

MIDWEST SDB **IN CINCINNATI** **2026 REGIONAL MEETING**

September 25-27

**hosted by Cincinnati Children's
at the Graduate by Hilton Hotel
midwestsdbincincy.org**







Midwest Society for Developmental Biology Meeting

Friday, September 25 – 27, 2026

Graduate Hotel, 151 Goodman Dr., Cincinnati, OH 45219

Talks to be upload to the conference computer before each session.

2 Keynote: 40 minutes + 5 minutes Q&A

4 Invited speakers: 25 minutes + 5 minutes Q&A

30 Selected Abstract talks: 12 minutes + 3 minutes Q&A

20 Poster Preview Flash talks: 90 seconds

Predocs speakers are indicated in **blue**, Postdocs in **green**, faculty in **black**.

Prizes will be awarded for best postdoc, predoc, prebac presentations (talk or poster), as well as for trainees who ask the best question(s).

Friday, September 25

- 2:30-4:00 pm** **Registration & Poster Setup (West Pre-function)**
- 4:00-4:15 pm** **Welcome & Opening Remarks (Cincinnati Ballroom):**
Aaron Zorn, Cincinnati Children's
- 4:15-4:30 pm** **Society of Developmental Biology Update:**
Sharon Amacher, Ohio State University, Midwest Representative
- 4:30-5:15 pm** **Session 1 (Cincinnati Ballroom)**
Chair: **Samantha Brugmann**, Cincinnati Children's
- Keynote: **Deneen Wellik, PhD**, University of Wisconsin-Madison
Hox genes in Development and Disease

Sponsored by: **DSHB** 

5:15-6:30 pm	Session 2 (Cincinnatus Ballroom) Chair: Ben Allen , University of Michigan
5:15-5:30	Nicole Pek , Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center <i>Vessel Organoids Reveal FOXF1 Variant-Specific Regulation of Mesoderm and Capillary Development</i>
5:30-5:45	George Roy , The Ohio State University <i>Characteristics of sRNA-Driven Transposon Methylation in Plant Zygotic Genome Activation</i>
5:45-6:00	Joydip Barua , Miami University <i>Müller Glia Ion Homeostasis Preserves Retinal Integrity and Protects Retinal Ganglion Cells</i>
6:00-6:15	Blair Leach , Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center <i>Fibroblast-Derived FOXF1 Coordinates Alveolar Development and Capillary Maturation</i>
6:15-6:30	Poster preview flash talks 10 flash talks Poster # - Name, institution, predocs in blue and postdocs in green .
6:30-9:30 pm	Poster Session 1 - <u>Sponsor Display</u> (Fountain Square Room) heavy hors d'oeuvres and bar
6:30-8:00	Odd numbers Posters 1-59
8:00-9:30	Even numbers Posters 2-60

Saturday, September 26

8:00-8:30 am	Coffee and light pastries (North Pre-function Area)
8:30-10:00 am	Session 3 (Cincinnatus Ballroom) Chair: Cristina Cebrian , Cincinnati Children's
8:30-8:45	Shelbie Wenner , Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center <i>HSPA2 Regulates Translation During Meiosis</i>
8:45-9:00	Josy Joseph , Indiana University Bloomington <i>Identifying the molecular mechanism of beetle horn formation</i>

9:00-9:15	Anthony Treichel , Stowers Institute for Medical Research <i>Streamlined mRNA targeting and phenotyping reveal non-essential roles of maternally encoded zebrafish microproteins during MZT</i>
9:15-9:30	Omodasola Adekeye , University of Maine <i>Loss of Ptpdq disrupts podocyte development, structure, and function</i>
9:30-9:45	Electra Coffman , The Ohio State University <i>Adherens junctions and the spectrin-actin cytoskeleton function interdependently to maintain cortical lens transparency with age</i>
9:45-10:00	Benjamin Gilbert , Nationwide Children's Hospital <i>Pathogenic variation in MECOM is associated with non-syndromic congenital heart disease</i>
10:00-10:30 am	Break: Coffee, Lemonade & Cookies (North Pre-function Area)
10:30-12:00 pm	Session 4 (Cincinnatus Ballroom) Chair: Sarah Petersen , Kenyon College
10:30-10:45	Grace Gottschamer , University of Iowa <i>Periderm-like cells are present on the surface of Irf6 knockout mouse embryos</i>
10:45-11:00	Avelina Lee , Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center <i>Investigating the role of ESRP2 in craniofacial development using the cleft primary palate (cpp) avian model</i>
11:00-11:15	Jaclyn Olberding , University of Iowa <i>Ectoderm-mediated patterning of the mandible during mouse development</i>
11:15-11:30	Lisa Wirtz , University of Michigan <i>Striatin-Interacting Phosphatases and Kinases complex is an important cytoskeletal organizer during skin epidermal development</i>
11:30-12:00	Invited talk-1 , Education Session Anna Cunningham, MEd, PhD , Washington University in St. Louis <i>Optimizing Your Research with Artificial Intelligence Tools</i>
12:00-2:00 pm	Box Lunch and Discussion Tables (location 1st floor)
12:15-1:00	Round table session - 1
1:00-1:45	Round table session - 2

2:00-3:30 pm	Session 5 (Cincinnatus Ballroom) Chair: Rosa Ventrella , Midwestern University
2:00-2:30	Invited talk-2 Chris Wolverton, PhD , Ohio Wesleyan University, <i>Fractional Gravity on the ISS Uncovers a Novel Plant Gravity Sensory System</i>
2:30-2:45	Patrizia Tornabene , Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center <i>Modeling Cystic Fibrosis pancreatic disease using human iPSC-derived pancreatic organoids</i>
2:45-3:00	Rei Yagasaki , University of Michigan <i>How fluid dynamics and cellular mechanics shape colonic crypts</i>
3:00-3:15	Bailey Weatherbee , Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center <i>Multifunctional RNA-binding transcription factors coordinate cell states in development</i>
3:15-3:30	Sushant Bangru , Morgridge Institute for Research <i>Adaptive osteoblast behaviors permitting regeneration of plucked scales from disabled progenitor pools</i>
3:30-4:00 pm	Break: Coffee, Lemonade & Cookies (North Pre-function Area)
4:00-5:30 pm	Session 6 (Cincinnatus Ballroom) Chair: Debora Sinner , Cincinnati Children's
4:00-4:30	Invited talk-3 Kevin Cox Jr., PhD , Washington University in St. Louis, <i>Building a Spatial and Transcriptomic Framework for Transcription Factor Regulation in Duckweed</i>
4:30-4:45	Matthew Riccetti , Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center <i>Dorsal respiratory group neurons specified by Gsx2 drive the hypoxic ventilatory response</i>
4:45-5:00	Josefina Doffo , Stowers Institute for Medical Research <i>Regulated Intron Removal as a Post-Transcriptional Strategy in Neural Development and Disease</i>
5:00-5:15	Jacob Gafranek , Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center <i>Atrial regeneration profiling reveals chamber-specific recovery dynamics within the zebrafish epicardium</i>

- 5:15-5:30 **Poster preview flash talks**
 10 flash talks
 Poster # - Name, institution, predocs in **blue** and postdocs in **green**.
- 5:30-6:30 pm **Poster Session 2 set up (Fountain Square Room)**
- 6:30-9:30 pm **Poster Session 2 - Sponsors Display (Fountain Square Room)**
 heavy hors d'oeuvres/bar
- 6:30-8:00 **Odd numbers** Posters 61-119
- 8:00-9:30 **Even numbers** Posters 62-120

Sunday, September 27th (Cincinnatus Ballroom)

8:00-8:30 am Coffee and pastries (North Pre-function Area)

8:30-9:15 am Session 7 (Cincinnatus Ballroom)

Chair: **Aaron Zorn**, Cincinnati Children's

Keynote: **James Wells, PhD**, Cincinnati Children's Hospital
Modeling human GI development and disease with organoids



Sponsored by: **Nikon**

9:15-10:30 am Session 8 (Cincinnatus Ballroom)

Chair: **Jennifer Gutzman**, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

9:15-9:30 **Timothy Nguyen**, Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center,
A BIRC5 molecular rheostat regulates cranial neural crest differentiation timing

9:30-9:45 **Kongju Zhu**, Harvard Medical School
Defective human somitogenesis in the absence of HOX genes

9:45-10:00 **Jingyue Xu**, Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center
Foxf2 and Twist1 acts cooperatively to pattern the embryonic palatal mesenchyme and regulate palatal musculoskeletal integration

10:00-10:15 **Paul Huber**, University of Kentucky
Modeling neural plate border differentiation using a Xenopus organoid system

10:15-10:30 **Rebecca Clements**, Kenyon College
Developmental regulation of antigen presentation machinery in human erythroid progenitors may contribute to fetal and perinatal immunity

10:30-11:00 am	Break: Coffee, Lemonade & Cookies (North Prefunction Area)
11:00-12:30 pm	Session 9 (Cincinnatus Ballroom) Chair: Mark Charlton-Perkins , Miami University
11:00-11:30	Invited talk-4 Noah Mitchell, PhD , The University of Chicago <i>TDB</i>
11:30-11:45	Kemal Keseroglu , Northwestern University <i>Two distinct timers control vertebrate embryo segmentation</i>
11:45-12:00	Peter Kropp , Kenyon College <i>Mitochondrial control of germ cell differentiation and death in a C. elegans model of MEPAN syndrome</i>
12:00-12:15	Isha Verma , University of Michigan <i>Education, Emulation, And Ethics-Based Teaching Activity Helps Learners Appreciate the Importance of Neurodiversity</i>
12:15-12:30	Timothy Plageman , The Ohio State University <i>Retinal dystrophy-associated morphological defects are caused by disruption of Shroom3-dependent cell contractions within the outer limiting membrane</i>
12:30-12:45 pm	Awards Ceremony Chairs: Debora Sinner and Rosa Ventrella
12:45-1:00 pm	Closing – Aaron Zorn , Cincinnati Children's



2x poster sessions, 60 posters/session = 120 posters (Organize Judging: Sinner & Ventrella)