



**Martine Behra, Ph.D.**  
**Assistant Professor of Anatomy and Neurobiology**  
**Seed Monies Recipient, RCMi Program**

Martine L. Behra is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Anatomy and Neurobiology, School of Medicine, University of Puerto Rico Medical Sciences Campus.

Dr. Behra earned her Ph.D. in Molecular and Cellular Biology from the University Louis Pasteur in Strasbourg, France. She completed her graduate work at *the Institut de Génétique et de Biologie Moléculaire et Cellulaire*, IGBMC.

Dr. Behra's research focuses on regeneration of sensory neuroepithelia. In the inner ear, the hair cells are mechanoreceptors which respond to sound waves (in the cochlea) and to head movements (in the vestibule). Capitalizing on the genetic power of zebrafish, her short-term objectives are to elucidate the molecular events underlying the multi-step process of regeneration of hair cells in the lateral line in zebrafish larvae. As an entry point, she is using a zebrafish mutant line (*phoenix*), which she has previously characterized. The mutated gene is novel and homozygote larvae have a clear reduction in regenerated hair cells in the lateral line. Her laboratory is currently pursuing several approaches to elucidate the function of this new gene, including work in fish and human cell lines.

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Research Areas: Genetics of regeneration in the context of whole organisms, using the zebrafish as an animal model

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