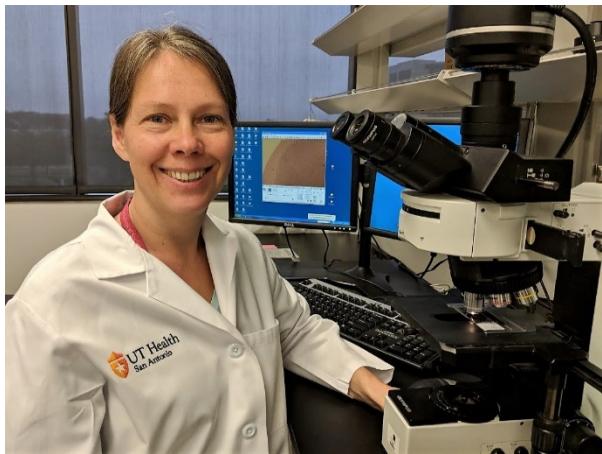


Dr. Gruslova Completes the Eli Lilly Certificate Course on Making Medicines



Dr. Aleksandra Gruslova, postdoctoral fellow, conducts *in vitro* and *in vivo* experiments for preclinical drug development.

Aleksandra Gruslova, Ph.D., postdoctoral fellow, was always fascinated with the life sciences and, after 10 years of dedicated study, received her Ph.D. in physiology at St. Petersburg State University in Russia. In 2012, she joined the lab of Andrew Brenner, M.D., Ph.D., co-leader of the Experimental and Therapeutic Program at the Mays Cancer Center, and began studying the efficacy of new therapeutics drugs to treat brain and breast cancers sparking her passion for drug development.

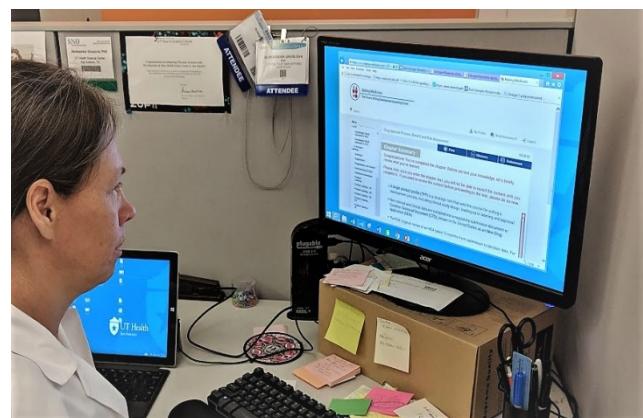
Her time in Dr. Brenner's lab led her to develop an intracranial microscopy technique using a cranial window that allows for

the study of brain tumor progression in a live mouse to better understand the interactions of cell systems during cancer initiation, response, and treatment. She has also established primary tumor cell lines, a research tool widely used for preclinical drug screening. "As I began studying the applications of my laboratory science, I knew I wanted to bridge the gap between bench and clinical work," Dr. Gruslova shared.

Wanting to gain deeper insights into the drug discovery and development process from the pharma-industry perspective, she was excited to learn of a new eLearning certificate course developed by Lilly USA, LLC in collaboration with academia and now available to UT System institutions. "We believe this course provides UT researchers, innovators, and entrepreneurs a more robust appreciation of the complexities and intricacies of the drug development process," said Matthew Sorenson, Ph.D., innovation program manager with the UT System's Office of Innovation and Strategic Investment. The online modules cover the entire spectrum of drug development, from discovery to clinical trials including the regulatory process, how to identify key stakeholders, and patient insights to better inform trial development.

"The flexibility of the course was very helpful to me. I was able to gain a deeper understanding of the step by step process for discovering and developing drugs," Dr. Gruslova shared, "As a basic scientist, I was compelled to think about where my research is and how to apply it to the drug development pipeline to bring new treatments from the bench to clinicians and help save lives."

When asked if she had any advice to offer students about career development, Dr. Gruslova recommended to begin networking as soon as possible. Without the right collaborations and attitude, it can be more challenging to launch your career. Recalling an important lesson learned from 18 years of practicing Aikido, "Leave your ego with your shoes. Success is a process and to gain



Dr. Gruslova completed the *Making Medicines: The Process of Drug Development* certificate course gaining a deeper understanding of translational research.

perspective on my work, I must first think about how to best utilize it for other people and tailor my education to those needs," she shared, "We cannot make an impact on the world if we do not continue to learn and grow."

Editor's Note: [*Making Medicines: The Process of Drug Development*](#) is available to UT Health San Antonio students, faculty, and staff. Contact Dr. Teresa Evans evanstm@uthscsa.edu to request login information.