Gulchina
Networking Chair Statement

I am enthusiastically putting myself forward for the position of Networking Chair on the UPPDA executive board for the 2017-2018 term! I am currently a first-year postdoctoral associate in the Department of Psychiatry in the School of Medicine. My research focuses on the development of the prefrontal cortex across adolescence, as well as how disruptions in inhibitory signaling effect the prefrontal microcircuitry. If elected, I intend to build on the progress of the previous Chair and UPPDA executive board by modifying current events to make the most of opportunities to build our professional networks.

Alumni across the Health Sciences programs at Pitt are excellent resources that I hope to tap into to promote networking opportunities. By providing a means for postdoctoral scholars to engage with alumni, we can make the most of this resource to communicate about career options and the reality of navigating STEM careers as you prepare to transition out of your role as a postdoctoral scholar. I see this as an opportunity for postdocs to learn more about potential career options, gain insight into their prospective fields of interest, and build long-term relationships with these individuals and others. This will lead to direct expansion of a scholar’s professional network, which plays an essential role in securing a job on the path to their desired career.

Further, the Postdoc-to-Postdoc seminar series was established to allow postdoctoral scholars to practice presentations and job talks with their peers. Working with the executive board, we can revamp this series by combining it with one of the UPPDA-sponsored happy hour events held during the year. Three to five volunteer postdocs can discuss their research in 15-20 minute presentations to an audience of scientists in a casual bar setting. This plan taps into the P2P series’ goal of promoting public speaking, gaining experience presenting to a multidisciplinary audience, and practice presenting to large crowds, and takes it a step farther by recruiting more postdocs to attend UPPDA-sponsored events to participate in fun scientific interactions! Who knows, you may even find a collaborator at such an event!

With these, and other, goals in mind, I am enthusiastic about working with the executive board to engage with the postdoctoral community and continue to bring opportunities for networking, and ultimately career development, to you!