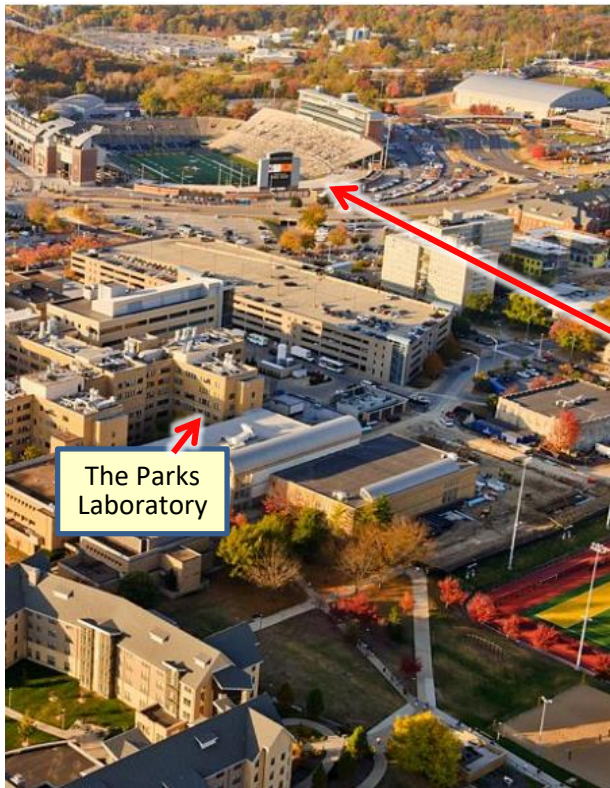


September 2018

Autumn News from the Laboratory of Elizabeth Parks, University of Missouri



THE PARKS LAB, "WHERE NUTRITION BECOMES YOU"



Hello from our laboratory in the Department of Nutrition and Exercise Physiology at the University of Missouri!

It's fall and the football season has begun! I remember when I moved to Mizzou in October, 5 years ago. We were unpacking boxes on a Saturday and all of a sudden, I heard the roar of a crowd. "What's that?" I asked. One of the students responded, "Um, Dr. Parks, the football stadium is right over there." That's when I was reminded what it's like to work at a University whose primary mission is undergraduate education. In the past, I had worked at an academic center that had medical and professional schools but no undergraduates. The feeling was different.

At Mizzou, teaching and working with undergraduates enriches faculty in so many ways. The students bring curiosity and enthusiasm to research. You can really feel their joy in learning how the human body works, in both health and disease. As we discuss our research findings, the students are able to put into

practice the facts and concepts they are learning in the classroom. From a student's perspective, working in a research laboratory can make a large university seem smaller. In addition to learning the scientific process, the students discuss and explore career options and build transferrable skills. Graduate students and fellows provide the undergraduates with professional mentoring.

So, on this Saturday in September, as I sit at my desk I can hear encouragement from the football stadium. It's almost as if the fans are yelling, "Good Job, Elizabeth! Keep going, you are doing great!" I hope you are lucky enough to be able to hear the roar of the crowd encouraging your handiwork, wherever you are! Go MIZZOU!



Jennifer Snawder, RDN, LD, Research Dietitian and Clinical Trial Manager. In addition to working with research subjects on the Liver Health Study, Jen also teaches dietetic students at the medical school's Family Impact Center, which offers nutrition services to the community. This fall Jen is excited to begin a graduate degree in Educational Psychology.



Nathan Le, BS, Lab Manager.

Nathan has been collecting data to understand how excess body weight causes liver stiffness. Doing this work has meant many early mornings in the hospital working with patients! The exciting news is that these research findings have been accepted for presentation at The American Association for the Study of Liver Disease and The Obesity Society. Both meetings are in November, 2018.



Katherine Anguah, PhD, Assistant Research Professor.

Katherine joined the Department of Nutrition and Exercise Physiology faculty in August. After spending 2 weeks at the University of Michigan taking an intensive introductory course in functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI), Katherine began a collaboration with Mizzou faculty in the Department of Psychology. She will assist with a study of young adults who have a metabolic disorder called phenylketonuria (PKU). Katherine's long-term goals are to use fMRI to understand how overweight people's brains respond to food intake and whether she can increase their feelings of fullness by providing different diets.



Graduate and Undergraduate Student Activities

Justine Mucinski, BS, Doctoral Student.

In August, Justine transitioned from the masters program to the PhD program in Exercise Physiology. She is busy taking classes this fall, working as a teaching assistant for a sports nutrition course, and serving as Vice President of the NEP Graduate Student Association.

Jillian Otto, Junior in Nutritional Sciences.

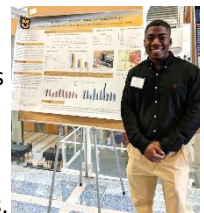
Jillian spent the summer working in the lab on her study of taste changes in patients undergoing bariatric surgery. This project, funded by the College of Human Environmental Sciences, is testing whether weight loss surgery affects taste perception and preference.

Zereque Powell, Senior in Biological Science,

completed a summer research experience with us and presented a poster at the MU Summer Undergraduate Research and Creative Achievements Forum in July. He has also been chosen to present his latest work at an Annual Biomedical Research Conference in Indianapolis, IN, from November 13-17, 2018. Nice job, Zereque! This fall, his goals are to perfect his skills measuring plasma concentrations of lipids.

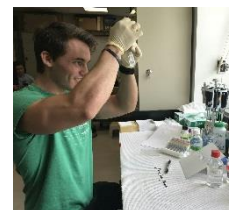


Alisha Perry, Sophomore in Biological Sciences, is an IMSD EXPRESS Fellow in the lab. She is very involved on campus in organizations representing minority students. Alisha hopes to work toward having her own research project next semester.



Brad Oxler, BS. After graduating from Mizzou with degrees in Nutritional Sciences and Biological Sciences, Brad joined our lab as a research assistant. He is coming up-to-speed quickly in clinical research management and juggling subject recruitment and data entry. Brad is also supporting the many academic responsibilities of Dr. Parks.

Ramiro Arreola, Senior in Engineering, submitted his research to the national meeting of The Obesity Society and this work was accepted for presentation in Orlando, FL in November. Ramiro investigated how a hormone called FGF21 is elevated in people with fatty liver disease.



Majid Syed, MS, Doctoral Candidate in Nutrition. Majid submitted a grant to the American Heart Association to study the effects of saturated fats on liver cells. Recently, he has been studying and preparing for his written and oral comprehensive exams.



The members of the laboratories of Elizabeth Parks and Scott Rector found some "spare" time for a summer bowling party to celebrate all the milestones we have been knocking down! STRIKE!