

Meet a New ASP Member

New ASP Member Dr. MyPhuong Le is an Assistant Professor, Division of Renal Diseases and Hypertension, University of Colorado's Anschutz Medical Campus. Dr. Le is a molecular biologist by training and has conducted research into dietary factors of chronic disease for several years. Her work in this vein led to her recent K01 award with the National Center for Complimentary and Integrative Health. We were pleased to meet her at this year's Annual Meeting in Copper Mountain, Colorado, and are excited to hear more about her work and enthusiasm for intergalactic television.

By Dr. Dan Kulakowski

How did you hear about the ASP?

Dr. Amy Keller, a fellow colleague at the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus, recommended ASP.

Why did you join ASP?

I joined ASP to be exposed to various aspects of working with natural products, but more importantly, to connect with other researchers in this field.

Do you belong to any other scientific societies?

I am also a member of American Association of Pharmaceutical Scientists, American Thoracic Society, American Society of Nephrology, and Phytochemical Society of North America.

What are your current research interests in pharmacognosy?

My current research interests are to develop therapeutics against fructose-induced adverse metabolic effects and to develop an antioxidant peptide that could be used for a targeted delivery approach in the treatment of pulmonary hypertension.

What is your scientific background?

I serendipitously became interested in pharmacognosy. My scientific background was mainly as a molecular biologist. I started out as a research technician at the Genome Center at the University of Washington, Seattle, Washington, where we were sequencing a part of the human genome. From there, I joined a startup biotech company, Blue Heron Biotechnology, Inc., Bothell, Washington, and helped generate genetic products



Dr. MyPhuong Le

DR. LEAH VILLEGAS

from scratch for our customers. I then joined the Pharmaceutics Department in the College of Pharmacy, University of Florida, Gainesville, Florida, where I became interested in developing therapeutics, particularly personalized medicine through pharmacogenomics. My interest in pharmacognosy came during my post-doctoral fellowship where we collaborated with a nutraceutical company interested in developing a dietary supplement that could be used to ameliorate the effects of carbohydrate-induced metabolic adverse effects. I am relatively a baby in the field of natural products, but hope to combine my background in molecular biology to develop natural-based therapeutics.

What would you like to achieve through your membership?

Hopefully by being a part of ASP, I can find a supportive and collaborative community that will teach me about various aspects with working with natural products so that I can move my research forward.

What do you like doing in your spare time?

I enjoy building, especially wood-working. My goal for the next couple of years is to build a wrap-around deck, a shed, and ultimately cabinets and an island for our kitchen.

What are you currently reading?

We just went to the Denver Comic Con, and I am reading Farscape comics. If you have not seen the television series, you are missing out! It is my favorite science-fiction show.

What is your favorite plant, fungus, animal or microbe (for research or general interest) and why?

I have no favorites. But if it was possible, Zhann (from Farscape) would be my favorite plant organism. ■

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