



Friday June 5, 2026

SFH220

- 9:00 am** Department Chair’s Welcome and Introductions – Walter Atwood, Ph.D.
- 9:05 am** Biographical Sketch of Dr. Samuel M. Nabrit, Ph.D. – Sebastian Millien
- 9:15 am** **Keynote Address**
Bil Clemons, Ph.D. (California Institute of Technology)
Killing bacteria by leveraging phage-derived peptide antibiotics

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- 10:15 am** Short Break

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- 10:25 am** **Tonie Farris, Ph.D. (Duke University)**
Demystifying the role of an E2 ubiquitin-conjugating enzyme UBE2A in neurodevelopment
- 10:40 am** **Sudipta Biswas (Emory University)**
Leiomodin-2 is a processive pointed-end elongator of actin filaments
- 10:55 am** **Novalia Pishesha, Ph.D. (Boston Children's Hospital / Harvard Medical School)**
Engineered nanobodies to direct and visualize immune tolerance
- 11:10 am** **Lightening Talks for Poster Session**
Marissa Berry, Brianna Dominguez, Funsho Ogunshola, Emma Sedivy, Jaime Carazco-Carrillo, Walatta-Tseyon Mesquitta

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- 11:30 am** Poster Session

12:50 pm Lunch and Informal Poster Viewing

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- 2:00 pm** **Luz Porras, Ph.D. (University of Florida)**
Ultrasrare structural variant alters 3D genome architecture and gene expression in schizophrenia neural models
- 2:15 pm** **Helen Magana (University of Massachusetts Chan Medical School)**
VPS45 binding sites regulate Rabenosyn-5 and Syntaxin-16 binding in endosomal membrane trafficking
- 2:30 pm** **Joselyn Landazuri Vinueza, Ph.D. (Fred Hutch Cancer Center)**
Understanding the role of δ -catenin in Merkel cell carcinoma tumors caused by Merkel cell polyomavirus
- 2:45 pm** **Rubén García-Reyes (Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis)**
Navigating appetitive motivation in the Dorsal Raphe through modulation in vGAT, vGlut2 and vGlut3 subpopulations
- 3:00 pm** **Issa Yusuf, Ph.D. (University of Massachusetts Chan Medical School)**
Aberrant protein citrullination characterizes ALS progression and its downregulation protects motor neurons, axons and NMJ and modulates disease outcome in an ALS mouse model
- 3:15 pm** **Amanda Ruiz, Ph.D. (Ragon Institute of MGB, MIT, and Harvard)**
Elucidating immunodominance mechanisms using protein engineering techniques to inform rational vaccine design

SFH Atrium

- 3:30 pm** Short Break

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- 3:40 pm** **Early Career Researchers Panel Discussion**
Charting your course
Moderators: Janet Joseph and Sebastian Millien
Panelists: Tonie Farris, Rubén García-Reyes, Helen Magana, Amanda Ruiz, Issa Yusef

- 5:00 pm** Closing Remarks

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- 5:10 pm** Reception