Cheryl P. Andam, after earning a Ph.D. at the University of Connecticut and doing a postdoctoral fellowship at Cornell University, moved into a postdoctoral position at Harvard T. H. Chan School of Public Health in the laboratory of William P. Hanage, where she researches the population structure and evolution of *Streptococcus pneumoniae* and examines how clinical interventions such as vaccination have influenced its population structure, dynamics and genome evolution. Through sequencing and analysis of 900 pneumococcal genomes, she has demonstrated that changes in their population structure are driven mainly by both the expansion of variants existing at low frequencies prior to vaccine introduction and highly variable rates and patterns of recombination across the population. The process of serotype replacement allows non-vaccine serotypes to occupy the ecological niche left behind by those eliminated by the vaccine, consequently undermining the benefits of the vaccine. Andam used the CDGPW award to attend the 10th International Symposium on Pneumococci and Pneumococcal Diseases (ISPPD-10) in Glasgow, Scotland.

Elizabeth N. Bess earned a Ph.D. in Organic Chemistry from the University of Utah, and is now a postdoctoral fellow in Peter Turnbaugh’s laboratory at the University of California, where she employs an interdisciplinary approach to study enterolignans, microbial metabolites which are thought to protect against breast cancer. The precursors to these compounds, lignans, are found in many commonly consumed foods, but their activation requires gut microbes, suggesting that differences between individuals’ gut microbiomes may shape the lignans’ beneficial effects. Bess’s research focuses on identifying microbial genes responsible for lignin metabolism, determining if other components of the diet alter their function, and testing the ability of the microbiome to prevent breast cancer in animal models. Bess will use the CDGPW award to attend the Microbiome in Health and Disease Keystone Symposium in Keystone, Colo.
Tera Levin, a postdoctoral fellow in Harmit Malik’s laboratory at Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center, earned a Ph.D. in Molecular and Cell Biology from the University of California, Berkeley. Currently, she studies the biology of Legionella bacteria within their natural hosts, environmental amoebae, and examines what genetic changes occur when Legionella evolves between symbiotic and pathogenic states within amoebae, and if the symbiotic Legionella strains serve as a genetic reservoir of host-adaptation genes that can then be transferred to pathogens. She explores how Legionella species have acquired their enormous repertoires of eukaryote-manipulating effectors, as well as the evolutionary steps that have shaped this class of pathogens. Levin plans to use the award to visit the laboratory of Howard Shuman (University of Chicago, Ill.), a leading expert in the field of Legionella biology.

Laura Mike earned a Bachelor’s degree in chemistry from Duke University, followed by a Ph.D. in Microbiology from Vanderbilt University. She is currently a postdoctoral fellow at the University of Michigan in Harry Mobley’s and David Sherman’s laboratories, pursuing research that bridges bacterial pathogenesis and natural product chemistry. Her work includes the development of a novel vaccine strategy that protects against urinary tract infections (UTI) caused by uropathogenic Escherichia coli (UPEC), accomplished by attaching iron-chelating compounds called siderophores to immunogenic carrier proteins thereby eliciting a B cell-mediated immune response that protects against UTI. Complementary to the vaccine project, she conducted a high-throughput screen that identified several Streptomyces species that secrete natural products which subvert UPEC growth in low iron, and she has successfully isolated a novel antimicrobial compound (nicoyamycin) that inhibits UPEC iron acquisition. Mike used the CDGPW award to attend the American Chemical Society’s short-course on 1-D and 2-D NMR Spectroscopy in Philadelphia, Pa.

Mary M. Weber, a postdoctoral fellow in Ted Hackstadt’s laboratory at NIH/NIAID Rocky Mountain Laboratories, earned a Ph.D. in Biomedical Sciences from Texas A&M Health Science Center. Her research uses biochemical and molecular techniques to elucidate effector mechanisms for virulence factors. Specifically, she studies mechanisms by which Chlamydia trachomatis inclusion membrane proteins (Incs) modulate the host response and facilitate chlamydial development. Employing a variety of genetic approaches to express 50 predicted IncS, she demonstrated that ten previously undefined IncS localize to the C. trachomatis inclusion membrane. Using site-specific mutagenesis and a complementation system that she implemented, she has identified several IncS that are required to subvert the host response and promote normal inclusion development. (Due to NIH/NIAID regulations governing the acceptance of cash awards, Weber was named an awardee, but no cash award was or will be provided.)

Call for nominations. The 2017 Career Development Grants for Postdoctoral Women program is currently accepting nominations. Up to five grants ($1,500 each) are given annually to postdoctoral women with outstanding scientific accomplishments and potential for additional significant research or study in the area of microbiology. For more information on the program and the application process, go to http://www.asm.org/index.php/career-development-grant-postdoctoral-women on the ASM website or contact adempsey@asmusa.org.