



Skylar Settles

Dick Award
Ph.D. Candidate, Genetics
First Year ARCS Scholar

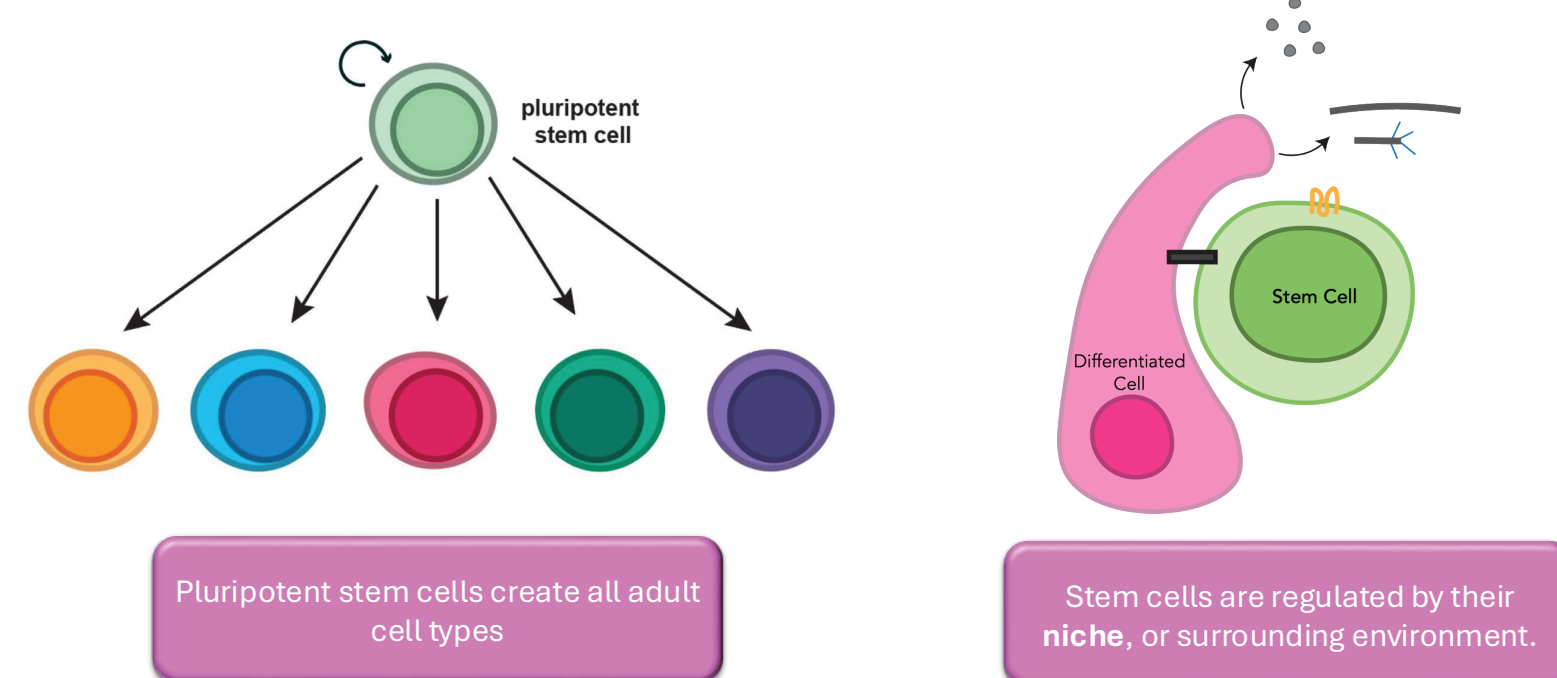


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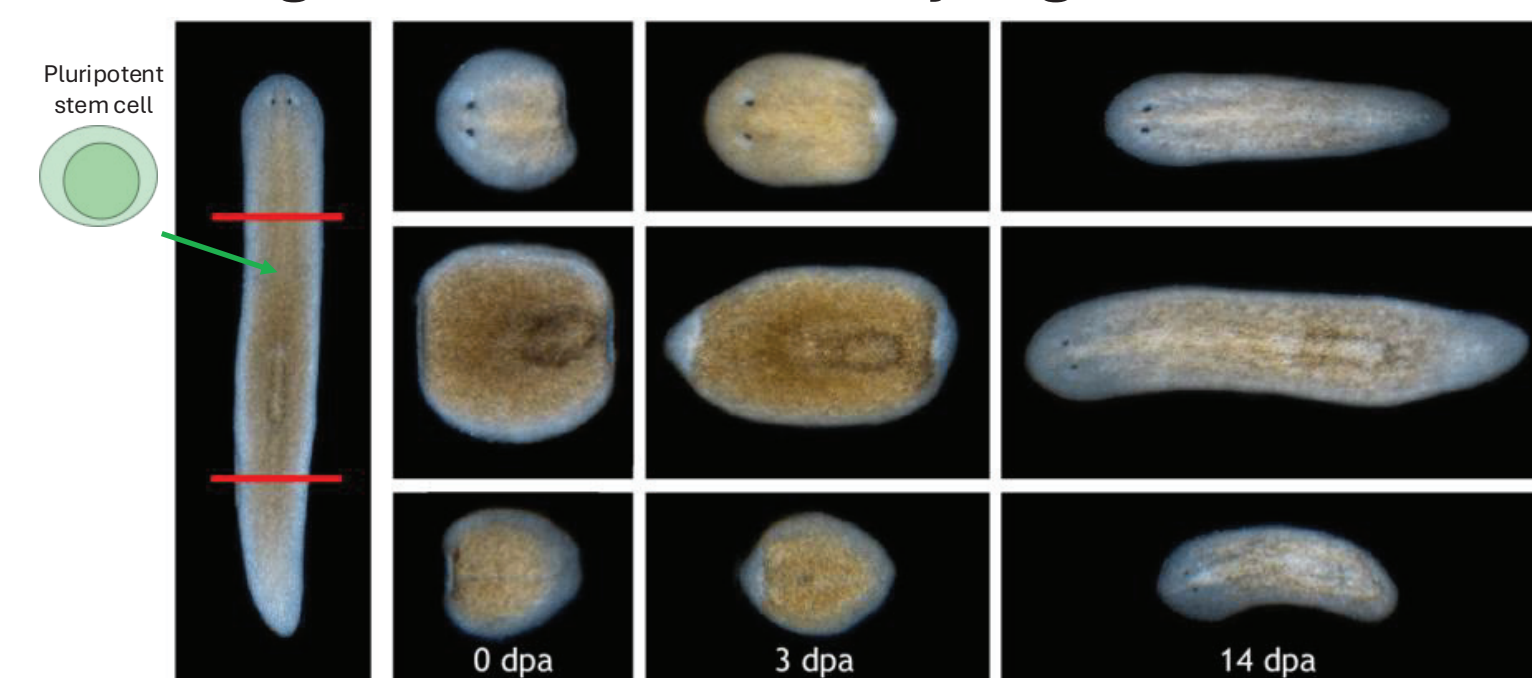
A parenchymal niche modulates pluripotent stem cell function

By studying an animal that has and uses pluripotent stem cells at a high rate, we can begin to understand how the most potent adult stem cell type is regulated within an organism for the very first time.

Understanding pluripotent stem cell regulation could improve stem cell therapies

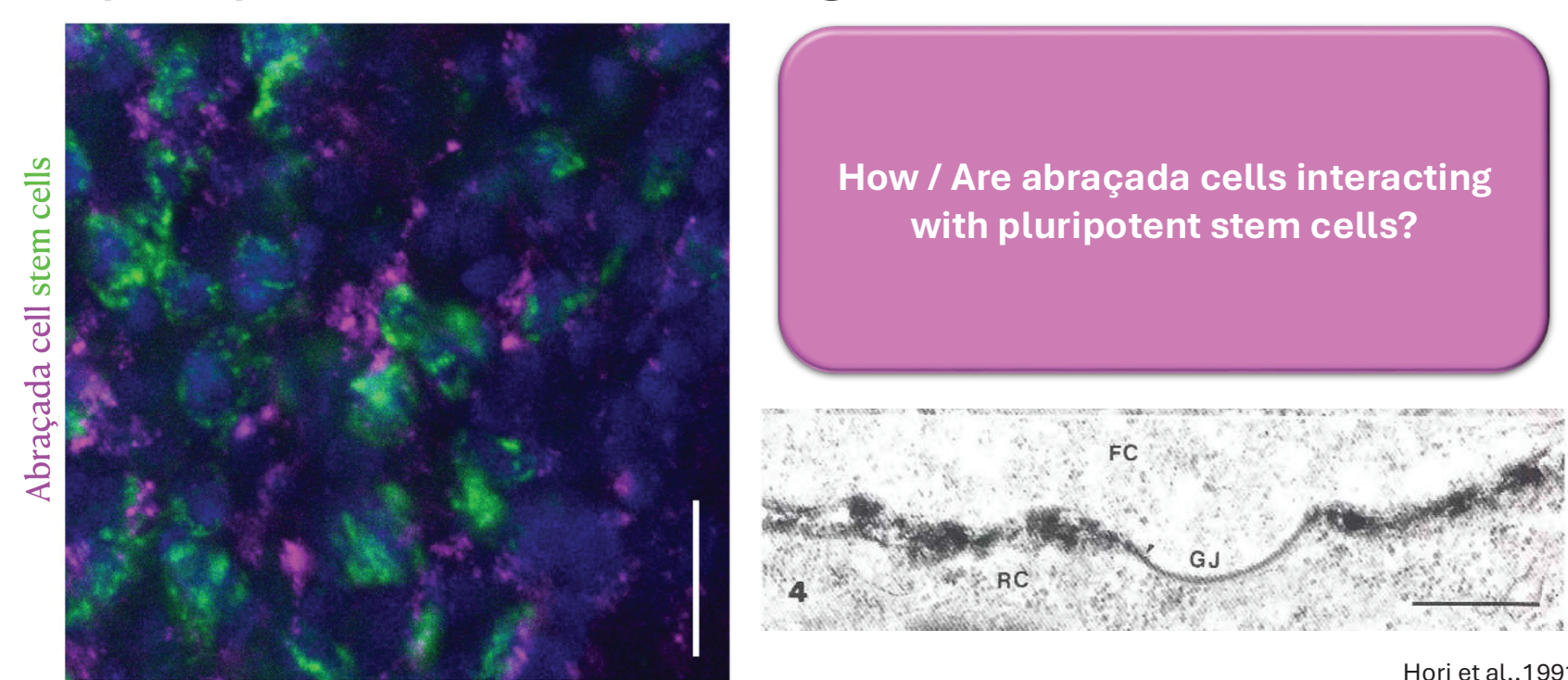


Planarians possess pluripotent stem cells that give them whole body regeneration

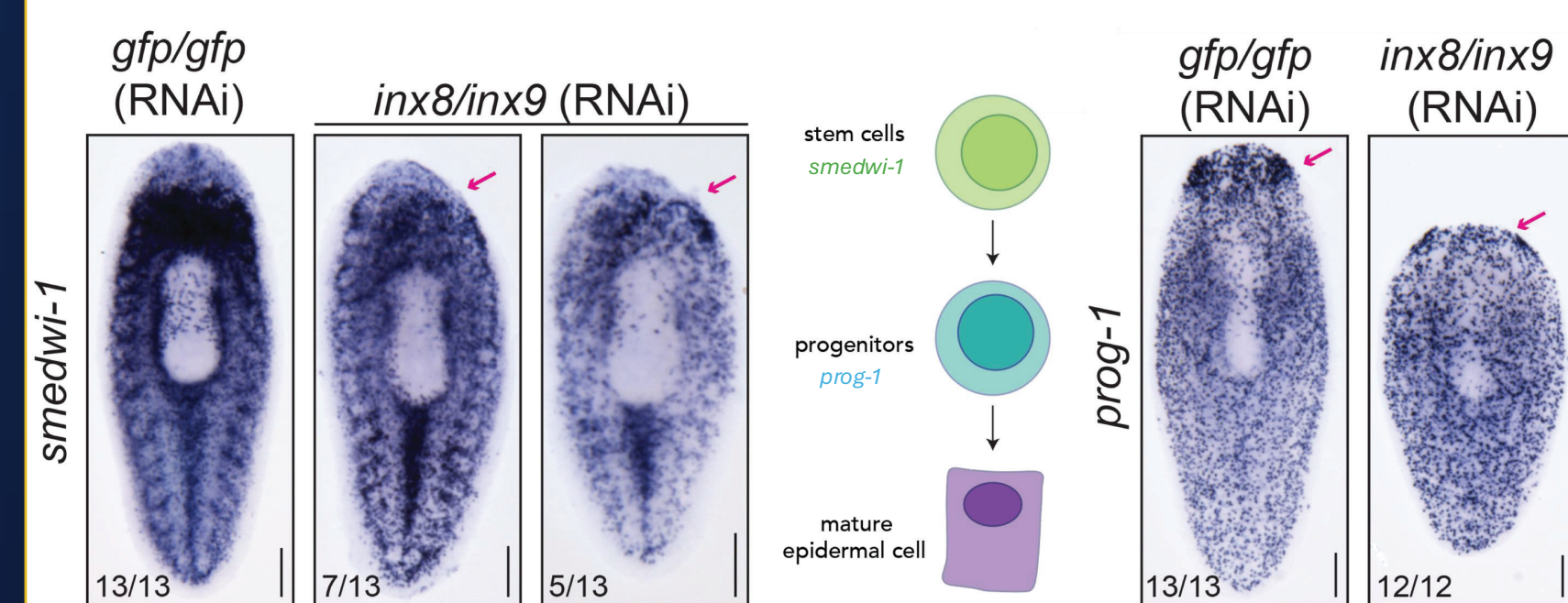


Ivankovic et al., 2019

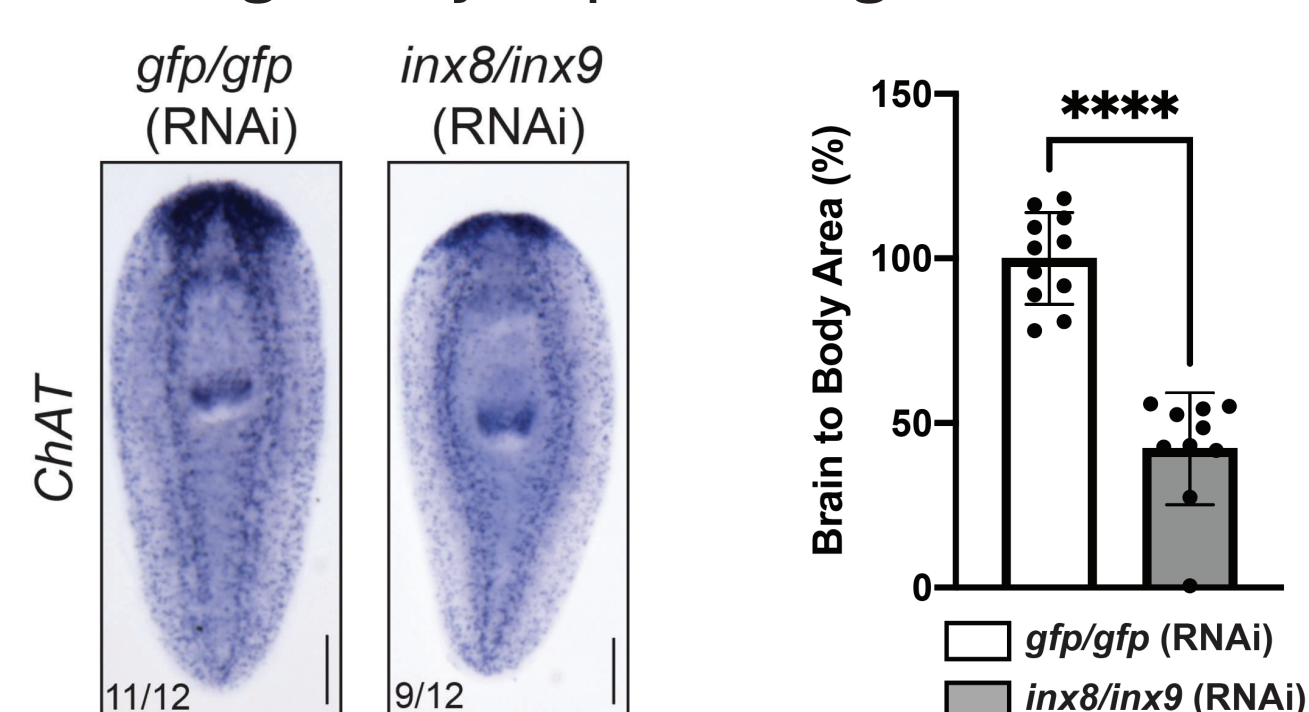
Identified abraçada cells as the most frequent pluripotent stem cell neighbor



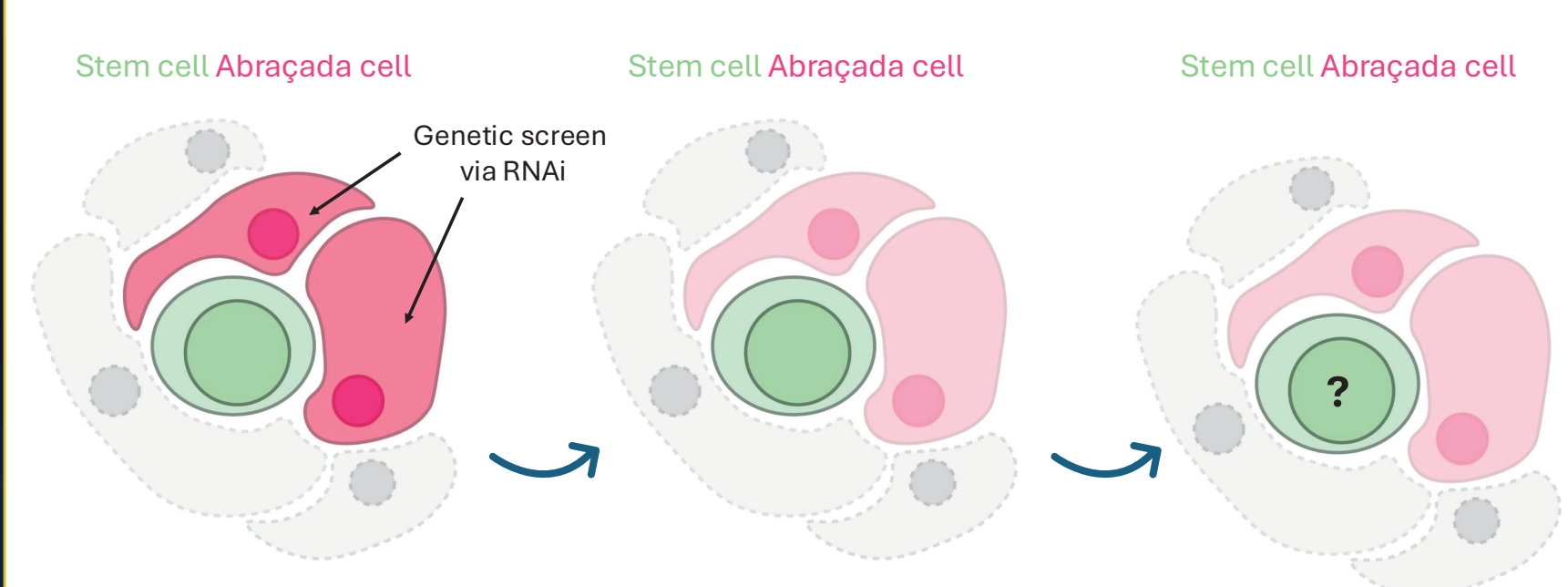
Altering gap junction proteins in abraçada cells negatively impacts the stem cell population



Altering gap junction proteins in abraçada cells negatively impacts regeneration



Working to find genes needed for abraçada cell survival



Scholar Awards Celebration
November 12, 2025



Igniting
Innovation
in Georgia