



Texas Branch

AMERICAN SOCIETY FOR MICROBIOLOGY

Program **2025 Spring Meeting**

March 27 – 29, 2025
Mt. Lebanon Camps
Cedar Hill, TX



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Opening Keynote Speaker

Joseph Boll, PhD

Dr. Joseph Boll is an Associate Professor of Biological Sciences at the University of Texas at Dallas. He received a BS in microbiology from Texas Tech University and a PhD in Molecular Microbiology from UT Southwestern Medical Center. His research is focused on antimicrobial resistance mechanisms in Gram-negative pathogens. The Boll Research Group leverages several approaches including, genomics, proteomics, lipidomics, and glycobiology to address fundamental questions related to assembly and modification of the Gram-negative cell envelope to specifically understand how essential processes can be perturbed to effectively treat infections. His lab has developed several key collaborations to expand their ability to study cell envelope enzyme activities and mechanical properties that support cell envelope stability and function.



Eugene and Millicent Goldschmidt Lecturer

Jennifer R. Honda, PhD, ATSF



Jennifer R. Honda PhD, ATSF was born and raised in Honolulu, Hawai'i. She received her B.S. from Colorado State University in Biology and Zoology, M.S. in Microbiology from the University of Hawai'i, and PhD in Microbiology from the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus. Her research program has been focused for the past 16 years on uncovering the 1) environmental- 2) host- 3) microbial factors that contribute to nontuberculous mycobacterial (NTM) lung disease emergence locally and globally. As a translational mycobacteriologist, Dr. Honda first grew her research program as an Instructor and Assistant Professor at National Jewish Health in Denver. In 2023, she was recruited to the Department of Cellular and Molecular Biology and the School of Medicine at the University of Texas Health Science Center at Tyler (UTHSCT) as an

Associate Professor and is the Inaugural Director of a new Center for NTM Innovation. She is deeply invested in mentoring the next generation of academicians in NTM science including women and Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders. Active in the American Thoracic Society (ATS) Pulmonary Infections and Tuberculosis (PI-TB) Assembly since 2014, she is the recipient of an ATS Foundation award in Pulmonary Medicine and named PI-TB's Rising Star in 2019, PI-TB Top Junior Faculty in 2021, and an ATS Fellow in 2022. The European Respiratory Society distinguished Dr. Honda in 2020 as an Innovator in NTM Science and Medicine.

2024 Peggy Cotter Awardee Speaker

Lori Banks, PhD



Dr. Lori Banks is an Assistant Professor of Biology at Prairie View A&M University. She has a BS in Biology from Prairie View A&M University and a PhD in Molecular Virology and Microbiology from Baylor College of Medicine. Dr. Banks' research focuses on drug discovery-related protein structure-function studies from a range of microbial targets using experimental and computational methods. She also designs and implements curricular models that incorporate graduate-level scientific research and medicine into undergraduate learning and works to increase the representation of historically excluded groups in STEM curriculum resources. Outside of her technical classes, she is active in the Society for the Advancement of Chicanos and Native Americans in Science (SACNAS), American Society for Microbiology (ASM), and does scientific outreach work with Girl Scouts, Zeta Youth Affiliates, and Allies in Hope of Houston.

Career Session Speaker

**Goldschmidt Graduate Student Awardee Alumna
Tetiana Bowley, PhD**

Tetiana Bowley got her PhD in Molecular and Cellular Biology from Southern Methodist University in Dallas, TX. Her undergraduate studies were on microbiome diseases, bioinformatic analysis, and West Nile Virus. Her graduate research was focused on host-pathogen interactions of cancer-causing viruses (HPV, HTLV-1, HTLV-2). During her graduate school, she established novel HPV and HTLV-1 mouse models. Her graduate studies resulted in publication of six manuscripts. Her first postdoc position was on circulating tumor cells and melanoma metastasis at UNM in Albuquerque, NM. Her postdoc research was published in five papers and resulted in obtaining a patent. Tetiana has extensive research experience in microbiology, oncology, immunology, and cellular biology. She joined Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) in May 2024 to be part of the chemistry team and to establish 2D and 3D in vitro platforms of the human immune system. She is currently testing different pathogens using 2D and 3D platforms to evaluate innate and adaptive responses.



Eugene and Millicent Goldschmidt Graduate Student Awardee

Jessica Watts



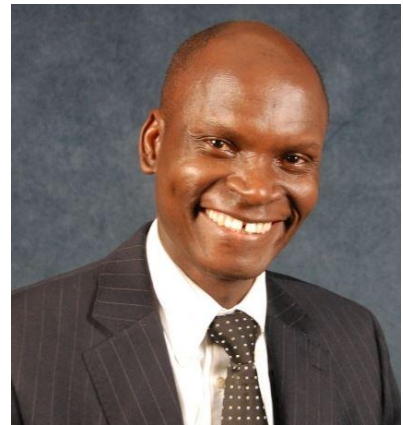
Jessica Watts (pronouns: she/her) is a PhD candidate in the Development, Disease Models, & Therapeutics program at Baylor College of Medicine. Her research aims to develop preventative treatments that reduce the incidence of lethal disease in Asian elephants associated with an elephant herpesvirus. Jessica's work led to the development of the first elephant herpesvirus mRNA vaccine that was administered to an Asian elephant named Tess at the [Houston Zoo in June 2024](#). After graduation, Jessica will transition to the public health field and begin a postdoctoral journey at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in the Laboratory Leadership Service (LLS) program.

Jessica is originally from Prairie View, Tx and received a BS in Biology from Prairie View A&M University. Outside of the lab, Jessica enjoys doing STEM outreach and mentoring the next generation of Black scientists, leisurely reading, and whipping up homemade ice cream.

Eugene and Millicent Goldschmidt Faculty Teaching Awardee

Frederick Baliraine, PhD

Dr. Frederick Baliraine is a Professor of Biology at LeTourneau University and a Fellow of the University of Pavia's Center for International Co-operation and Development (CICOPS). He received his M.S. and Ph.D. in Biochemistry from the University of Nairobi before completing postdoctoral work at the Division of Infectious Diseases at the University of California at San Francisco and the Department of Public Health at the University of California at Irvine. Dr. Baliraine has widely published on malaria, measles, and rotavirus. Additionally, he currently directs undergraduate research as a part of the SEA-PHAGES program at LeTourneau University.



Education Keynote Speaker

American Society for Microbiology Distinguished Lecturer

Davida Smyth

Davida Smyth is a Professor of Biology at Texas A&M University-San Antonio. She received her Ph.D. in Microbiology from the University of Dublin, Trinity College, Ireland. She also completed postdoctoral training at New York Medical College, the University of Mississippi Medical Center, and New York University. She is currently serving as PI and co-PI on several NSF grants including the “Vision and Change in Undergraduate General Education Biology Courses” project, the “HSI Implementation and Evaluation Project: Green Chemistry: Advancing Equity, Relevance, and Environmental Justice” project, the “Addressing Water Security: towards Student Retention, Improved Relevance, and Increased Readiness” project. She was co-PI on the “RCN-UBE: A National Network for Integrating the Study of Microbiomes into Course-based Undergraduate Research Experiences” project. In 2024 she was appointed to the ASM Distinguished Lecturer roster and she received the ASM Carski Award for Undergraduate Education. She is Deputy Director of the National Center for Science and Civic Engagement. Her research focuses on microbes in the built environment, and she regularly integrates her research and civic issues into her courses to make them more engaging and relevant to her students.



Special Acknowledgements

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Meeting Organizers: William Cody, University of Dallas

Jennifer Hennigan, Abilene Christian University

Meeting Sponsors



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Wifi Network Information:

Texas Hall

Password: trustinhim

Motel

No password required

Patton Chapel

Password: praisethelord

Lodges

No wifi available



No parking permit required. Most parking is near the motel (blue star).
Check in is at the Texas Hall (orange star).

Texas Branch ASM Spring Meeting 2025

Thursday, March 27

3:30 PM

Texas Hall

Registration Opens (*Registration will be available between 8:30 AM-9:30 PM throughout, except during meal times and Thursday business meeting*)

5:00 PM - 6:00 PM

Dining Hall

Dinner (must arrive between 5:00-5:30 PM)

6:30 PM -6:35 PM

Texas Hall

Welcome and Opening Remarks
Jennifer Hennigan and William Cody

6:35 PM -7:45 PM

Opening Keynote

8:00 PM-9:00 PM

Texas ASM Business Meeting

[Join the meeting now](#)

Meeting ID: 218 285 638 026 **Passcode:** 58GW6Qi6

Texas Hall

Student social sponsored by the University of Dallas ASM Chapter

Friday, March 28

7:30 AM - 8:30 AM

Dining Hall

Breakfast (must arrive between 7:30-8:00 AM)

8:45 AM -9:45 AM

Texas Hall

Undergraduate Student Oral Presentations
(in competition for Orville Wyss award)

9:45 AM- 10:05 AM

BREAK

10:05 AM- 11:25 AM

Graduate Student Oral Presentations
(in competition for Charlie Gauntt award)

11:25 AM- 12:30 PM

Dining Hall

Lunch

Patton Chapel

Poster set up

1:00 PM - 1:50 PM	<u><i>Texas Hall</i></u> Career Session Tetiana Bowley, Los Alamos National Laboratory
1:50 PM - 2:00 PM	BREAK
2:00 PM- 2:20 PM	<u><i>Texas Hall</i></u> Goldschmidt student awardee Jessica Watts, Baylor College of Medicine <i>"Vaccine development to reduce the incidence of lethal hemorrhagic disease linked to Elephant endotheliotropic herpesvirus (EEHV) infection in endangered Asian elephants"</i>
2:20 PM - 2:50 PM	Peggy Cotter awardee: Lori Banks, Prairie View A&M University <i>"Profiling a Pathogen"</i>
3:00 PM- 5:00 PM	<u><i>Patton Chapel</i></u> Student Poster Presentations and Judging
6:00 PM - 7:00 PM	<u><i>Dining Hall</i></u> Dinner (must arrive between 6:00-6:30 PM)
7:00 PM - 8:15 PM	<u><i>Texas Hall</i></u> Eugene and Milicent Goldschmidt Lecture: Jennifer R. Honda, PhD, ATSF, University of Texas at Tyler <i>Nontuberculous mycobacteria – lung disease causing lurkers of soil, water, dust, and air</i>
8:15 PM - 8:45 PM	Awards Presentation Closing Remarks and Announcements
8:45 PM - 10:00 PM	Social sponsored by UT Health Microbiology and Infectious Disease
Saturday, March 29 7:30 AM - 8:30 AM	<u><i>Dining Hall</i></u> Breakfast (must arrive between 7:30-8:00 AM)
8:30 AM - 10:30 AM	<u><i>Texas Hall - Student Session</i></u> Volunteering with ASM and Summer Programs Heidi Kaplan, UTHealth McGovern Medical School Ask A Mentor - Q&A Session for a microbiology career Jennifer R. Honda, PhD, ATSF, University of Texas at Tyler Tetiana Bowley, Los Alamos National Laboratory

MINI-CUE

8:30 AM - 11:30 AM

*Patton Chapel - Microbiology and Biology Education
Session*

Eugene and Millicent Goldschmidt Faculty Teaching
Awardee:

Federick Baliraine, LeTourneau University

Learning to Teach and Helping Students Learn to Learn

9:00 AM-10:00 AM

Education Keynote

Davida Smyth, Texas A&M University-San Antonio

*Updated ASM Curriculum Guidelines for Undergraduate
Microbiology*

10:00 AM-10:15 AM

Break / Poster Presentations

10:15 AM - 11:30 AM

"Tips and Tools" Presentations

11:30 AM - 12:00 PM

Texas Hall

Clean-up and check-out with ASM Organizers

See you at the 2025 Fall Meeting at UT Tyler!