

VAN ANDEL INSTITUTE GRADUATE SCHOOL

# 2021 | COMMENCEMENT PROGRAM



# Monday, May 3, 2021

## 2 PM | VIRTUAL VIA ZOOM

**DOWNLOAD A PRINTABLE PDF OF THE PROGRAM BOOKLET AND GRADUATING STUDENT BIOSKETCHES HERE.**

### GATHERING TIME

#### OPENING OF CEREMONY

Dr. Steven J. Triezenberg, *President and Dean, Van Andel Institute Graduate School*

#### INTRODUCTION OF GRADUATES BY MENTORS

Dr. Patrick Grohar  
Dr. Wei Lü

#### PRESENTATION OF CANDIDATES FOR DEGREE

Dr. Steven J. Triezenberg

#### CONFERRING OF DEGREES

Dr. Juan Olivarez, *Chair, Van Andel Institute Graduate School Board of Directors*

#### PRESENTATION OF HOODS

#### REFLECTIONS BY GRADUATES

Maggie Chassé  
Wooyoung Choi

#### STUDENT PERSPECTIVE

Eric Cordeiro-Spinetti, on behalf of the Graduate Student Association

#### CONCLUSION OF CEREMONY

*Music for today's celebration performed by Kopper and Keys.*

For general questions, please contact Susanne Miller-Schachinger.  
For AV questions, please contact AV Support.

#### PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

Patrick Grohar, M.D., Ph.D.  
Brian Haab, Ph.D.  
Wei Lü, Ph.D.  
Juan Olivarez, Ph.D.  
Steven J. Triezenberg, Ph.D.

#### CANDIDATES FOR DEGREE AND THESIS ADVISERS

Maggie Chassé — Patrick Grohar, M.D., Ph.D.  
Wooyoung Choi — Wei Lü, Ph.D.  
Robert Vaughan — Scott Rothbart, Ph.D.  
Leslie Wyman — Darren Moore, Ph.D.

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Steven J. Triezenberg, Ph.D.  
Hong Wen, Ph.D.  
Bart O. Williams, Ph.D.  
Mary Winn, Ph.D.  
Ning Wu, Ph.D.  
Tao Yang, Ph.D.



## 2021 Van Andel Institute Graduate School Commencement

### Graduating Student Bios



#### **Maggie Chassé**

**Dissertation:** Therapeutically targeting SWI/SNF dysregulated pediatric solid tumors  
**Thesis Adviser:** Patrick Grohar, M.D., Ph.D.  
**Hometown:** Eagle River, Alaska  
**Next Step:** Postdoctoral Fellow at Harvard Medical School/ Boston Children's Hospital, Zon Laboratory



#### **Wooyoung Choi**

**Dissertation:** Structural basis for molecular gating of two ion channels involved in cellular calcium homeostasis: CALHM2 and TRPC3  
**Thesis Adviser:** Wei Lü, Ph.D.  
**Hometown:** Jeonju, South Korea  
**Next Step:** Postdoctoral Fellow at University of California, San Francisco, Cheng Laboratory



#### **Robert Vaughan**

**Dissertation:** Epigenetic regulation through histone ubiquitination  
**Thesis Adviser:** Scott Rothbart, Ph.D.  
**Hometown:** Ada, Michigan  
**Next Step:** Postdoctoral Fellow at Michigan State University, MacKeigan Laboratory



#### **Leslie Wyman**

**Dissertation:** Biochemical studies of *LRRK2* dimerization and enzymatic activity  
**Thesis Adviser:** Darren Moore, Ph.D.  
**Hometown:** Kentwood, Michigan  
**Next Step:** Research Associate at VAI, Moore Laboratory; CEO at Lakeside Analytical, Inc.

## HISTORY OF VAN ANDEL INSTITUTE GRADUATE SCHOOL

Van Andel Institute Graduate School develops future biomedical research leaders through an intense, problem-focused Ph.D. degree in molecular and cell biology. Through the leadership of Dr. Gordon Van Harn, then the director of Van Andel Institute for Education, the Graduate School was formally incorporated in 2005 and later that year received approval to grant doctoral and master's degrees. The founding dean, Dr. Steven J. Triezenberg, was hired in 2006. The first class of three students matriculated in August 2007, and the first Ph.D. degrees were conferred in 2012. Accreditation by the Higher Learning Commission was initially granted in 2013 and was reaffirmed in 2018.

As of April 2021, the Graduate School student body has grown to 36 students. VAI is proud of 28 alumni pursuing excellent careers in academia, research and industry. Twenty-five students have graduated with Ph.D. degrees (two in the M.D./Ph.D. program), and three with master's degrees. A strategic plan adopted in 2019 guides the continued growth, innovation, and excellence of the Graduate School through the year 2025.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We gratefully acknowledge that the origins and success of the Graduate School arise from:

- The generosity of Jay and Betty Van Andel, whose vision led to the founding of VAI
- Stalwart support of David Van Andel, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of VAI
- Thoughtful guidance from the Van Andel Education Institute Board of Trustees
- Creative direction and diligent oversight by past and current members of the Van Andel Institute Graduate School Board of Directors
- Committed leadership of Dr. Steven J. Triezenberg, President and Dean, Van Andel Institute Graduate School
- Dedicated and excellent work by Graduate School staff members Kathy Bentley, Dr. Brian Haab, Michelle Love, Christy Mayo, Susanne Miller-Schachinger, Alli Roman and Dr. John Vasquez
- Excellent operational and administrative support from VAI departments and staff
- Scientific leadership and commitment from Dr. Peter A. Jones, Chief Scientific Officer, and his predecessors Dr. Jeffrey Trent and the late Dr. George Vande Woude
- The passion of our faculty for doing science that improves the health and enhances the lives of current and future generations, and their commitment to teaching, training, and developing the future leaders of this discipline.