



# 2026 Michigan Branch Meeting

## American Society for Microbiology

March 28<sup>th</sup>, 2026

1 Riverfront Plaza, Flint, MI 48502

Time	Event
8:00-9:00 AM	Registration and Continental Breakfast
9:00-9:10 AM	Introductions
9:10-9:25 AM	<b>Speaker:</b> Nico Fernandez, PhD (University of Michigan-Dearborn) <b>Title:</b> “Two Distinct Regulatory Systems Control Pulcherrimin Biosynthesis in <i>Bacillus subtilis</i> ”
9:25-9:40 AM	<b>Speaker:</b> Brendyn St. Louis (Wayne State University) <b>Title:</b> “Cleavage of the Hippo kinases by the non-canonical inflammasome activates apoptosis in macrophages upon pathogenic <i>Legionella</i> infection”
9:40-9:55 AM	<b>Speaker:</b> Emily Capehart (Michigan State University) <b>Title:</b> “Characterizing the Antigenic Variation System of the Tick-Borne Relapsing Fever Agent <i>Borrelia hispanica</i> ”
9:55-10:10 AM	<b>Speaker:</b> Paul Breen, PhD (University of Detroit Mercy) <b>Title:</b> “Pla-mediated Cleavage of the C-terminus of Factor H on <i>Y. pestis</i> Prevents Inactivation of C3b to iC3b”
10:10-10:25 AM	<b>Speaker:</b> Rylan Hissong (University of Michigan-Ann Arbor) <b>Title:</b> “IL-10 is Crucial for Protection of CNS from Inflammatory Damage during Cryptococcal Meningoencephalitis”
10:30-12:00 PM	Poster session
12:00-1:00 PM	Lunch
1:00-1:15 PM	<b>Speaker:</b> Yifan Wang (University of Michigan-Medical School) <b>Title:</b> “Host-specific determinants of <i>Toxoplasma gondii</i> fitness revealed by genome-wide CRISPR screens”
1:15-1:30 PM	<b>Speaker:</b> Claire Albright (University of Michigan-Ann Arbor) <b>Title:</b> “Aerotolerant Capacity of the Lung Commensal <i>Prevotella melaninogenica</i> ”
1:30-1:45 PM	<b>Speaker:</b> Maddy Quinlan (Michigan State University) <b>Title:</b> “Dissecting an Endophytic <i>Caulobacter-Bradyrhizobium</i> Partnership that Enhances Soybean Nodulation and Drought Resilience”
1:45-2:00 PM	<b>Speaker:</b> Joseph M. Krampen (University of Michigan-Ann Arbor) <b>Title:</b> “Rising Ocean Temperatures Reduce the Hawaiian Bobtail Squid’s Egg Defense Mediated by Symbiont Metabolites”
2:00-3:00 PM	Networking
3:00-4:00 PM	<b>Keynote speaker:</b> Anne W. Thompson, PhD (Portland State University) <b>Title:</b> “The invisible forest: Life and death of the Earth’s most numerous photosynthetic cells”
4:00-4:30 PM	Presentation Awards and Closing Remarks
4:30-5:00 PM	Board meeting