UF-HHMI Science for Life Distinguished Mentor Awards acknowledge faculty engagement with outstanding undergraduates. We are happy to announce awards in the 2012 competition to Dr. Michael Bubb, Dr. Darragh Devine and Dr. Jacob Jones.

Dr. Michael Bubb

Dr. Michael Bubb is an Associate Professor in the Division of Rheumatology and Department of Medicine at the University of Florida. He also has an appointment at the Mal Randall VAMC in Gainesville Florida. Dr. Bubb is a clinician who specializes in the treatment of rheumatoid arthritis. His research spans from molecular modeling and structural biology to translational research in arthritis and clinical trials in rheumatoid arthritis. In the laboratory Dr. Bubb investigates the regulation of cell motility, which is basically the mechanism by which cells crawl. Nearly every cell in the human body exhibits this crawling behavior. There are several aspects of cell motility that have direct relevance to human pathophysiology, including the molecular pathways that are responsible for inflammation and autoimmunity that are at the root of the cause of rheumatoid arthritis. Dr. Bubb teaches and mentors at nearly every level of education at the University of Florida, starting with students who are just entering as undergraduates, but also in the graduate medical programs where he trains future rheumatologists. Over the last fifteen years, the Bubb laboratory has supported undergraduate research, offering an opportunity for five to eight students to have their own research project in a closely mentored environment. Undergraduate students in the have participated in collaborative projects that include a research experience abroad, have attended national scientific meetings, and have published their results in peer-reviewed journals. bubbmr@medicine.ufl.edu
Dr. Darragh Devine is an Associate Professor in the Department of Psychology and Director of the Behavioral and Cognitive Neuroscience program. He joined the faculty at UF in 1998, after completing a PhD in the Center for Studies in Behavioural Neurobiology at Concordia University in Montreal, and a Post-Doctoral fellowship in the Department of Psychiatry at the University of Michigan. He now studies the neurobiological basis of self-injurious behavior, a debilitating characteristic of autism and other neurodevelopmental disorders. His lab group investigates pathological brain mechanisms that confer vulnerability for self-injury in these disorders, and the roles that severe emotional stress and anxiety contribute to this vulnerability. The research has garnered support from The National Institute on Child Health and Human Development, the National Science Foundation, the Congressionally Directed Medical Research Programs, and the Autism Speaks Foundation. Dr. Devine has been recognized with the Governor General of Canada's Gold Medal, and a Colonel Allen R. and Margaret G. Crow Term Professorship. He has twice been awarded the “Teacher of the Year” for the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences at the University of Florida (2003 and 2012), and has served as guest editor of the Journal of Intellectual Disabilities Research and the UF Journal of Undergraduate Research. During the past 5 years, 15 undergraduate students, 7 graduate students, and 2 mentored scientists have worked in the lab, producing 14 published papers and 31 abstracts with 10 undergraduate authors. Those students have won numerous awards and honors, including University Scholars, Anderson Scholars, and UF-HHMI Science for Life Awardees, and all the graduates have continued in scientific or medical programs post-graduation. dpdevine@ufl.edu

Dr. Jacob Jones is an Associate Professor in the Department of Materials Science and Engineering at the University of Florida. Jones completed his PhD at Purdue University in Materials Engineering in 2004, undertook a postdoctoral appointment at the University of New South Wales in Sydney, Australia sponsored under the NSF International Research Fellowship program, and joined the faculty at UF in 2006. His current research projects are related to piezoelectric, ferroelectric, and multiferroic materials which have applications including but not limited to impact and displacement sensors, actuators, capacitors, microelectromechanical systems, health monitoring, nonvolatile memory, vibrational energy harvesting, and ultrasound. Since 2004, Jones has published over 70 papers on these topics. His research is supported by the National Science Foundation, the Army Research Office, and several other government and private entities. He has received numerous research awards including the National Science Foundation (NSF) CAREER award (2007) and a Presidential Early Career Award for Scientists and Engineers (2009) awarded at a White House ceremony in January 2010. Numerous undergraduate students participate in the research projects, mentored by Jones and his group of postdoctoral scientists and graduate students. He regularly hosts undergraduate research students in his laboratory through the Undergraduate Scholars Program (USP), Research Experience in Materials (REM) program, and the UF-HHMI Science for Life Program. In addition, Jones leads an NSF award for international research experiences for students (IRES), a program that enables five undergraduate students to complete research experiences in Australia each summer (2012-2014). jjones@mse.ufl.edu