



BIOLOGY CENTRE ASCR

Institute of Parasitology

address: Branišovská 1160/31, 370 05 České Budějovice, Czech Republic

IBAN – CZ22 0710 0000 0000 0552 7231 | SWIFT CODE – CNBACZPP | VAT No.: CZ60077344

phone: +420 387 775 403 | fax: +420 385 310 388 | www.paru.cas.cz | e-mail: paru@paru.cas.cz

In České Budějovice, 15.5.2015

Karolina is our first PhD baby. I have to admit that I was a typical teenage mother who did not know what to do with a “screaming” baby. But we both learned and now she is standing here ready to take her last step in order to become Doctor of Philosophy (PhD). I bet my pants she does not want to look back at the last 5 years and she probably won't do it for quite some time. I completely understand that. The journey from a young and naïve student to an established scientist went through a lot of ups and downs. Especially the last year proved to be extremely stressful, but also rewarding. Her PP paper got accepted early this year, she got involved in many other projects, which will bring her another papers in a near future. She wrote her master piece, a PhD study, that we will proudly show to any newcomers.

When I look back, I see our empty lab and I feel again the excitement when our first electroporations worked. However few months later, we realized that the liquid nitrogen stabilates were bad and we lost all our cell lines. So after the first year, we were again at the beginning. So many things have changed since then. Do you remember our old FACS machine for which we had to use floppy discs, btw. they had to be re-formatted before ever use. How we developed our westerns using a developer and fixer (how many pants we ruined) and we used extremely expensive KODAK films, 50 different exposures were out of questions. How we purified proteins manually, just waiting for the columns to drop and drop and drop.....

But I guess we had some fun moments too, I think that Karolina at some point might like to refresh her memory how great it was to have Anka in the lab, how excited she was when she won the first prize as the best presenter on Protodny, when she went to Buffalo and spent one month in Laurie Read lab. And what about the lobsters in Woods Hole, they were good, weren't they? And what about the Blue native gels that worked only if the lab temperature raised above 35 degree Celsius. Karolina may remember that the Institute was empty, everybody else was by the pool, but she was running her BN gels. What about the champagne in our office to celebrate your paper? And I bet there were many more happy moments (that excluded her supervisors) during her PhD which brought the whole career path into the balance.

When she is ready she can also look at our annual reviews, as it is a beautiful example of her development how to define aims, goals and achievements. How she developed from a student “who wanted to catch up on a paper reading” to a scientist who is able to ask difficult questions, define the aims of study, propose the experimental procedures and most importantly to perform the experiments.

Mira Obornik once told me “Karolina is the biggest surprise of the Institute”. I already knew it, but it was nice to hear it from somebody outside of the lab. Of course, Karolina did not believe it and she probably still does not believe it. Her low self-confidence is sometimes startling. So if I can have a few recommendations for her I would say: “trust yourself more and try to handle stressful situation better.



Science is not an easy world, the best genius scientists working 16 hours a day are difficult, actually impossible to beat, there is always competition, always deadlines, there are never moments that you can fully forget about what you are doing. But we still do this, because we are excited by the unknown, by the surprises hidden under the cover and when we look carefully, we reveal a beautiful complexity of life. And I know that this is exactly what drove Karolina forward.

Now when she is standing on an imaginary top of up-to now career she needs to decide what to do next. Whatever decision she makes I am sure it will be the best for her. We will miss her enormously. At the end I would like to say that we are very proud of her and thank her for everything she accomplished.

Thank you.

Alma Křivá