

Publications of the Week

Dendritic *atoh1a*+ Cells Serve as Merkel Cell Precursors During Skin Development and Regeneration

First Author: Evan Craig | Senior Author: Jeffrey Rasmussen (*pictured*)
Development | UW



Sensory cells often adopt specific morphologies that aid in the detection of external stimuli. The mechanisms by which Merkel cells acquire their stereotyped morphology from keratinocyte progenitors are unknown. Here, researchers establish that dendritic Merkel cells express *atonal homolog 1a* (*atoh1a*), extend dynamic filopodial processes, and arise in transient waves during zebrafish skin development and regeneration. [Abstract](#) | [Press Release](#)

Metagenomic Estimation of Absolute Bacterial Biomass in the Mammalian Gut Through Host-Derived Read Normalization

First Author: Gechlang Tang (*pictured*) | Senior Author: Sean Gibbons
mSystems | Institute for Systems Biology, Fred Hutch, and UW



Absolute bacterial biomass estimation in the human gut is crucial for understanding microbiome dynamics and host-microbe interactions. Current methods for quantifying bacterial biomass in stool are insufficient. Here, researchers propose a simple, cost-effective approach that circumvents some of these technical challenges: directly estimating bacterial biomass from metagenomes using bacterial-to-host read count ratios. [Abstract](#)

[View All Publications](#) ➔

Awards

Immunobiology and Immune Therapy for Merkel Cell Carcinoma

UW Medicine



The National Cancer Institute has officially renewed the Program Project Grant, "Immunobiology and Immune Therapy for Merkel Cell Carcinoma," led by Dr. Paul Nghiem (*pictured*) at UW and Fred Hutch. The \$14.3 million grant supports collaborative research across four institutions: Fred Hutch, UW, University of Michigan, and University of Virginia, involving more than 60 investigators and staff. [Read More](#)

Dr. Horacio de la Iglesia Elected to the Washington State Academy of Sciences

UW Department of Biology



Dr. Horacio de la Iglesia (*pictured*) was elected as a new member of the Washington State Academy of Sciences in July 2025. Election recognizes the new member's "outstanding record of scientific and technical achievement and willingness to assist the Academy in providing the best available scientific information and technical understanding to inform complex policy decisions in Washington." [Read More](#)

New Grants Awarded to the Biology Community

UW Department of Biology



UW Biology Assistant Professor Dr. Alejandro Rico-Guevara (*pictured*) has received a National Science Foundation (NSF) CAREER Award of \$1,200,000 from the Division Of Integrative Organismal Systems. The NSF CAREER Award is the agency's most prestigious honor for early-career faculty, recognizing those with the potential to become academic leaders in both research and education. [Read More](#)

[View All Awards](#) ➔

Local News

2025 ITHS EXPO and Symposium Lightning Talks: People Behind the Innovations

Institute of Translational Health Sciences (ITHS)



At the 2025 ITHS EXPO and Symposium attendees had the opportunity to hear from several research professionals showcasing their groundbreaking work addressing and solving real-world health concerns. From preeclampsia and coronary disease to dental implants, each speaker shared insights into both the breakthroughs and challenges they encountered while moving their work from lab into tangible real-world solutions. [Read More](#)

UW Researchers Test Common Disinfectants' Abilities to Fight Antibiotic Resistance at the Genetic Level

UW News



UW researchers offer new insights into measures currently used to control the spread of antibiotic resistant bacteria and other infectious agents in health care facilities. In a recent paper from Dr. Huan He (*pictured*), researchers studied the efficacy of nine common disinfectants used in health care facilities or households against three well-known strains of antibiotic-resistant bacteria. [Read More](#)

Lab Notes: Why Don't We Understand the Brain?

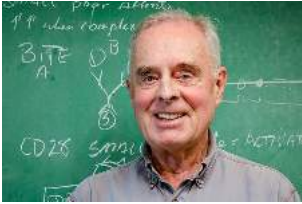
Allen Institute



Scientists have known for centuries that the brain is the seat of human thought, but we're still in the dark about how it works. *Lab Notes*, the podcast from the Allen Institute, asked four neuroscientists to get into the weeds with us about why the brain is so complicated and hard to understand. Do we have any hope of understanding our own brains? [Read More](#)

Two Lifetimes' Worth of Bone Marrow Transplant Breakthroughs

Fred Hutch



Fred Hutch bone marrow transplant pioneer Dr. Rainer Storb (*pictured*) celebrated two milestones this year: turning 90 and retiring after nearly 60 years of making lifesaving breakthroughs. A key member of the team that made bone marrow transplantation into a reality, Dr. Storb's leadership in the field predates Fred Hutch, which celebrates its 50th anniversary this year. [Read More](#)

Pilot Test of Novel Opioid-Use Therapy Shows Success

UW Medicine



A novel treatment protocol for opioid-use disorder significantly improves patient outcomes, according to research published today in *JAMA Network Open*. Developed and implemented by Seattle's Downtown Emergency Service Center, in collaboration with UW Medicine clinicians, this new approach allows patients to begin treatment without stopping fentanyl use. [Read More](#)

Washington Research Foundation Appoints Dr. Orin S. Levine as New President and CEO

Washington Research Foundation



Washington Research Foundation (WRF) has appointed Dr. Orin S. Levine (*pictured*) as its new President and CEO. Dr. Levine is an internationally recognized leader in public health and innovation who has been tapped to join WRF on October 6 following the retirement of current President and CEO Dr. Tom Daniel. Dr. Levine brings more than two decades of experience in bridging science, policy, and philanthropy to his leadership of WRF. [Read More](#)

[View All Local News](#) ➔ | [Submit an Article](#) ➔



Upcoming Events in Seattle

August 24 -
September 7
8:00 AM

Summer Workshop on the Dynamic Brain 2025
Friday Harbor

August 27
8:00 AM

MapMySections – Data Challenge
Online

August 27
4:00 PM

WRF x Nucleate Seattle Summer Social
SLU BRU

September 5
6:00 PM

ORCA 2025 Banquet
UW Center for Urban Horticulture

September 16
10:30 AM

2025 Long-Read Sequencing Symposium
UW

[View All Events](#) ➔ | [Submit an Event](#) ➔



Science Jobs in Seattle

Research Associate I, Protein Design
Allen Institute

Research Scientist/Engr 4
UW

Senior Scientist, Immuno-Oncology
Systimmune

Oncology Early Stage Clinical Scientist
Pfizer

Research Technician I/II, Jesse Bloom Lab
Fred Hutch

[View 72 Other Science Jobs](#) ➔ | [Submit a Job](#) ➔



On-Demand Training:
Human Hepatic Organoid Course

[REGISTER NOW ➔](#)

Submit your articles and events by reaching out to us at info@scienceinseattle.com.

BROUGHT TO YOU BY



STEMCELL Technologies

[Products](#) | [Services](#)

STEMCELL Science News

[Free Weekly Updates on Your Field](#)

The Stem Cell Podcast

[Interviews and Updates](#)
[on Stem Cell Science](#)