Save the Date

- **Grand Challenges in Parkinson’s Disease**  
- **Hope on the Hill Gala**  
  o October 27, 2016
- **West Michigan Regional Undergraduate Science Research Conference**  
  o November 5, 2016
- **A Conversation About Women’s Health hosted by Carol Van Andel**  
  o November 16, 2016

The 2016-2017 Incoming class

- Maggie Chassé, who’s originally from Alaska, received her Master’s in biochemistry from Colorado State University.
- Wooyoung Choi, VAIGS’ first international student from South Korea, received his Master’s from Tsinghua University in 2012.
- Minge Du comes to VAIGS from Stony Brook University and received her Master’s in genetics from Southeast University in China.
- Guillermo Flores is an M.D.-Ph.D. candidate who is currently completing his second year of medical school at MSU.
- Katie Krajnak, who earned her Master’s in biological sciences from Purdue University Calumet.
- Alexis Weber graduated from MSU in 2014 with a B.S. in genomics and molecular genetics, with an additional major in microbiology.

VAIGS Recent Publications


Staying Connected

- Join the [Graduate Student Association (GSA) Student & Alumni Group](#) on LinkedIn! The GSA provides a peer-based organization to support and aid in the development of scientific careers, fosters camaraderie among graduate students, facilitates scientific outreach to the local community, and promotes professional collaborations beyond VAI.

- For more information regarding opportunities to stay involved with Van Andel Institute and our mission, please don’t hesitate to contact the following:
  - Nancy.schaperkotter@vai.org, Student Affairs
  - Teresa.reid@vai.org, Development
Meet Our 2016 Graduates

Casey Droscha successfully defended his dissertation this spring. After graduation, Dr. Droscha began working as a Research Scientist with NorthStar Cooperative Incorporated, an agricultural biotech company in the Lansing area.

**Undergraduate University:** Central Michigan University (B.S.)

**Thesis:** Characterizing mechanisms of gene transcription in models of bone development

**Mentor:** Bart Williams, Ph.D.

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Marie Mooney successfully defended her dissertation in January. In April, Dr. Mooney began a postdoctoral position with Dr. Andre Bachmann in the Department of Pediatrics and Human Development at the College of Human Medicine, Michigan State University (MSU).

**Undergraduate University:** Michigan Technological University (B.S. bioinformatics, summa cum laude)

**Graduate University:** University of Cincinnati (M.S. biomedical engineering)

**Thesis:** Modeling glioma-derived growth factor signal transduction in pediatric glioblastoma

**Mentor:** Matt Steensma, M.D.