

# NEW FACULTY INTRODUCTIONS

## Johnatan (Yonatan) Aljadeff

I grew up in Israel, and got my bachelor's degree in physics at Tel Aviv University. During my PhD at UCSD I shifted my research interests to theoretical problems in neuroscience. I am extremely happy and proud to be returning to UCSD to start my lab. In my free time I like to explore the desert, to take photos and to cycle.

## Marcus Benna

Marcus was trained as a theoretical physicist, but now does research in computational neuroscience. He likes cycling and rock climbing.

## Alexandra “Jazz” Dickinson

I'm Jazz Dickinson, a new PI in Cell and Developmental Biology. My research interests lie at the intersection of chemistry and stem cell biology. My lab uses plant roots as a model to understand how stem cells make decisions, giving us the opportunity to make scientific contributions in applications ranging from agriculture to regenerative medicine.

## Andreas Ernst

Andreas obtained his PhD in biochemistry from Heidelberg University, Germany, studying how membrane proteins can specifically interact with their surrounding membrane lipids. During his postdoc at Yale, he investigated how cargo can be efficiently routed across the endomembrane system of a cell. In his lab at UCSD, he focusses on the question how organelle morphology is achieved, and whether it controls cell function.

## Sara Jackrel

Sara grew up exploring the New Jersey Pinelands and is looking forward to getting to know the natural areas of Southern California. Sara loves the outdoors and wildlife, with a slight bias



for birds and reptiles. She's been riding out the pandemic by cooking, baking, and spending time with her adopted parrot.

## **Matthew Lovett-Barron**

I am a new faculty in the Neurobiology section, and just opened my lab this summer in Tata Hall. My lab studies the flexibility of animal behavior, to try and understand how nervous systems adapt their functions to different circumstances, including environmental disruptions, internal states, and social contexts. We use volumetric light microscopy to record neural activity across entire brains of small transparent fish species (juvenile zebrafish and adult glassfish), as they behave in a variety of virtual reality environments. <https://www.lovettbarronlab.com/>.

## **Claire Meaders**

Claire Meaders is starting as an Assistant Teaching Professor in the Cell and Developmental Biology section in November 2020. She holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Cell and Molecular Biology from Brown University and a Ph.D. in Organismic and Evolutionary Biology from Harvard University. For her postdoctoral research at Cornell University, Claire switched to discipline-based education research and now studies the transition between high school and college for students in STEM. Outside of research, Claire is active in science outreach, and is training for a virtual marathon this October!

## **Aspen Reese**

The goal of my lab is to better predict host phenotype with data from the gut microbiota. Drawing on a range of techniques and theory from ecology, evolution, microbiology, and immunology, the lab will use animal experiments, comparative observational studies, and ex vivo culture work (as well as lots of computation) to relate the microbiota to host condition under varying environments. Specific interests include understanding human impacts of artificial selection and environmental change; the role of commensal microbes in attenuating infectious disease; when the microbiota can (and cannot) be manipulated to improve host health; and conservation of rare animals (and their microbes). Aspen got her BS at Yale, her PhD at Duke, and did an independent postdoc at the Harvard Society of Fellows before joining the EBE faculty.

## **Diana Rennison**



Academically Diana is interested in identifying the mechanisms generating and maintaining the phenomenal diversity of life we see on earth today. Outside of work Diana spends time relaxing outdoors with her husband, daughter, and border collie. Diana likes bright clothes, Del Mar dog beach, Belgian beer, French wine, and sushi.

## **Keefe Reuther**

I am an old lecturer and new Assistant Teaching Professor that loves hiking, biking, and keeping busy with my three dogs. My scholarly interests involve curriculum development, particularly with respect to teaching data analysis and experimental design.

## **Fabian Rivera Chavez**

I grew up in Petaluma, California and attended UC Santa Cruz as an undergrad where I majored in Molecular, Cell, and Developmental Biology. At UCSC, I conducted undergraduate research in the lab of Prof. Fitnat Yildiz who studies *Vibrio cholerae* biofilm formation. After finishing my PhD at UC Davis on *Salmonella* pathogenesis, I decided go back to studying *Vibrio cholerae* as a postdoc in the lab of Prof. John Mekalanos. On a more personal note, I'm a first-generation college student of Mexican decent. Spanish was my first language. I enjoy traveling, hiking, karaoke, playing soccer, boxing, and arm wrestling.

