American Institute for Medical and Biological Engineering

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AIMBE's 2014-2015 AIMBE Scholars

Sonja Brooks Fulmer, Ph.D.

Dr. Fulmer is an AIMBE Scholar at the U.S. Food and Drug Administration in the Center for Devices and Radiological Health, Office of the Center Director. Sonja completed her Ph.D. in Chemical and Physical Biology at Vanderbilt University. Her research focused on understanding basic mechanisms of protein interactions with DNA, which include the enzymatic processes of DNA repair to prevent disease, cancer, and cell death. In particular, she studied DNA repair proteins and their role in maintaining epigenetic marks necessary for development. Sonja is interested in continuing her research of protein and DNA interactions to include studying mechanisms of antibiotic resistance. Sonja's experiences extend beyond the lab, including a legislative policy internship with Life Science TN and a science communication fellowship, which have reiterated her long-held interest in connecting research and policy. Dr. Fulmer intends to utilize her scientific background and communication training to inform public policy and advocate for biomedical and translational research.

Christopher J. Medberry, Ph.D.

Dr. Christopher J. Medberry is an AIMBE Scholar at the U.S. Food and Drug Administration in the Center for Devices and Radiological Health, Office of the Center Director. He completed his Ph.D. in Bioengineering at the McGowan Institute for Regenerative Medicine at the University of Pittsburgh. His research focused on the development and application of novel biomaterials, including hydrogels and scaffolds derived from nervous tissue extracellular matrix, and multiple preclinical models of traumatic central nervous tissue injury to investigate the mechanisms of biomaterial-mediated tissue repair. His postdoctoral research explored therapeutic approaches that modulate the default healing response to prevent scarring and preserve or restore vision following injury and disease. Beyond the laboratory, Dr. Medberry worked as a Postdoctoral Fellow with the Coulter Translational Research Partners II Program at the University of Pittsburgh where he provided technical expertise and aided in the development of regulatory documents and in industry where he worked on medical device research, design, and development. His long-term goals are to promote translational research for novel regenerative medicine strategies that combine multiple modes of action to successfully improve patient care and clinical outcomes.

Maria Elisabeth Murray, Ph.D.

Dr. Murray is an AIMBE Scholar at the U.S. Food and Drug Administration in the Center for Devices and Radiological Health, Office of the Center Director. Maria completed a PhD in Bioengineering at the University of Pennsylvania in December 2013. Her research focused on the response of the vimentin intermediate filament network to changes in the mechanical properties of the extracellular matrix. Ultimately, Maria is interested in translating discoveries in the laboratory to advancing human health. In addition to research, Maria was heavily involved in graduate student life during her time at school, winning the President and Provost's Citation for Exceptional Commitment to Graduate and Professional Student Life. Projects she worked on included: cultural programming, advocacy for student life issues, and working to ensure that the Student Health insurance policy follow the guidelines set forth in the Affordable Care Act. She also worked extensively with the Penn Biotech Group working on consulting projects focused on how to bring research ideas into the clinic. Maria is invested in continuing this work translating research findings into patients during her term as an AIMBE Scholar at the FDA.