocal image of a foetal hepatocyte organoid line, which has been tagged with CDH1-GFP (partly, one organoid is tagged in the image). Color coding is for depth.
by Indi Joore

Clearance of aged Stu-committee members concludes the 2018-19 temporal dynamics of comprehensively sociable CSDB interactome

Annually, the influx of unknown antigens of new students to the CSDB community acts as a igniting signal for renewal of the Student Committee members. Coming to the rescue, February last air-rollers Madu & Ramon first get recruited by our beloved master coordinator Joost. Later on other fresh-bie September starters join the force to meet the urgent need of creating a socially and scientifically engaging class. Exciting science talks, fun social activities and an unforgettable retreat have wrapped up a very nice 2018-2019 year for StuCom. As an ode to the amazing team, here are a few of many wonderful behind-the-scene moments:

- Mara's protection glasses for onion cutting @ Mara's, 1st StuCom dinner
- Ramon's slow mode function @ Anna's
- Lucca's first kitten experience!! @ Ramon's
- Niels' cats that turned StuCom to StuCat
- Anna's slogan: Who has receipts for ___
- Madu's mama openings: "Kids, Kittens, Kitties, __"
- Marc's Floss Dance
- Thi's deleting messages & sleeping @ Skype meeting
- Lucca's "Bring the sweater"
- Dimi's "Ok guys, __"
- Retreat photoshoot: kids will forever be kids

COLOPHON

STUCOM E-MAIL

stucomcsd@gmail.com

STUCOM FACEBOOK

Stucom CSND

CSDB INSTAGRAM

CS&D Master Students & Alumni

CSDB LINKEDIN

CS&D Master Students & Alumni

FRONTPAGE PHOTO

The front page shows the winner of the picture challenge by **Fàtima de la Jara-Ortiz**

"The image is an optical section of a 3D database of immunostained patient-derived organoids imaged using confocal microscopy.

Blue: nuclear dye. Red, Green: two different antibodies targeting membranal proteins."

This StuCom newsletter was written and designed by Tran Ngoc Minh Thi and Niels Tjoonk unless otherwise specified.