Role of Isoprenoid Biosynthesis in Listeria-based Tuberculosis Vaccine Efficacy

BY

JAMES FRENCHER

THESIS

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Defense Committee:
Zheng W. Chen, Chair and Advisor
Nancy Freitag
Alan McLachlan
Deepak Shukla
Richard Novak, Medicine
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Contribution of Authors


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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS
M. tb.  Mycobacterium tuberculosis

CFU  Colony Forming Units

HIV  Human Immunodeficiency Virus

TNF  Tumor Necrosis Factor

HAART  Highly Active Antiretroviral Therapy

TB  Tuberculosis

MDR  Multi-Drug Resistant

BCG  Mycobacterium bovis-Bacillus Calmette Guerin

WHO  World Health Organization

CD  Cluster of Differentiation

MHC  Major Histocompatibility Complex

Th1  T-helper 1

IFNγ  Interferon-γ

IL-2  Interleukin-2

PPD  Purified-Protein Derivative

ESAT-6  Early Secreted Antigen of Tuberculosis 6

Ag85A  Antigen 85A

Ag85B  Antigen 85B

Ag85C  Antigen 85C

MEP  2-C-methyl-D-erythritol 4-phosphate

DOXP  1-deoxy-D-xylulose 5-phosphate

TCR  T cell receptor

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS (Continued)
HMBPP  (E)-4-Hydroxy-3-methyl-but-2-enyl pyrophosphate
IPP    Isopentenyl pyrophosphate
Lm     Listeria monocytogenes
rLm    recombinant Listeria monocytogenes
LLO    Listeriolysin O
DNA    Deoxyribonucleic Acid
RNA    Ribonucleic Acid
EDTA   Ethylenediaminetetraacetic acid
PBMC   Peripheral Blood Mononuclear Cells
PBS    Phosphate Buffered Saline
BHI    Brain Heart Infusion
RBC    Red Blood Cell
OD     Optical Density
RPMI   Roswell Park Memorial Institute media
R10    Roswell Park Memorial Institute media containing 10% Fetal Bovine Serum
FITC   Fluorescein isothiocyanate
PE     phycoerythrin
Cy7    Cyanine 7
APC    Allophycocyanin
PB     Pacific Blue
AF700  Alexafluor700
IACUC  Institution of Animal Care and Use Committee

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS (Continued)

xviii
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>IBC</td>
<td>Institutional Biosafety Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>SIV</td>
<td>Simian Immunodeficiency Virus</td>
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<tr>
<td>mg</td>
<td>milligram</td>
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<tr>
<td>kg</td>
<td>kilogram</td>
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<tr>
<td>HCl</td>
<td>Hydrochloric acid</td>
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<tr>
<td>CBC</td>
<td>Complete Blood Count</td>
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<td>BAL</td>
<td>Bronchoalveolar Lavage</td>
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<tr>
<td>μg</td>
<td>microgram</td>
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<td>ml</td>
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<tr>
<td>CO₂</td>
<td>Carbon Dioxide</td>
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<tr>
<td>MOI</td>
<td>Multiplicity of Infection</td>
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<tr>
<td>rh-IL-2</td>
<td>Recombinant Human IL-2</td>
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<td>intravenous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IM</td>
<td>intramuscular</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LN</td>
<td>Lymph node</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tdap</td>
<td>Tetanus-Diphtheria and acellular Pertussis Vaccine</td>
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**SUMMARY**
Tuberculosis is among the leading infectious causes of death worldwide. Antibiotics used to treat the causative agent, *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*, are becoming less effective as the bacterium develops resistance mutations to the 4-drug first-line treatment regimen. The only vaccine used for this pathogen worldwide shows variable levels of protection and this immunity progressively declines with age, showing no demonstrable efficacy in adults. Our studies have focused on the development of alternative vaccine strategies to induce protective immunity against *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* strains. The studies within the Chen lab focus on the use of attenuated strains of the gastrointestinal pathogen *Listeria monocytogenes* to deliver immunogenic proteins to the cytoplasm of antigen presenting cells, allowing for the development of strong Helper and Killer T cell responses. The current studies focus on the examination of the T cell responses generated by respiratory administration of this *Listeria*-based Tuberculosis Vaccine, and the potential protective effect it generates against primary progressive Tuberculosis infection. In the studies describe here, we examine the protective effect of respiratory administration of a *Listeria*-based Tuberculosis vaccine, and demonstrate that 1 intratracheal dose provides significant improvement of bacterial burden and pulmonary pathology following respiratory *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* challenge, while 3 doses of the same vaccine provide minimal protection against Tuberculosis-mediated pathology. Examination of the T cell responses generated by the vaccine demonstrated that CD4 and CD8 T cells specific for select *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* proteins accumulate in both the blood and airways following vaccination. In addition, a subset of T cells specific for isoprenoid synthesis pathway intermediates accumulate in massive numbers in the blood and airways after a single administration of the vaccine, but the number and activity of these cells declines following...
repeated administration of the vaccine. In addition, these isoprenoid-sensitive T cells
demonstrate markers of exhaustion and apoptosis following repeated stimulation with the
vaccine, suggesting that repeated high dose vaccination could be inducing activation-induced T
cell exhaustion and cell death. Using molecular biology techniques, we decrease the ability of
our vaccine to generate isoprenoid intermediates that are potent stimulators of these cells. The
Listeria-based vaccine that only produces low potency isoprenoids shows a reduced ability to
stimulate isoprenoid-sensitive T cells, decreased expression of exhaustion markers followed
repeated respiratory administration, and a restored ability to protect against pulmonary
Tuberculosis. Collectively, these data support the hypothesis that Listeria-based vaccines given
in repeated high doses induce exhaustion and cell death of isoprenoid-sensitive T cells. As these
T cells have been demonstrated to be important components of the early response to
Tuberculosis and other isoprenoid-producing bacterial infections, this may provide a
mechanism through which repeated bacterial infection or repeated BCG infection result
in poorer outcomes of Tuberculosis infection.
CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Tuberculosis

1.1.1. Tuberculosis Epidemiology and Pathogenesis

Tuberculosis is the leading infectious cause of death worldwide, killing an estimated 1.4 million people in 2011\(^1\). Exposure to the causative agent, *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* most commonly occurs through inhalation of aerosolized bacilli\(^2\). Although the minimum dose of *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* bacilli required to cause infection is not known, research in mice and macaques suggest that inhalation of as few as 10 live bacilli may be sufficient to induce pulmonary tuberculosis\(^3\). Indeed, previous studies examining rhesus macaques inoculated intrabronchially with 10 colony forming units (CFU) of a clinical isolate of *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* resulted in significant progressive pulmonary disease in these animals\(^4\). Clinically patients with pulmonary tuberculosis will develop recurrent fevers, night sweats, weight loss and a productive cough that will contain acid-fast staining bacilli. Dissemination of the bacillus following pulmonary infection can occur, resulting in colonization of any organ\(^2\).

The clinical outcome following exposure to *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* can vary considerably depending on the strain of *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* and host factors\(^3,5-7\). It is currently believed that a low percentage of people initially exposed present with progressive primary tuberculosis. It is generally accepted that the vast majority of individuals exposed to
Mycobacterium tuberculosis bacilli develop a clinically latent infection. These patients are infected, develop strong adaptive immune responses to protein antigens that are capable of suppressing replication of the bacillus and show no clinical signs of infection, but are incapable of completely clearing the organism. Because of the strong antigen-specific responses generated, clinically asymptomatic tuberculosis carriers are commonly screened for using the tuberculin-skin test, or the more recently approved QuantiFERON blood test. HIV infection, administration of corticosteroids, chemotherapy, or Tumor Necrosis Factor (TNF) inhibitors causes immune suppression and reactivation of Mycobacterium tuberculosis resulting in a progressive pulmonary disease, dissemination, and death without treatment. The increasing prevalence of HIV in Mycobacterium tuberculosis endemic regions, increased use of corticosteroids and TNF inhibitors in the treatment of allergy and autoimmunity, and increased resistance of Mycobacterium tuberculosis to drugs in southeast Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa suggests that new drugs and vaccines will be necessary for the treatment and possible eradication of Mycobacterium tuberculosis.

1.1.1. Current Anti-tubercular Agents

Due to the slow growth patterns of Mycobacterium tuberculosis, treatment for Tuberculosis infection requires an intensive administration of four drug cocktail for at least 8 weeks, followed by continuation of 2 drugs for up to 6 months. If sputum cultures remain positive at the 8 week period, drug treatment may have to continue for up to 9 months. The regimen for most patients with drug-resistant Tuberculosis lasts 20 months. Many of the patients in Sub-Saharan Africa and Southeast Asia infected with Mycobacterium tuberculosis are concurrently
infected with HIV and require the highly active anti-retroviral therapeutic (HAART) drug cocktail to maintain immunocompetence\textsuperscript{15}.

Due to the long length of treatment, side-effects and toxicities of the multi-drug cocktails, and drug/drug interactions (especially in cases of HIV-TB co-infection), adherence to drug treatment remains a problem in managing the disease\textsuperscript{16}. Up to half of all patients with TB do not complete treatment\textsuperscript{17}. This incomplete treatment of Tuberculosis infection can result in the production of multi-drug resistant organisms. Indeed, isolates of multi-drug resistant Tuberculosis (MDR-TB; defined as demonstrating resistance to at least 2 of the 4 drugs primarily used to treat M.tb.) has been isolated from patients previously diagnosed with drug-sensitive Tuberculosis who discontinued therapy, and MDR-TB isolates are more commonly associated with patients containing physician reports of poor adherence to treatment in their chart\textsuperscript{18}. The number of MDR-TB cases continues to rise, reaching 60,000 notified cases worldwide in 2011\textsuperscript{2}. Estimates suggest that more than 5 times that amount, or over 300,000 cases worldwide per year, are multi-drug resistant\textsuperscript{19}. Thus, there is an increasing need for new drug treatments and or immunotherapeutic regimens that will decrease the length of treatment time for patients, and have fewer drug interactions with currently prescribed medications.

The best hope for decreasing the burden of tuberculosis would be the creation of an effective vaccine. The current vaccine for \textit{Mycobacterium tuberculosis} is an attenuated form of a related slow-growing mycobacterial species, \textit{Mycobacterium bovis}-Calmette Guerin (BCG). Although it is not used in the United States, the BCG vaccine is administered in the majority of countries and has been used to vaccinate against Tuberculosis since 1921\textsuperscript{20}. The BCG vaccine has shown
promising efficacy in preventing severe disseminated tuberculosis in children, but has not proven to be effective in decreasing the incidence or complication of tuberculosis in adults. In the United States, BCG has been an effective treatment for a number of cancers and multiple sclerosis\textsuperscript{21,22}. Like \textit{Mycobacterium tuberculosis}, \textit{Mycobacterium bovis} is a persistent pathogen, and incomplete clearance of BCG and reactivation is possible under certain circumstances. Indeed, bladder cancer patients who are immunocompromised are at increased risk for BCG dissemination and granulomatous pathology following intravesicular BCG administration for bladder cancer treatment\textsuperscript{23}. Similarly, the WHO no longer advocates the administration of the BCG vaccine to infants with HIV even in high Tuberculosis endemic areas due to the high risk of disseminated BCG infection in these children\textsuperscript{24}. As a result, one of the most widely available tools to fight the spread of tuberculosis is becoming less widely used due to the HIV epidemic in these tuberculosis endemic regions. A vaccine with a decreased risk of reactivation would assist in decreasing overall tuberculosis burden in these areas.

1.1 \textbf{Immune correlates of protection against} \textit{Mycobacterium tuberculosis}

1.2.1. CD4 T cells

Many studies have established the key role CD4 T cells play in host protection against \textit{Mycobacterium tuberculosis}\textsuperscript{25}. Tuberculosis infection of mice deficient for CD4 or MHC class II molecules that present antigens to CD4 T cells result in increased bacterial burdens and increased susceptibility to intravenous tuberculosis infection, establishing that these cells contribute to keeping bacterial burden following \textit{Mycobacterium tuberculosis} exposure low\textsuperscript{26}. Decreases in CD4 T cell number due to HIV infection result in reactivation of \textit{Mycobacterium}
*tuberculosis*[^12]. Studies in macaques using CD4 depleting antibodies have demonstrated that CD4 T cells play an important role in preventing severe pulmonary pathology and dissemination throughout the body[^27]. CD4 T cells mediate protective effects through the production of the Th1 cytokines IFNγ, TNFα, and IL-2[^28]. Pharmaceutical agents that inhibit TNFα have shown to cause reactivation of *M. tb*. in macaques and humans[^29,30]. Adoptive transfer of T cells in mouse models of Tuberculosis have shown that IFNγ production specifically from CD4 T cells are necessary for minimizing bacterial burdens following aerosolized exposure to *M. tb*[^31]. While initial studies examining immune responses following *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* infection demonstrated a role of each of these Th1 cytokines individually, the development of flow cytometer capable of using multiple lasers and detecting cells stained with many antibodies has allowed for the examination of T cell production of multiple cytokines following stimulation[^32,33]. More recent studies examining these multifunctional or polyfunctional CD4 T cells have shown strong correlations between the percentage or number of CD4 T cells producing 2 or 3 Th1 cytokines and low bacterial burdens[^34]. Indeed, *in vitro* studies have shown a synergistic effect of IFNγ used in combination with TNFα to inhibit the intracellular growth of *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*.

1.2.1. CD8 T cells

In addition to CD4 T cell-mediated protection against *M. tb.*, antigen-specific CD8 T cells have also shown to be responsible for mediating some protection against Tuberculosis[^35,36]. CD8 T cells accumulate in the granulomas of infected individuals[^57]. Genetic deletion of CD8 or MHC class I molecules in mice or mice have established that T cell recognition of antigens through
MHC class I presentation is necessary for control of *M. tb.* infection\(^{38}\). CD8 depleting antibodies have been used in macaques vaccinated with BCG to demonstrate that BCG vaccine-mediated protection against *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* involves CD8 T cell responses to invading bacilli\(^{39}\). CD8 T cells are commonly characterized by their strong cytolytic activity, mediated through the production of perforin, granzyme A, and granulysin\(^{40-42}\). Cytolytic granulysin has been shown to directly cause lysis of extracellular tubercle bacilli, but is incapable of entering intact cells. Perforin punches holes in the cell membrane of target cells, allowing for the entry of cytolytic granulysin to enter cells and kill intracellular *M. tb.* In addition to their cytolytic activity, CD8 T cells from PPD+ individuals secrete large amounts of IFN\(\gamma\) and TNF\(\alpha\) in response to mycobacterium re-exposure, suggesting that they could contribute to activation of macrophages and inhibition of intracellular growth of *M. tb.* Recent studies have demonstrated that IFN\(\gamma\)-producing CD4 T cells augment *M. tb.*-specific CD8 T cell degranulation and cytokine function following antigen re-exposure\(^{31}\). Recombinant forms of the BCG vaccine that express the listeria hemolysin Listeriolysin O or the *Clostridium perfringens* toxin perfringolysin O demonstrated increased immunogenicity and protection against *M. tb.* challenge\(^{43,44}\). These new vaccines allow BCG to escape the endosome and produce antigens in the cytoplasm, allowing for increased cytoplasmic antigen processing and presentation to CD8 T cells\(^{45}\). Vaccination strategies combining activation of CD4 and CD8 T cells may provide optimal synergy to minimize spread of *M. tb.*
1.2.3. Early Secreted Antigen of Tuberculosis 6 (ESAT-6)

Because a large percentage of the world population has been vaccinated with the BCG vaccine, a number of investigators have sought approaches to administer a booster vaccine to augment the vaccine-induced M.tb.-specific responses generated by the BCG vaccine in order to generate a vaccine regimen that would induce protection against Tuberculosis in children and adults\textsuperscript{46,47}. Many of the early studies examined cultured filtrates of \textit{Mycobacterium tuberculosis} lysates in order to find antigens that are highly immunogenic\textsuperscript{48}. Among the proteins discovered, early secreted antigen of tuberculosis 6 (ESAT-6) has been shown to induce high levels of IFN\gamma secretion from T cells derived from \textit{M.tb}.-infected mice\textsuperscript{48}. ESAT-6 is produced by clinical isolates of \textit{M.tb.} as well as virulent strains of \textit{Mycobacterium bovis}, but is not secreted by a number of strains of the BCG vaccine due to a genomic deletion that eliminates the gene encoding ESAT-6\textsuperscript{49}. The attenuated laboratory strain of \textit{Mycobacterium tuberculosis}, H37Ra, is also deficient in ESAT-6 secretion because of a defect in its regulator protein, \textit{phoP}\textsuperscript{50,51}. Transfection of wildtype \textit{phoP} in to the H37Ra strain of \textit{Mycobacterium tuberculosis} results in a recovery of virulence and secretion of ESAT-6, suggesting that ESAT-6 may contribute to virulence\textsuperscript{50}. Indeed, \textit{in vitro} studies in amoeba have demonstrated that ESAT-6 mediates lysis and apoptosis of lung epithelial cells and macrophages and permits cell-to-cell spread of \textit{M.tb.} without lysing infected cells through eliciting formation of cellular ejectosomes\textsuperscript{52}.

Because ESAT-6 elicits strong T cell responses in mice and is not present in the BCG vaccine, it has been viewed as a strong candidate for boosting the BCG-vaccine induced response. Recombinant forms of the BCG vaccine have been created that induce ESAT-6 production and
secretion by the vaccine vector. Additionally, subunit vaccines based on ESAT-6 have conferred protection against *M.tb.* challenge in mice. These data suggest that stimulation of ESAT-6-specific T cells could play a strong role in inducing anti-tuberculosis immunity.

1.2.4. Antigen 85B (Ag85B)

Proteins actively secreted by *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* have been examined as potential candidates of immunogens that could stimulate CD4 and CD8 T cells to respond to cells infected by this intracellular organism. Among the secreted proteins produced by *M.tb.* the proteins of the Antigen 85 complex are the most common proteins in culture supernatants of *M.tb.* The antigen 85 complex proteins are encoded by 3 genes and produce 3 products, Ag85A, Ag85B, and Ag85C. These proteins have been shown to be highly immunogenic in natural *M.tb.* infection as well as many experimental models. Ag85B immunization in mice has been shown to induce partial protection against intravenous *M.tb.* challenge and significant protection in a guinea pig model of aerosolized *M.tb.* exposure. Humans and animals produce strong T cell responses following exposure to Ag85B. Studies using recombinant forms of BCG that express and secrete the *M.tb.* gene for Ag85B has shown superior protection compared to the parental BCG strain, indicating that Ag85B is capable of augmenting immune responses induced by the BCG vaccine. Because the Ag85B encoded by BCG is highly homologous to the Ag85B expressed by *M.tb.,* differing in only 2 amino acids, it is hypothesized that the increased protection seen in recombinant BCG expressing *M.tb.* Ag85B is due to the heightened expression of Ag85B in the recombinant BCG strain. Collectively, these studies suggest that delivery and antigen presentation of Ag85B to the host would strengthen immune protection against *M.tb.*
1.2.5. γδ T cells

In addition to CD4 and CD8 T cells, γδ T cells have increasingly been considered a major player in playing a role in the early phase of protection against *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*. γδ T cells are considered an innate lymphocyte, capable of rapid activation and cytokine production following exposure to the antigens they recognize. γδ T cells increase in large number following *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* infection and have been identified in the granulomas of infected individuals through immunohistochemistry. Figure 1 lists many of the described antimycobacterial activities that γδ T cells possess. Following activation, the majority of γδ T cells secrete Th1-related cytokines such as IFNγ and TNFα. Some subsets of γδ T cells have been shown to produce perforin, granzymes, and granulysin similar to CD8 T cells, and kill or inhibit the intracellular growth of *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*. Although these cells are similar to innate immune cells in their ability to recognize and respond to patterns, some γδ T cells are capable of developing a memory response, responding to antigen faster and at a higher magnitude following the second response than the first. Vaccines that induce and maintain strong CD4, CD8 and γδ T cell responses may be strong candidates against *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* challenge.
Figure 1. Anti-microbial Functions of Vγ2Vδ T cells

Summary of the functional activities described for Vγ2Vδ T cells that may contribute to elimination of *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* following *in vivo* infection. Vγ2Vδ T cell secretion of Th1 and Tfh cytokines cytolytic granule production has been described both *in vitro* and *in vivo*, while antigen presentation activity of Vγ2Vδ T cells has only been described through *in vitro* experimentation.
1.3. **Isoprenoid Biosynthesis and Host Response**

1.3.1. **Isoprenoid Biosynthesis**

Isoprenoid biosynthesis is essential for life in all known archaea, eukarya, and bacteria. There are 2 main pathways that can be used to generate isoprenoids. Many Bacteria and algae, including *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*, use the 2-C-methyl-D-erythritol 4-phosphate/1-deoxy-D-xylulose 5-phosphate (MEP/DOXP) pathway for isoprenoid production, while most eukaryotes use the mevalonate pathway of isoprenoid biosynthesis. Isoprenoids make up the precursors of molecules necessary for protein prenylation, cell membrane maintenance, steroid hormone synthesis, protein anchoring, and N-glycosylation.

1.3.2. **Vγ2Vδ2 T cell Response to Isoprenoids**

Studies using human and non-human primate white blood cells have shown that a subset of lymphocytes, Vγ2Vδ2 T cells are capable of responding to isoprenoids. These cells are exclusively found in human and non-human primates and comprise 65-90% of total circulating human γδ T cells. Using an oligoclonal T cell receptor (TCR) repertoire derived from the γ2 and γ2 TCR loci, these cells detect MEP pathway intermediate (E)-4-Hydroxy-3-methyl-but-2-enyl pyrophosphate (HMBPP) or mevalonate pathway intermediate isopentenyl pyrophosphate (IPP) presented by some unknown antigen presenting molecule. While high concentrations of IPP are required to activate Vγ2Vδ2 T cells, HMBPP is a ∼1000-fold more potent than IPP for *in vitro* activation of Vγ2Vδ2 T cells through detection of MEP pathway HMBPP, Vγ2Vδ2 T cells are capable of responding to a variety of bacterial pathogens. Figure 3
Figure 2. **Diagram of activation of Vγ2Vδ2 T cells by phosphoantigens**

Natural Phosphoantigens HMBPP (H), derived from the MEP/DOXP pathway, or IPP (I), an intermediate common to the MEP/DOXP pathway and the mevalonate pathway, are both sufficient for activation of naïve Vγ2Vδ2 T cells *in vitro*. Administration of low doses of purified H or high doses of purified I result in activation and proliferation of Vγ2Vδ2 T cells. Vγ2Vδ2 T cell activation occurs through TCR-mediated recognition of the phosphoantigen in the context of an unknown antigen presenting molecule. TCR of the Vγ2Vδ2 T cell is shown in blue, and unknown antigen presenting molecule on the antigen presenting cell is shown in red.
Figure 3. **Potency of Isoprenoid Biosynthesis pathways in Vγ2Vδ2 T cell induction**

A) Diagram of mevalonate and MEP pathways of isoprenoid biosynthesis. Mevalonate pathway of isoprenoid biosynthesis predominantly utilized by eukaryotes to generate IPP, while the MEP pathway of isoprenoid biosynthesis is used by a number of Bacteria species and protozoans to generate isoprenoids. B) Diagram of potency of natural and synthetic isoprenoids in their ability to stimulate activation of Vγ2Vδ2 T cells *in vivo*.
lists the relative potency of natural and synthetic antigens that have been used in vitro to
stimulate Vγ2Vδ2 T cells, demonstrating that the MEP pathway intermediate HMBPP is one of
the most potent stimulators of phosphoantigen-responsive T cells. In addition to bacteria-
mediated phosphoantigen stimulation, host cell infection with viruses and oncogenic
transformation appears to activate Vγ2Vδ2 T cells through the upregulation of mevalonate
pathway intermediates. Indeed, inhibition of the mevalonate pathway upstream of IPP
production through HMG-CoA Reductase inhibitors results in decreased response of Vγ2Vδ2 T
cells to tumors or influenza virus infected cells.

In vitro activated Vγ2Vδ2 T cells can produce Th1 cytokines IFNγ and TNFα, lyse infected cells or
tumors through release of cytolytic effectors and inhibit the intracellular growth of bacteria.
Some of these in vitro findings have been replicated in vivo by administration of IL-2 plus
HMBPP or equivalents. Infections of humans and nonhuman primates with HMBPP-
producing bacteria and parasites have been shown to induce in vivo activation and expansion of
Vγ2Vδ2 T cells. Activated Vγ2Vδ2 T cells can traffic to and accumulate in the pulmonary
compartment and intestinal mucosal interface. Following immune clearance of pathogens,
some Vγ2Vδ2 T cells can express central and effector memory phenotypes similar to those seen
in CD8+ αβ T cells, suggesting an adaptive immune response of these phosphoantigen-specific
γδ T cells. Consistent with these memory phenotypes, robust, accelerated recall-like
expansion and rapid production of anti-microbial cytokines can be seen after in vivo re-
exposure to HMBPP-producing pathogens such as Mtb, BCG or Listeria monocytogenes.
Virtually, rapid recall-like expansion of Vy2Vδ2 T cells after Mtb challenge of BCG-vaccinated macaques coincides with the vaccine-induced protection against severe form of tuberculosis.

1.4.  *Listeria monocytogenes*

1.4.1. *Listeria monocytogenes*-based immunogen delivery

*Listeria monocytogenes* is a bacterium that has been investigated as a possible vaccine-delivery vector for over 20 years. A food-borne pathogen most commonly associated with gastroenteritis in the immunocompetent, sepsis and abortion in pregnant women, and meningitis in infants and the immunocompromised, *Listeria monocytogenes* has developed efficient mechanisms to invade and infect phagocytes as well as many other cell types. Following endocytosis by the host cell, *Listeria monocytogenes* can use phospholipases and its secreted hemolysin, Listeriolysin O (LLO) to escape the phagosome and survive in the cytoplasm. While in the cytoplasm, *Listeria* can travel throughout the cell and even invade neighboring cells using *actA*-mediated actin polymerization.

Extensive study has been performed on the mechanisms of virulence of *Listeria* using genetic manipulation of the organism. Deletion of the *actA* gene from laboratory strains of *Listeria monocytogenes* demonstrated that the pathogen is greatly attenuated in the absence of its ability to polymerize actin, suggesting this attenuated bacterial organism could be used as a means to deliver foreign proteins or DNA to the cytoplasm of cells. Indeed, various investigators have used forms of *Listeria* deficient for actin polymerization, alanine metabolism,
or *Listeria* capable of rapid autolysis as a delivery system for foreign proteins, DNA or RNA in various mouse models\textsuperscript{74-76}.

Because there are many tools for the modification of *Listeria monocytogenes*, there has been increased interest in its use for vaccine development\textsuperscript{45,66,77}. Attenuated forms of *Listeria monocytogenes* that produces immunogens involved in cancer are being tested in clinical trials for a variety of cancers, including prostate, breast, cervical cancer, mesothelioma and glioblastoma\textsuperscript{78-82}. Many of these vaccines have been administered through intravenous routes to cancer patients and were safely tolerated in patients\textsuperscript{79}. As *Listeria* is a non-persistent pathogen that can efficiently be cleared through antibiotic treatment, individuals who demonstrate poor vaccine clearance can be treated with antibiotics in order to minimize the possibility of vaccine-induced complications. In addition, *Listeria*-based vaccines are in development for parasite infections such as malaria and a variety of infectious diseases\textsuperscript{78}.

*Listeria*-based vaccine vectors allow for immunogen delivery to the cytoplasm of host cells, providing for robust antigen presentation to CD8 T cells\textsuperscript{83,84}. Genetic modifications to *Listeria* transcription factor *prfA* that allow constitutive activation of the transcription factor allow for dramatically increased production of proteins that are under the regulation of this transcription factor\textsuperscript{85}. Immunogens placed under the Listeriolysin O promoter demonstrate significantly increased production of the immunogen and stronger immune responses generated\textsuperscript{76,85}. A *Listeria*-based vaccine capable of autolysis expressing *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* antigens demonstrated similar vaccine efficacy as the BCG vaccine in a mouse model of Tuberculosis infection\textsuperscript{75}. Because *Listeria*-based vaccines will stimulate both CD4 and CD8 T cell responses
and are readily controllable with antibiotic treatment, this vaccine delivery system may serve as a safer alternative to BCG vaccination in immunocompromised patients.

1.4.2. Isoprenoid Synthesis in Listeria monocytogenes

While most microbes contain either the MEP/DOXP or mevalonate pathway of isoprenoid synthesis, Listeria monocytogenes is unique in that it contains functional enzymes for both the MEP and mevalonate pathways\(^{86}\). Because of the dual pathways of isoprenoid synthesis in Listeria, bacilli genetically modified to lack MEP pathway genes remain viable, allowing for the examination of host responses to Listeria lacking the ability to produce the potent Vγ2Vδ2 T cell intermediate, HMBPP\(^{87}\). Because Vγ2Vδ2 T cells have been shown to provide an early source of Th1 cytokines, produce cytolytic enzymes and kill infected cells, and present antigens to CD4 and CD8 T cells, it is important to determine if the isoprenoids synthesized by Listeria contribute to the vaccine-induced adaptive immune responses and overall vaccine-induced protection seen in studies using Listeria-based vaccines\(^{62}\). In addition, it is currently unknown whether Listeria monocytogenes is capable of Vγ2Vδ2 T cell stimulation in the absence of HMBPP production. Because Listeria monocytogenes can also produce IPP through the mevalonate pathway, it is possible that bacteria-produced IPP would be sufficient to activate Vγ2Vδ2 T cells in vivo and produce a memory T cell response (see Figure 4A). Also, because Listeria monocytogenes is an intracellular pathogen, it may induce host cell stress that induces an increased production of IPP similar to that seen in influenza infection (Figure 4B)\(^{88}\). Either of these mechanisms could induce Vγ2Vδ2 T cell activation in the absence of HMBPP production.
1.5. **Role of Vγ2Vδ2 T cells in *Listeria*-based Vaccine Induced Immune Responses**

Taken together, the data suggests that *Listeria monocytogenes* may serve as an efficient vaccination vector for protecting individuals against *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*. This protection may be mediated through the development of memory CD4, CD8, and γδ T cells. We intend to examine the role that isoprenoid recognizing Vγ2Vδ2 T cell activation and memory development may play in the development of *Listeria*-mediated vaccine responses and Tuberculosis protection through genetic modification of our *Listeria*-based vaccine vector.
Figure 4. Proposed mechanism of Listeria-mediated activation of Vγ2Vδ2 T cells in the absence of HMBPP production

A) *Listeria monocytogenes* ΔgcpE strains are incapable of HMBPP production but competent for IPP biosynthesis. High IPP production from the *Listeria* bacillus (shown in green) may provide sufficient levels of IPP to the antigen presenting cell to result in IPP presentation to Vγ2Vδ2 T cells for activation and expansion *in vitro*. B) Cellular infection of host macrophages by *Listeria monocytogenes* ΔgcpE strains may result in increased production host cell IPP generated through upregulation of the mevalonate pathway (shown in red). Upregulation of host cell IPP production occurs in oncogenic transformation of host cells and host cell infection by some viruses.
CHAPTER 2
MATERIALS AND METHODS


2.1. Bacterial Strains

The strains of bacteria and their sources are indicated in Table 1. All Listeria monocytogenes strains and samples derived from mice or macaques infected with Listeria monocytogenes were plated and cultured on BHI media except where indicated. Mycobacterium tuberculosis Erdman strain and all samples derived from M.tb. infected macaques were placed on Middlebrook 7H11 media plates.

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Recombinant L. monocytogenes 10403S ΔactA prfA*(G155S) pPL6-ESAT6
Created in this study

Recombinant L. monocytogenes 10403S ΔactA ΔgcpE prfA*(G155S) pPL6-ESAT6
Created in this study

Recombinant L. monocytogenes 10403S ΔactA ΔgcpE prfA*(G155S) pPL6-Ag85B
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Created in this study

Mycobacterium tuberculosis Erdman
Gift from Dr. William Jakobs (Albert Einstein College of Medicine)

| TABLE I |
| Bacteria Strains Used for Studies |

2.2. Targeted deletion of gcpE from Listeria monocytogenes strain 10403S ΔactA prfA*

Primers used for generation of Listeria monocytogenes ΔactA ΔgcpE prfA* (G155S) are listed in Table II. Amplification of 5’ and 3’ flanking regions of GcpE were amplified using the following primer pairs: GcpESOE1 and GcpE SOE2 to amplify the 5’ upstream region, and GcpE SOE3 and GcpE SOE4 to amplify the downstream coding region. Resulting products were mixed in a 1:1 ratio, and PCR was performed using primers GcpE SOE1 and GcpE SOE4 to generate 1 overlapping product lacking the GcpE coding region. This PCR product and the pKSV7 plasmid was digested with restriction enzymes PstI and XbaI and ligated together using NEB T4 Ligase. The resulting ligation product was transformed into competent E.coli DH5α and transformed E.coli cells were selected for using LB agar containing 100μg/mL ampicillin. Minipreps (Qiagen) of pKSV7 containing GcpEKO PCR product were prepared from positive colonies, and insert was confirmed using restriction digest using PstI and XbaI. Plasmid pKSV7-GcpEKO was electroporated into electrocompetent Listeria monocytogenes ΔactA prfA* (G155S) (provided by Dr. Nancy Freitag). Listeria containing the plasmid was selected for by plating on BHI plates
containing 5μg/mL chloramphenicol. Select colonies were grown in BHI media in the presence of chloramphenicol at 42°C for 24 hours, then repeatedly passaged at 30°C in the absence of chloramphenicol. The loss of gcpE coding region was confirmed by PCR analysis using primers GcpEKOF and GcpEKOR.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primer Name</th>
<th>Sequence</th>
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<tr>
<td>GcpE SOE1</td>
<td>5’-GATTTATTCTTTTTCTAGATTGGCC-3’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GcpE SOE2</td>
<td>5’-GCAGAAATTTCTTTTCAATGAAAGTAACGGCCGTGTTT-3’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GcpE SOE3</td>
<td>5’-TCTTTGAATGAAAGATATTCGCCCGATTAAGTACGTCCTT-3’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GcpE SOE4</td>
<td>5’-CTACTCCCTGCAGCAATAACAA-3’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GcpEKOF</td>
<td>CTCGAAGGTACCAATGCTTATCTCCTGGCCCTACTTG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GcpEKOR</td>
<td>TTTTCTGAAATTCAACGATAATCCCCCTTG</td>
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TABLE II

Primers Used in the generation of *Listeria monocytogenes strain 10403S ΔactA ΔgcpE prfA*  

2.3. **Complementation of gcpE in to Listeria monocytogenes strain 10403S ΔactA ΔgcpE prfA**

The Kanamycin resistance containing shuttle plasmid pIMK2 (received from Dr. Nancy Freitag, UIC, Chicago, IL) was used to generate the plasmid pIMK2-gcpE. The forward and reverse primers GcpECompF and GcpECompR were used to amplify the coding region of *gcpE*. PCR product and pIMK2 were digested with cloned into plasmid pIMK2 using NheI and Sall (NEB Biolabs). Digested plasmid and insert were combined and ligated using T4 ligase. Resulting ligation product was transformed into E.coli DH5α and transformed cells were selected for on LB agar plates containing 50μg/mL kanamycin. Select colonies were grown up in 4mL LB media
containing kanamycin and MiniPrep kits were used to isolate plasmid DNA. Isolated DNA was digested with NheI and SalI to confirm presence of insert, and 5 colonies were sequenced to confirm no mutations occurred during cloning process.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primer Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GcpECompF</td>
<td>TAGTCTACCATGGTGGTCTCTTTGAATGAAAG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GcpECompR</td>
<td>TTTTCTGTCGACAAACGATAATCCCCCTTG</td>
</tr>
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Table III

Primers used in generation of *Listeria monocytogenes strain 10403S*

\[ \Delta actA \Delta gcpE \text{ prfA}^*plMK2-gcpE \]

2.4. Peripheral Blood Mononuclear Cell (PBMC) Isolation

Freshly collected EDTA anti-coagulated blood was centrifuged and the buffy coat was removed and diluted in PBS. Diluted buffy coats were layered over Ficoll-Paque Plus (Amersham, Piscataway, NJ) and centrifuged to separate PBMCs from red blood cells (RBCs) and granulocytes. PBMCs were aspirated from top layer of Ficoll-Paque and contaminating RBCs were lysed using RBC lysis buffer (eBioscience). Purified PBMCs were washed twice and counted using a hemacytometer.
2.5. **Preparation of Low-molecular weight lysates of *Listeria monocytogenes* strains**

*Listeria monocytogenes* strains were grown in BHI media to an OD of 0.4, washed twice with PBS and resuspended in 1mL PBS and sonicated to lyse bacteria. Sonicated cells were filtered through a 10kDa Centrifugal Filter Units (EMD Millipore). The bottom fraction was collected and stored in -80°C until use.

2.6. **In-vitro Stimulation of Vγ2Vδ2 T cells in PBMC by *Listeria monocytogenes* supernatants**

100μL of PBMCs at a concentration of 5x10^6 PBMC/mL R10 media containing 500U/mL IL-2 were placed in round-bottom 96-well plates and stimulated with indicated dilutions of filtered low molecular weight lysates of indicated *Listeria monocytogenes* strains. Cells were stimulated for 7 days prior to analysis. On day 7, cells were stained with CD3-PE-Cy7 (SP34-2; BD Biosciences) and Vγ2-FITC (7A5; Thermo Scientific) for 15 minutes at RT. Cells washed with PBS and fixed in 2% formalin. Cells were analyzed using a CyAn Flow Cytometer. Lymphocytes were gated based on forward- and side-scatters, and pulse-width and at least 50,000 gated events were analyzed using Summit Data Acquisition and Analysis Software (DakoCytomation).

2.7. **Intravenous Challenge of BALB/c mice with *Listeria monocytogenes* strains**

2x10^4 CFU of indicated *Listeria monocytogenes* strains were injected into the tail vein of 8 week old BALB/c mice. 3 days following infection, mice were euthanized, liver and spleen were weighed, harvested, homogenized, and serial dilutions of homogenate were placed on BHI plates to determine bacterial burden.
2.8. **Rhesus Macaques for in vivo Infection with* Listeria monocytogenes**

Twelve Chinese-origin rhesus macaques, free of simian retrovirus, simian T-lymphotrophic virus type 1, and SIV infection, were used in this study. All animals were maintained and used in accordance with guidelines of the IACUC and IBC of the University of Illinois at Chicago. Animals were anesthetized with 10mg/kg ketamine HCl (Fort Dodge Animal Health) for all blood sampling, infections and treatments. Blood for white blood cell isolation was collected in EDTA tubes and complete blood counts (CBCs) were performed on all harvested blood samples. Day 0 blood was drawn immediately before infection.

2.9. **Intratracheal challenge and rechallenge of Rhesus macaques with recombinant* Listeria monocytogenes* strains**

$10^8$ CFU of *Listeria monocytogenes ΔactA prfA* expressing ESAT6 or Ag85B (5x10$^7$ CFU of recombinant Listeria expressing each antigen, 1x10$^8$ CFU recombinant Listeria total) or *Listeria monocytogenes ΔactA ΔgcpE prfA* expressing ESAT6 or Ag85B (5x10$^7$ CFU of recombinant Listeria expressing each antigen, 1x10$^8$ CFU recombinant Listeria total) was administered intratracheally to 12 Chinese-origin rhesus macaques (6 per group). For intratracheal inoculation, macaques were sedated with Ketamine (10mg/kg) and Xylazine (1-2 mg/kg; Ben Venue Laboratories, Bedford, OH), by intramuscular injection. An endotracheal tube was inserted through the larynx into the trachea and placed at the carina and a 1mL solution containing the inoculum was administered through the endotracheal tube. Seven weeks following initial challenge, macaques were re-challenged with $10^8$ CFU of the same strain of
Listeria through the intratracheal route. Macaques were isolated following vaccination and monitored for clinical signs of disease throughout the study.

2.10. Bronchoalveolar Lavage (BAL) and Bronchoalveolar Lavage Fluid (BALF) Collection

BAL was performed as previously described. Briefly, macaques were sedated with Ketamine (10mg/kg) and Xylazine (1-2 mg/kg), by intramuscular injection. An intratracheal tube was inserted through the larynx into the trachea and placed at the carina. Saline solution was instilled and harvested from the lungs through the intratracheal tube. A maximum of 10mg/kg of solution was placed in the lungs of macaques, and the recovery rate was greater than 50% in all cases.

2.11. Phenotyping of PBMC and BAL lymphocytes from Macaques

For cell-surface staining, PBMCs were stained with up to 6 Abs (conjugated to FITC, PE, allophycocyanin, pacific blue, PE-Cy7, and Alexafluor-700) for 15min. After staining, cells were fixed with 2% formaldehyde-PBS prior to analysis on an LSR Fortessa flow cytometer (BD Biosciences). Lymphocytes were gated based on forward- and side-scatters, and pulse-width and at least 50,000 gated events were analyzed using Summit Data Acquisition and Analysis Software (DakoCytomation).
2.12. **Intracellular Cytokine Staining of Mononuclear Cells**

0.5×10^6 PBMC plus mAbs CD28 (1μg/ml) and CD49d (1μg/ml) were incubated in 100μl final volume for 1h at 37°C, 5% CO₂ followed by an additional 5h incubation in the presence of brefeldin A (GolgiPlug, BD). After staining for cell-surface markers (CD3, CD4, γδ) for 15 min, cells were permeabilized for 45 min (Foxp3 Fix/Perm Buffer, Biolegend) and stained for 45 min with cytoplasmic antibodies (IFNγ, TNFα, IL-2), (IFNγ, IL-17, IL-22) or (Perforin, Granzyme B, Granulysin) before fixation in formalin.

2.13. **Intracellular Inhibition of Growth Assay**

For generation of target cells, monocytes were isolated from PBMC through adherence to flat-bottom 96-well plates. Monocytes were infected with an MOI of 100 of *Listeria monocytogenes* strain 10403S for 1 hour. Cells were washed to remove extracellular bacteria, and media was replaced with R10 media containing 10μg/mL gentamicin.

To isolate effector cells, PBMCs isolated from challenged macaques were stained for Vγ2-FITC (7A5) for 15 minutes and washed twice with PBS prior to sorting on a MoFlo (Beckman Coulter). Sorted cells were aliquoted into wells containing target cells at the indicated ratios. The total volume of Target cell: Effector cell mixture was 200μL in all cases. At indicated time-points following co-culture, cells were centrifuged, media was removed, and cells were lysed using sterile water solution to release bacteria. Solutions were serially diluted and placed on BHI plates containing 200μg/mL streptomycin to determine CFU counts of *Listeria*.
2.14. Third challenge of Rhesus macaques with recombinant *Listeria monocytogenes* strains

$10^8$ CFU of $\Delta$actA prfA* *Listeria monocytogenes* expressing ESAT6 or Ag85B (5x$10^7$ CFU of recombinant Listeria expressing each antigen, 1x$10^8$ CFU recombinant Listeria total) or $\Delta$actA $\Delta$gcpE prfA* *Listeria monocytogenes* expressing ESAT6 or Ag85B (5x$10^7$ CFU of recombinant Listeria expressing each antigen, 1x$10^8$ CFU recombinant Listeria total) was administered intratracheally to 12 Chinese-origin rhesus macaques (6 per group) as previously described.

2.15. Vy2Vδ2 T Cell Proliferation Assay

PBMCs were isolated blood collected from macaques prior to infection, 7 weeks following initial *Listeria* vaccination, 7 weeks following second administration of the *Listeria*-based vaccine, or 7 weeks following the 3rd administration of the *Listeria*-based vaccine. PBMCs were stained with CellTracker Violet Dye (Invitrogen) and seeded at the bottom of round-bottom 96-well plates at a concentration of 5x$10^6$ cells/mL and stimulated with 40ng/mL of HMBPP, 4ng/mL HMBPP, 400pg/mL of HMBPP, or 40pg/mL of HMBPP in the presence of 100U/mL rh-IL-2 (Sigma). These cells were grown in culture for 7 days, then stained with antibodies against CD3 (SP34-2; BD Biosciences) and Vg2 (7A5 Thermo Scientific) for 15 minutes at room temperature. These cells were fixed with 2% formalin, then analyzed by flow cytometry using the LSR Fortessa. 50,000 lymphocytes were counted for all samples.
2.16. **Vγ2Vδ2 T Phosphoantigen Sensitivity Assay**

PBMCs were isolated blood collected from macaques prior to infection, 7 weeks following initial *Listeria* vaccination, 7 weeks following second administration of the *Listeria*-based vaccine, or 7 weeks following the 3rd administration of the *Listeria*-based vaccine. PBMCs were seeded at the bottom of round-bottom 96-well plates at a concentration of 5x10^6 cells/mL in R10 media containing 1μg/mL CD28 and CD49d and stimulated with 40ng/mL of HMBPP, 4ng/mL HMBPP, 400pg/mL HMBPP, 40pg/mL HMBPP, or left unstimulated for 1 hour. 1 hour following HMBPP stimulation, protein transport was inhibited with Brefeldin A (GolgiPlug, BD Biosciences) and cells were cultured for 5 more hours. After the 5 hour incubation period, cells were stained with surface markers (CD3, Vγ2) for 15 minutes, washed twice, then fixed and permeabilized with Foxp3 Fix/Perm Buffer (Biolegend) for 30 minutes. Fix/Perm buffer was washed off, cells were washed twice with Foxp3 Perm buffer, then incubated with intracellular antibodies (IFNγ, TNFα) for 45 minutes at room temperature. Cells were washed twice, fixed in 2% formalin, and analyzed using the LSR Fortessa. 5,000 Vγ2+ events were counted for each sample.

2.17. **Rhesus Macaques for in vivo Infection with *Mycobacterium tuberculosis***

Two weight-matched Chinese-origin rhesus macaques, free of simian retrovirus, simian T-lymphotrophic virus type 1, and SIV infection, were challenged with *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* in addition to the two Rhesus macaques vaccinated and boosted with *Listeria monocytogenes ΔactA prfA* (G155S) expressing ESAT6 and Ag85B and three macaques vaccinated and boosted with *Listeria monocytogenes ΔactA ΔgcpE prfA* (G155S) as previously
described. All animals were maintained and used in accordance with guidelines of the IACUC.

Animals were anesthetized with 10mg/kg ketamine HCl (Fort Dodge Animal Health) for all blood sampling, infections and treatments. Blood for white blood cell isolation was collected in EDTA tubes. Day 0 blood was drawn immediately before infection.

2.18. Challenge of Rhesus Macaques with *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*

Rhesus macaques were sedated with Ketamine (10mg/kg) and Xylazine (1-2 mg/kg), by intramuscular injection. A pediatric bronchoscope was inserted into the right caudal lung lobe, and 80 CFU of *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* Erdman strain was administered in 3mL of saline solution. Pediatric bronchoscope was subsequently flushed with 3mL of saline followed by 3mL bolus of air to ensure full inoculum was administered to the macaque. Macaques were monitored for clinical signs of pulmonary Tuberculosis 3 times weekly following infection and weighed once weekly to determine the extent of weight loss following infection.

2.19. Gross pathologic analysis of Tuberculosis-induced lesions

8 weeks following infection, macaques were euthanized with pentobarbital (37.5mg/kg IV) and necropsies were performed immediately following euthanasia. Standard gross pathologic evaluation procedures were followed, and steps were recorded and gross pathologic specimens were photographed. Lung lobes, bronchial, axillary, and mesenteric lymph nodes were collected and labeled. Multiple specimens from all tissues with gross lesions were harvested. Gross
observations of the presence, size, location, number and distribution of lesions were recorded. A scoring system used previously in the Chen lab was excised to calculate gross pathology scores for TB lesions in lungs. For each lobe of the lung, granuloma presence was scored 0-4 for (0) no visible granulomas, (1) 1-3 visible granulomas, (2) 4-10 visible granulomas, (3) >10 discrete granulomas, and (4) military pattern of granulomas, respectively. Granuloma size was scored 0-3 for (0) none present, (1) <1-2 mm, (2) 3-4 mm, and (3) >4mm, respectively. Pulmonary consolidation or atelectasis as viewed from organ exterior and cut surfaces were scored 0-2 for (0) absent, (1) present focally in 1 lobe, (2) extensive within 1 lobe or involving multiple lobes. One score was also given for the presence of tuberculosis-related focal parietal pleural adhesions, pleural thickening and opacification, or pulmonary parenchymal cavitation. For Hilar lymph nodes, enlargements were scored 0-3 for (0) visible but not enlarged, (1) visibly enlarged unilaterally (<2cm), (2) visibly enlarged bilaterally (<2cm), (3) visibly enlarged unilaterally or bilaterally (>2cm). Tuberculosis lesions in hilar lymph nodes were scored 0-4 for (0) no granulomas visible on capsular or cut surface, (1) focal or multifocal, circumscribed, non-coalescing granulomas, <2mm, (2) coalescing solid or caseating granulomas occupying <50% of nodal architecture, (3) coalescing solid or caseating granulomas occupying >50% of nodal architecture with residual nodal components still recognizable, (4) complete granulomatous nodal effacement and caseation. Tuberculosis lesions in each of the extrathoracic organs were scored similarly as each lung lobe. Pathology scoring of infected tissues was conducted in a blinded fashion.
2.20. **Determining Bacterial Colony Forming Unit (CFU) counts in organ tissue homogenates**

1 cubic centimeter tissue sections harvested from right caudal, right medial, and left caudal lung lobes and liver, spleen, and kidney of necropsied macaques were taken after gross pathological analysis was completed. If there were gross TB lesions in the respective lobe, a half of the lung tissue containing approximately 50% lesions and 50% healthy tissue was taken. If no visible lesions were present in the respective lobe, a random piece of tissue was taken for tissue homogenization. Tissue homogenates were prepared using a homogenizer (PRO 200, PRO Scientific INC, CT) and diluting the tissue in sterile PBS + 0.05% Tween-80. 5-fold serial dilutions of tissue homogenate samples were plated on Middlebrook 7H11 plates (Remel).

2.21. **Statistical Analysis**

Statistical analysis was done using paired two-tailed Student’s *t* test, unpaired two-tailed Student’s *t* test, or Mann-Whitney U test using Graphpad software (Prism, La Jolla, CA). Data compared were based on percentage, unless otherwise stated.
Altered \textit{in vivo} V\textgamma{}2V\delta{}2 T cell Expansion and Memory Formation by \textit{Listeria monocytogenes} deficient for HMBPP production


3.1. **Rationale**

V\textgamma{}2V\delta{}2 T cells exist only in humans and non-human primates, and comprise 65-90% of total circulating human γδ T cells. V\textgamma{}2V\delta{}2 T cells can be activated by naturally occurring metabolites often termed phosphoantigens, which include isopentenyl pyrophosphate (IPP) from the mevalonate pathway and (E)-4-hydroxy-3-methyl-but-2-enyl pyrophosphate (HMBPP) from the microbial 2-C-methyl-D-erythritol 4-phosphate/1-deoxy-D-xylulose 5-phosphate (MEP/DOXP) isoprenoid synthesis pathway\textsuperscript{55,89}. HMBPP is produced in selected microbes including \textit{Mycobacterium tuberculosis} (Mtb), \textit{M. bovis} BCG, \textit{Listeria monocytogenes} and malaria parasites (2, 3). IPP is synthesized in large amounts in stressed host cells due to infection or oncogenic transformation\textsuperscript{90,91}. While high concentrations of IPP are required to activate V\textgamma{}2V\delta{}2 T cells,
HMBPP is a ∼1000-fold more potent than IPP for in vitro activation of Vγ2Vδ2 T cells\(^{92-94}\). In vitro activated Vγ2Vδ2 T cells can produce Th1 cytokines IFNγ and TNFα, lyse infected cells or tumors through release of cytolytic effectors and inhibit the intracellular growth of bacteria\(^{54-56,64}\). Some of these in vitro findings have been replicated in vivo by administration of IL-2 plus HMBPP or equivalents\(^{60,95,96}\).

Infections of humans and primates with HMBPP-producing bacteria and parasites have been shown to induce in vivo activation and expansion of Vγ2Vδ2 T cells\(^{56,57}\). Activated Vγ2Vδ2 T cells can traffic to and accumulate in the pulmonary compartment and intestinal mucosal interface\(^{60,62}\). Following immune clearance of pathogens, some Vγ2Vδ2 T cells can express memory phenotypes similar to those seen in CD8+ αβ T cells, suggesting an adaptive immune response of these phosphoantigen-specific γδ T cells\(^{62,63}\). Consistent with these memory phenotypes, robust, accelerated recall-like expansion and rapid production of anti-microbial cytokines can be seen after in vivo re-exposure to HMBPP-producing pathogens such as Mtb, BCG or Listeria monocytogenes\(^{62,64}\). Rapid recall-like expansion of Vγ2Vδ2 T cells after Mtb challenge of BCG-vaccinated macaques coincides with the vaccine-induced protection against severe form of tuberculosis\(^{62}\). It is therefore critical to elucidate relative importance of isoprenoids in inducing immune responses of Vγ2Vδ2 T cells in infection.

It is now well known that many microbes and parasites produce HMBPP via the MEP pathway, and infections with these pathogens activate and expand Vγ2Vδ2 T cells, but it has yet to be determined whether bacterial organisms deficient for HMBPP production
Figure 5. **Predicted outcomes of HMBPP deficient *Listeria monocytogenes* infection of host cells**

A) Elimination of HMBPP synthase from *Listeria*-based vaccine strain ΔactA prfA* may result in an inability of the vaccine to induce the activation and expansion of Vy2Vδ2 T cells due to an absence of HMBPP production and a production of IPP that is insufficient for phosphoantigen presentation or cell activation. B) In the absence of HMBPP synthase, the *Listeria*-based vaccine may be capable of inducing Vy2Vδ2 T cell activation and expansion due to production of high levels of IPP or infection-mediated upregulation of the host cell mevalonate pathway.
are capable of stimulating Vγ2Vδ2 T cells, and if these Vγ2Vδ2 T cells activated in vivo in the absence of HMBPP exposure would generate similar effector and memory T cell responses. In the absence of HMBPP exposure, *Listeria monocytogenes* may be incapable of stimulating Vγ2Vδ2 T cell responses due to an insufficient production of stimulatory phosphoantigen IPP (Figure 5A). Alternatively, the IPP production by *Listeria monocytogenes* or the host upregulation of the MEP pathway by intracellular infection by *Listeria* may be sufficient to stimulate Vγ2Vδ2 T cell activation and expansion. Addressing this fundamental immunologic question will enhance our understanding of biology of Vγ2Vδ2 T cells in infections, and help to design γδ T-cell-targeted genetic manipulation of *Listeria monocytogenes* and macaque models\(^{64,76,85}\) to test the hypothesis that Vγ2Vδ2 T cells could be activated and expanded by IPP-producing *Listeria* deficient for HMBPP production, and that these cells would differ phenotypically from those generated by HMBPP/IPP co-production in *Listeria*. *Listeria monocytogenes* is the only pathogen known to possess both the mevalonate and MEP pathways of isoprenoid biosynthesis, making it possible to knock out the MEP pathway without a loss of *Listeria* viability\(^{87}\). We used homologous recombination to delete the *gcpE* gene encoding HMBPP synthase from our attenuated strain of *Listeria monocytogenes*, and compared phenotypic and functional differences in Vγ2Vδ2 T cells stimulated by these *Listeria* strains.
3.2. **HMBPP synthase-deficient *Listeria monocytogenes ΔactA ΔgcpE prfA* exhibited reduced ability to expand Vγ2Vδ2 T cells in vitro.**

A number of bacterial and parasitic pathogens produce HMBPP, and infections of humans and primates with these HMBPP-producing pathogens induce significant activation and expansion of Vγ2Vδ2 T cells. However, it remains unknown whether bacteria-derived HMBPP-induced activation of Vγ2Vδ2 T cells results in similar development of Vγ2Vδ2 T cell effector and memory cells as IPP-driven activation of Vγ2Vδ2 T cells. The research community needs to address this fundamental immunologic question, as an optimal Vγ2Vδ2 T cell production protocol may require stimulation of Vγ2Vδ2 T cells through a coordinated use of HMBPP and IPP in combination or in tandem.

To determine the contribution of HMBPP to Vγ2Vδ2 T cell expansion during microbial infections, we sought to develop infectious mutant bacteria deleted of *gcpE* gene encoding HMBPP synthase and to use it as an infection tool for comparative studies in macaques. While this genetic approach was attractive for comparing bacterial HMBPP-induced activation of Vγ2Vδ2 T cells during infections to IPP-induced activation of Vγ2Vδ2 T cells, most bacterial pathogens express either the MEP pathway or the mevalonate pathway of isoprenoid synthesis, and not both. Although *Listeria monocytogenes* is the only pathogen carrying both mevalonate and MEP pathways for critical bacterial metabolism, *gcpE*-knockout *Listeria* is significantly attenuated, and non-comparable to wild-type *Listeria* strain for infection. To overcome these problems, we made use of our experience with genetic modification of attenuated *Listeria monocytogenes (Listeria ΔactA prfA*) and *Listeria* infection of macaques. We presumed
Figure 6. Deletion of gcpE gene encoding HMBPP synthase from Listeria ΔactA prfA* vaccine strain reduced Listeria-mediated in-vitro expansion of Vy2V62 T cells.

A) PCR products amplified from the HMBPP-synthase gene gcpE sequence from indicated genomic Listeria monocytogenes DNA strains. PCR products were generated using PCR primers indicated in Materials and Methods, and run on a 0.8% agarose gel with GeneRuler 100bp plus ladder. B) Mean percentages of expanded γδ T cells following in vitro stimulation using Listeria monocytogenes lysates, and representative flow histograms of CD3+Vy2+ T cell percentages (bottom). PBMCs were isolated from healthy naïve rhesus macaques and stimulated with sonicated lysates of Listeria monocytogenes strains for 7 days in the presence of 500U/mL recombinant human IL-2, then stained with CD3 and Vy2 prior to flow cytometry analysis. Lysates from Listeria innocua, known to lack gcpE, were used as a negative control. Serial dilutions of HMBPP (40ng/ml) were used as a positive control. ***, p<0.001
that since *Listeria ΔactA prfA* strain is already remarkably attenuated, knock out of *gcpE* from this mutant would not further attenuate its infectivity/immunogenicity, and thus allowed us to compare the activation of Vγ2Vδ2 T cells in the context of bacterially-produced HMBPP to IPP-induced Vγ2Vδ2 T cells activation\(^6^d\).

We used homologous recombination to remove *gcpE* gene from our *Listeria ΔactA prfA* strain. This approach allowed us to successfully develop *gcpE* knock-out *Listeria ΔactA prfA* (*Listeria ΔactA ΔgcpE prfA*) (Figure 6A). Whereas HMBPP-containing, low-molecular-weight lysate from *Listeria* typically stimulates an expansion of Vγ2Vδ2 T cells in macaque PBMC culture, culture with lysate from HMBPP-synthase-deficient *Listeria ΔactA ΔgcpE prfA* mutant led to a significantly reduced expansion of Vγ2Vδ2 T cells compared to parental *Listeria ΔactA prfA* (Figure 6B). *Listeria innocua*, a nonpathogenic species of *Listeria* that lacks the *gcpE* locus (Figure 6A) was inefficient as well in stimulating Vγ2Vδ2 T-cell expansion (Figure 6B), while synthetic HMBPP was a potent inducer of Vγ2Vδ2 T cell expansion (Figure 6B). Low molecular weight lysates from both *Listeria ΔactA ΔgcpE prfA* and nonpathogenic *Listeria innocua* induced Vγ2Vδ2 T-cell expansion above media control, suggesting that IPP production from these pathogens is capable of activation and expansion of Vγ2Vδ2 T-cells (Figure 6B). Taken together, these data suggest *Listeria ΔactA ΔgcpE prfA* deficient in HMBPP expanded Vγ2Vδ2 T-cells to a lesser degree than the parent strain, suggesting that although HMBPP is the dominant contributor to Vγ2Vδ2 T cell expansion *in vitro*, *Listeria*-induced IPP and HMBPP can both contribute to Vγ2Vδ2 T cell expansion.
Figure 7. A loss of gcpE encoding HMBPP synthase in *Listeria ΔactA ΔgcdP prfA* did not further attenuate *Listeria ΔactA prfA* in mice

Bacterial burdens in livers (A) and spleens (B) of mice infected through intravenous inoculation with 2x10^4 CFU of the indicated *Listeria monocytogenes* strains. Livers and spleens of mice were harvested 3 days post infection. *, p<0.05
3.3. **A loss of gcpE encoding HMBPP synthase in Listeria ΔactA ΔgcpE prfA* did not further attenuate** Listeria ΔactA prfA* **in mice**

We then sought to determine whether removing gcpE from our attenuated strain of *Listeria* would further attenuate bacterial replication and infection *in vivo*, since a previous study showed that elimination of HMBPP synthase in a wildtype strain of *Listeria* resulted in a decreased virulence in mice. While *gcpE* deletion in a wildtype strain of *Listeria*, 10403S, resulted in decreases in bacterial loads in spleen and liver following intravenous challenge of mice (Fig. 2a, 2b, columns 1 and 3), *gcpE* deletion from the attenuated *Listeria ΔactA prfA* did not appear to attenuate infectivity further as this *gcpE*-deficient *Listeria ΔactA ΔgcpE prfA* strain did not cause a significant decrease in bacterial burdens at 3 days following intravenous infection of mice compared to the parental *Listeria ΔactA prfA* (Figure 7A, 7B, columns 2 and 4). These results demonstrated that *Listeria ΔactA ΔgcpE prfA* resembled *Listeria ΔactA prfA* in replication and infection in mice, suggesting a utility of this mutant for mechanistic studies of a role of listerial HMBPP in infection of macaques.

3.4. **HMBPP-producing Listeria ΔactA prfA* and HMBPP-deficient Listeria ΔactA ΔgcpE prfA* significantly expand pulmonary of Vγ2Vδ2 T cells after Listeria exposure or re-exposure.**

To determine if IPP-producing, HMBPP-deficient *Listeria ΔactA ΔgcpE prfA* lost an ability to activate or expand Vγ2Vδ2 T cells *in vivo*, rhesus macaques were inoculated intratracheally with 10^8 CFU of *Listeria ΔactA prfA* and *Listeria ΔactA ΔgcpE prfA* mutant, respectively. We elected
to perform an intratracheal challenge with *Listeria* since we were interested in dissecting pulmonary and systemic immune responses of HMBPP–driven Vγ2Vδ2 T cells after microbial invasion to lungs. Previous studies of respiratory infections with HMBPP-producing pathogens including *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* and *Yersinia pestis* have demonstrated that expanded Vγ2Vδ2 T cells can accumulate in lungs and correlate with improved clinical outcomes after pulmonary infections with these pathogens. Because these organisms only have the MEP pathway of isoprenoid biosynthesis, elimination of gcpE and other genes in the MEP pathway in these pathogens renders these organisms unviable. The ability of *Listeria ΔactA ΔgcpE prfA* to survive in the absence of a MEP pathway gives us the unique opportunity to examine Vγ2Vδ2 T-cell response to HMBPP and IPP in respiratory exposure to an HMBPP-producing organism.

No clinical signs of disease or distress were seen in rhesus macaques challenged with *Listeria ΔactA prfA* or *ΔactA ΔgcpE prfA* mutant, and no *Listeria* bacteria were recovered either in cultures of BAL samples or blood collected at 7 days following infection (data not shown), suggesting that attenuated *Listeria* bacteria did not apparently disseminate into the blood stream and was cleared within a week of inoculation. Since activated Vγ2Vδ2 T cells during infection of macaques with HMBPP-producing pathogens such as *Listeria* and Mtb can readily traffic to and accumulate in the pulmonary compartment, we asked if HMBPP was a major microbial factor driving such pulmonary responses of Vγ2Vδ2 T cells. To address this, we determined the dynamics of Vγ2Vδ2 T cells in lymphocytes from bronchoalveolar lavage (BAL) fluid. Macaques exposed to HMBPP-producing *Listeria* showed a significantly increases in these
Figure 8. HMBPP-producing *Listeria* ΔactA prfA* and HMBPP-deficient *Listeria* ΔactA ΔgcpE prfA* significantly expand pulmonary Vγ2Vδ2 T cells after *Listeria* exposure or re-exposure.

A) Representative flow histograms of Vγ2Vδ2 T cells in BAL cells from a macaque exposed to *Listeria* ΔactA prfA* on day 63 (2 weeks) after secondary exposure (left) and a macaque exposed to *Listeria* ΔactA ΔgcpE prfA* on day 63 (right). B) Mean percentage numbers of Vγ2Vδ2 T cells in BAL cells at various time points following *Listeria* exposure. Asterisks indicate statistically significant comparisons of time points between the group of macaques exposed to *Listeria* ΔactA prfA* and the group exposed to *Listeria* ΔactA ΔgcpE prfA* (asterisks for p values are the same as above); # signs indicate statistically significant comparisons between the indicated time point and Day 0 for the group of macaques exposed to *Listeria* ΔactA ΔgcpE prfA*. 
cells, reinforcing previous observations that HMBPP is a potent inducer of Vγ2Vδ2 T cell expansion. Interestingly, macaque groups challenged with HMBPP-deficient Listeria strains exhibited an increased percentage of Vγ2Vδ2 T cells in the airway (Figure 8A,B). Secondary exposure of macaques to HMBPP-producing Listeria resulted in a recall-like increase in Vγ2Vδ2 T cells in both groups. Taken together, these data support the view that both IPP and HMBPP from Listeria contribute to expansion of Vγ2Vδ2 T cells in pulmonary compartment during Listeria infection.

3.5. **HMBPP-synthase deficiency in Listeria ΔactA ΔgcpE prfA* significantly reduced the ability of Listeria to expand Vγ2Vδ2 T cells in blood circulation following intratracheal listerial exposure**

Significant expansion of pulmonary Vγ2Vδ2 T cells in could be seen in rhesus macaques challenged with the attenuated Listeria ΔactA prfA* capable of producing HMBPP as early as 14 days post-infection (Figure 8B). We next to determine whether an increase of circulating Vγ2Vδ2 T cells can be seen despite our inability to detect live bacilli in the blood of infected macaques. Significant increases in Vγ2Vδ2 T cells were seen in macaques challenged with Listeria ΔactA prfA* as early as 7 days post-challenge. In contrast, macaques challenged with Listeria ΔactA ΔgcpE prfA* mutant that was deficient in producing HMBPP showed no or subtle increases in circulating Vγ2Vδ2 T cells (Figure 9B,C). Indeed, while circulating Vγ2Vδ2 T cells in macaques exposed to HMBPP-producing Listeria were increased in means from baseline <3% up to 24% of all circulating T cells, Listeria ΔactA ΔgcpE prfA* mutant induced no or subtle expansion of Vγ2Vδ2 T cells following primary challenge (Figure 9B,C). These data suggest that HMBPP in Listeria contributes to a more profound expansion of Vγ2Vδ2 T cells following Listeria
Figure 9. HMBPP-producing Listeria ΔactA prfA* and HMBPP-deficient Listeria ΔactA ΔgcpE prfA* significantly expand circulating Vγ2Vδ2 T cells after Listeria exposure or re-exposure.

A) Representative flow histograms of Vγ2Vδ2 T cells in PBMCs from a macaque not exposed to Listeria (left, pre), a macaque exposed to Listeria ΔactA prfA* on day 56 [1 week following secondary exposure, (middle)], and a macaque exposed to Listeria ΔactA ΔgcpE prfA* challenged macaque on day 56 (right), respectively. Flow panels are gated on CD3+ lymphocytes. B) Percentages of Vγ2Vδ2 T cells in blood of individual rhesus macaques (B) or mean numbers (C) at various time points following Listeria exposures (arrows). Macaque numbers in light grey indicate animals challenged with Listeria ΔactA prfA*. Asterisks indicate statistically significant comparisons of time points between the group of macaques exposed to Listeria ΔactA prfA* and the group exposed to Listeria ΔactA ΔgcpE prfA* (*, p<0.05; **, p<0.01; ***, p<0.001); # signs indicate statistically significant comparisons between the indicated time point and Day 0 for the group of macaques exposed to Listeria ΔactA ΔgcpE prfA*.
infection of macaques and allows for a larger accumulation of \( V\gamma2V\delta2 \) T cells throughout the body. Secondary pulmonary exposure to HMBPP-producing \textit{Listeria \Delta actA \textit{prfA}^*} resulted in a rebound expansion of circulating \( V\gamma2V\delta2 \) T cells with a peak similar in magnitude to the first expansion (Figure 9C). Interestingly, macaques re-exposed to HMBPP-deficient \textit{Listeria \Delta actA 10C} although these increases were significantly lower numbers of circulating \( V\gamma2V\delta2 \) T cells in macaques exposed to the parental strain. These results suggest that although HMBPP in \textit{Listeria} plays a dominant role in driving expansion \( V\gamma2V\delta2 \) T cells during \textit{Listeria monocytogenes} re-exposure or re-infection of macaques, macaques exposed to HMBPP-deficient strains of \textit{Listeria monocytogenes} exhibit expansion of \( V\gamma2V\delta2 \) T cells in pulmonary and blood compartments.

3.6. \textit{HMBPP-synthase deficiency in Listeria did not negatively affect \( V\gamma2V\delta2 \) T cell differentiation into anti-microbial effector cells producing IFN\( \gamma \) and TNF\( \alpha \) Th1 cytokines after Listeria exposure}

We next sought to determine whether HMBPP from \textit{Listeria} help to differentiate effector functions of \( V\gamma2V\delta2 \) T cells after exposure to Listeria. Typically, \( V\gamma2V\delta2 \) T cells could produce significant amounts of IFN\( \gamma \) and TNF\( \alpha \) Th1 cytokines in response to \textit{in vitro} HMBPP stimulation (Figure 11A). \( V\gamma2V\delta2 \) T cells from macaques challenged with either HMBPP-producing or HMBPP-deficient \( \Delta actA \Delta gcpE \textit{prfA}^* \) strain of \textit{Listeria} demonstrated a similar percentage of \( V\gamma2V\delta2 \) T effector cells producing IFN\( \gamma \) (Figure 10A, top panels Figure 10B, upper left histogram) or TNF\( \alpha \) (Figure 10A, middle panels, Figure 10B, upper right histogram), much greater total numbers of IFN\( \gamma \)-producing \( V\gamma2V\delta2 \) T effector cells or percentages of CD3\^+ T cell population were seen in macaques exposed to HMBPP-producing \textit{Listeria} than those exposed to HMBPP-
Figure 10. **HMBPP-synthase deficiency in Listeria inefficiently differentiated Vy2Vδ2 T cells into anti-microbial effector cells co-producing IFNγ and TNFα Th1 cytokines after listerial exposure**

A) Representative flow histograms of IFNγ (top panels) TNFα (bottom panels) producing Vy2Vδ2T cells at 63 days following primary *Listeria* exposure. Top and middle panels were gated on CD3+ lymphocytes. Bottom panels were gated on Vy2+CD3+ lymphocytes. Numbers in upper right quadrant indicate the percentages of cells expressing IFNγ+ (top), TNFα+ (bottom). B) Mean percentage numbers of phosphoantigen-specific IFNγ+ or TNFα+ cells out of Vy2+ T cells. Percentages were generated by subtracting cytokine+ Vy2+ T cell percentage from unstimulated panel from cytokine+ Vy2+ T cell percentage in the HMBPP stimulated panel. (*, p<0.05)
deficient ΔactA ΔgcpE prfA* Listeria (Figure 10B, lower histograms) due to increased total numbers of Vy2Vδ2 T cells. Thus, HMBPP and IPP production can be used interchangeably to induce differentiation of Vy2Vδ2 T cells into anti-microbial effector cells co-producing IFNγ and TNFα Th1 cytokines after exposure to Listeria.

3.7. HMBPP-synthase deficiency in Listeria influenced polarization of memory phenotype of Vy2Vδ2 T cells following Listeria exposure

We next sought to determine whether Listeria-mediated HMBPP or IPP exposure impacted the development of memory phenotype of Vy2Vδ2 T cells following exposure to Listeria monocytogenes. Surface markers CD27 and CD45RA are commonly used to differentiate the different stages of memory formation for Vy2Vδ2 T cells (Figure 11A). Following primary exposure with HMBPP-producing Listeria, macaques exhibited a significant increase in percentage of circulating Vy2Vδ2 T cells with memory phenotype, as defined by CD27+ CD45RA- expression (Figure 11B). In contrast, Vy2Vδ2 T cells from macaques exposed to HMBPP-deficient Listeria ΔactA ΔgcpE prfA* showed significant lower percentages of circulating memory-type Vy2Vδ2 T cells and higher percentage of circulating naïve cells (Figure 11C).

Although percentages of memory-type Vy2Vδ2 T cells in the airway following primary exposure to either strain of Listeria were similar between groups, macaques re-exposed to HMBPP-producing Listeria exhibited a higher percentage of memory-type Vy2Vδ2 T cells and lower percentage of naïve Vy2Vδ2 cells in the airway than those animals re-exposed to HMBPP-deficient Listeria ΔactA ΔgcpE prfA* (Figure 11D,E, p <0.05 for both comparisons after II exposure).
Figure 11. HMBPP-synthase deficiency in *Listeria* influenced polarization of memory phenotype of Vy2Vδ2 T cells following listerial exposure. A) Diagram of phenotypic subsets of Vy2Vδ2 T cells based on CD27 and CD45RA expression. B,D) Representative flow histograms of Vy2Vδ2 T cell subtypes based on CD27 and CD45RA expression in blood (B) and BAL cells (D). Flow histograms are gated on Vy2+ CD3+ Lymphocytes. C,E) Graphs of phenotypic subsets of Vy2Vδ2 T cells in blood (C) and BAL cells (E) following primary (I) or secondary (II) exposure to the indicated strains of *Listeria monocytogenes*. Note that there are greater numbers of memory-type (CD45RA−CD27+) Vy2Vδ2 T cells in macaques exposed to HMBPP-producing *Listeria* than in those exposed to HMBPP-deficient strain (*, p<0.05). F) Gating strategy for determining CD45RA−CD27+ and CD45RA CD27+ CD28+ subsets of memory Vy2Vδ2 T cells and representative flow histograms of CD28− Vy2Vδ2 memory T cells in BAL of a macaque exposed to *Listeria ΔactA prfA* (black histogram) or a macaque exposed to *Listeria ΔactA ΔgcpE prfA* (Grey histogram). Isotype control for CD28 expression is shown as white histogram. G) Mean percentages of CD28+ and CD28− Vy2Vδ2 memory T-cell subsets in BAL of macaques following primary (I) or secondary (II) challenge with indicated strains of *Listeria monocytogenes*. Data from primary exposure were generated from blood collected on day 42 post infection, and those from secondary exposure were derived from blood collected on day 84. Significant difference between the groups was seen on day42 (*, p<0.05), and a similar trend was noted on day 84 despite no statistical significance.
One of the hallmarks of memory T cells is their ability to expand greatly in number following re-exposure to antigen. Previous studies have determined that CD28 co-stimulation to memory T cells correlates significantly with an ability to proliferate following re-exposure to antigen\textsuperscript{97}. We compared the expression of CD28 on Vy2Vδ2 memory T cells in \textit{Listeria} exposed macaques. Interestingly, phenotypic analysis of memory-type Vy2Vδ2 T cells demonstrated that macaques exposed to HMBPP-producing Listeria shifted toward the development of CD28- memory pool in the pulmonary compartment whereas primary and secondary exposure of macaques to HMBPP-deficient \textit{Listeria ΔactA ΔgcpE prfA*} displayed a higher percentage of CD28+ memory Vy2Vδ2 T cells (Figure 11G). Previous studies examining the memory phenotypes of Vy2Vδ2 T cells have suggested the loss of CD28 expression correlates with a later memory phenotype in these cells\textsuperscript{98}, suggesting that HMBPP stimulation skews Vy2Vδ2 cells to develop later memory phenotypes following primary and secondary exposure, while Vy2Vδ2 cells activated through \textit{Listeria}-mediated IPP production exhibit development of earlier memory phenotypes.
Determining the effect of repeated *Listeria monocytogenes*-based vaccine exposure on Vγ2Vδ2 T cell phosphoantigen sensitivity


4.1. **Rationale**

Current vaccination efforts for Tuberculosis involve the administration of a second or third immunogenic stimulus to generate strong memory responses to the antigens in the vaccine. These methods are commonly viewed as beneficial to the immune system and help to augment or diversify T cell responses and induce a higher titer of antibody production. Many other vaccination regimens involve repeated administration of the vaccine in order to induce sufficient protection against the invading organism. It has been well-established that maintenance of immunity to the toxins produced by tetanus requires booster doses to prevent waning immunity. In addition, a resurgence in cases of adult pertussis has prompted the CDC to consider the benefits of administering booster doses of the Tdap vaccine to adults to minimize adult pertussis cases as well as adult-to-child transmission of pertussis. The hepatitis B vaccine typically requires 3 doses to achieve maximal immunogenicity. Immunity to Hepatitis...
B also wanes over time, and can require booster doses to augment antibody responses later in life. Similarly, vaccines that target *Neisseria meningitides* and prevent bacterial meningitis require multiple doses to induce sufficient immunity that does not last the life of the host. Increasing studies have determined that newer vaccines such as those for cervical cancer may require repeated doses to maintain the protection induced by these constructs.

Despite the beneficial effects of repeated vaccine administration in a number of vaccine models known to induce strong antibody responses, BCG revaccination programs has faced predominantly negative results. BCG revaccination has shown little or no demonstrable increase in protection against Tuberculosis following revaccination of adolescents or adults who have received BCG as an infant, nor a beneficial protection of revaccinating adults upon conversion from TST-positive to TST-negative. Despite these negative results, immunologic studies have indicated increases in some of the known immune correlates of protection, such as CD4 T cell-mediated IFNγ release following *M. tb.* antigen re-exposure, or increased production of anti-mycobacterial antibodies. Although repeated antigen exposure of B cells results in increased antibody production and affinity maturation, repeated stimulation of antigen-specific T cells is associated with T cell hyporesponsiveness, anergy, and activation-induced cell death. Studies examining chronically infected individuals with Hepatitis C, chronic hepatitis B infection, or HIV infection have demonstrated T cell dysfunction and hyporesponsiveness of antigen-specific T cells. A recent cancer vaccination study demonstrated that the persistence of vaccine antigens in the body resulted in T cell migration to the site of vaccination, dysfunction, and clonal deletion of these antigen-specific T cells,
suggesting that chronic or repeated stimulation of these T cells may be detrimental to inducing a strong, long-lasting, protective response\textsuperscript{117}.

Multiple studies have indicated that Vγ2Vδ2 T cell number and responses may be adversely affected by repeated exposure to phosphoantigens\textsuperscript{63,95,118}. Because isoprenoid production is essential for proper growth of bacteria, many organisms produce IPP through the mevalonate pathway or HMBPP through the MEP pathway\textsuperscript{56}. Thus, humans are exposed to a variety of pathogenic and non-pathogenic bacteria harboring large doses of these isoprenoids throughout their life. Indeed, studies examining the Vγ2Vδ2 T cell population in the fetus, neonate, adult, and elderly demonstrate a decline in naïve Vγ2Vδ2 T cells and an increase in memory Vγ2Vδ2 T cells as individuals age\textsuperscript{63}. Animal studies that have used repeated administration of synthetic phosphoantigens have shown that the magnitude of Vγ2Vδ2 T cell expansion decreases with repeated high dose stimulation with phosphoantigens, suggesting that although Vγ2Vδ2 T cell stimulation may result in rapid effector function and memory development upon secondary exposure to phosphoantigens, repeated phosphoantigen stimulation could result in decreased Vγ2Vδ2 T cell proliferation and response, rendering these cells less useful for vaccination purposes\textsuperscript{95}. Thus, repeated administration of BCG or other HMBPP-producing pathogens, may decrease the host ability to detect and control \textit{M.tb.} infection due to phosphoantigen-induced exhaustion of Vγ2Vδ2 T cells.

Because Vγ2Vδ2 T cells are capable of responding to a number of different phosphoantigen stimuli, we sought to determine whether \textit{in vivo} antigen stimulation of Vγ2Vδ2 T cells through \textit{Listeria monocytogenes}-based vaccine vectors expressing the potent phosphoantigen resulted in T cell hyporesponsiveness. Using \textit{Listeria monocytogenes} strains deficient for HMBPP
synthase and comparing it to the parental strain that contains all the enzymes necessary for HMBPP production intact, we examined the consequences of repeated administration of the *Listeria*-based vaccines on the Vγ2Vδ2 T cell expansion and responses to phosphoantigens re-exposure.

4.2. **Decreased expansion and pulmonary accumulation of Vγ2Vδ2 T cells following repeated administration of *Listeria monocytogenes ΔactA prfA***

An understanding of the dynamics of activation, expansion, memory formation, and exhaustion of Vγ2Vδ2 T cells is necessary for developing optimal vaccination regimens that would induce strong Vγ2Vδ2 memory T cell responses without inducing Vγ2Vδ2 T cell exhaustion and activation-induced cell death. Previous studies have demonstrated that while a single administration of synthetic phosphoantigen in combination with IL-2 results in massive Vγ2Vδ2 T cell expansion, repeated phosphoantigen administration resulted in decreased expansion of these cells with each administration. We sought to determine whether repeated administration of a vaccine vector capable of producing HMBPP would result in a similar decline in Vγ2Vδ2 T cell expansion following repeated administration. To do this, we examined the kinetics of pulmonary Vγ2Vδ2 T cell responses following intratracheal administration of recombinant *Listeria monocytogenes ΔactA prfA* expressing *M.tb.* antigens ESAT6 and Ag85B. Peak Vγ2Vδ2 T cell percentages in bronchoalveolar lavage fluid rose significantly following the first administration, reaching an average of 42% of all T cells in the lungs (Figure 13B). A second exposure to the *Listeria*-based vaccine induced an expansion of higher magnitude than the first response (p<0.05). Interestingly, a third administration of the *Listeria*-based vaccine induced a
Figure 12. Peak *in vivo* expansion and pulmonary accumulation of Vγ2Vδ2 T cells diminishes with repeated vaccination with HMBPP producing *Listeria ΔactA prfA* *, but not with HMBPP deficient* *Listeria ΔactA ΔgcpE prfA* *

Peak percentages of Vγ2Vδ2 T cells in blood (A) and BAL (B) of rhesus macaques after primary (I), secondary (II) and tertiary (III) exposure to intratracheal administration of the indicated *Listeria*-based vaccine strains. Peak Vγ2Vδ2 T cell percentages were determined by surface cell staining of PBMCs with CD3 and Vγ2 antibodies and analysis by flow cytometry. Peak levels of Vγ2+ T cells were typically seen 7 days following inoculation. (*, p<0.05; **, p<0.01)
response of lower magnitude than the second, suggesting that repeated administration of the 
Listeria-based vaccine may have a detrimental effect on Vy2Vδ2 T cell proliferation following 
re-stimulation. Circulating Vy2Vδ2 T cell percentages rose following a single intratracheal 
administration of Vy2Vδ2 T cells, but the magnitude of Vy2Vδ2 T cell expansion in the 
peripheral blood declines significantly with each additional administration of the vaccine (Figure 
12A). These data demonstrate that single administration of the HMBPP producing Listeria-
based vaccine induces Vy2Vδ2 T cell expansion with, while repeated administration results in 
decreasing Vy2Vδ2 T cell proliferation.

4.3. Increased expansion and pulmonary accumulation of Vy2Vδ2 T cells following repeated 
administration of HMBPP-deficient Listeria monocytogenes ΔactA ΔgcpE prfA*

While both HMBPP producing Listeria monocytogenes and high potency phosphoantigens 
induce decreased proliferative responses from Vy2Vδ2 T cells with repeated administration, the 
effect of low-potency phosphoantigens on Vy2Vδ2 T cell proliferation and exhaustion has not 
been examined. Because the Listeria monocytogenes vaccine vector deficient for HMBPP 
production can induce activation and expansion of Vy2Vδ2 T cells, we examined the effect of 
repeated administration of HMBPP-deficient Listeria monocytogenes ΔactA ΔgcpE prfA* 
expressing ESAT6 and Ag85B on the magnitude of Vy2Vδ2 T cell responses. Pulmonary Vy2Vδ2 
T cells increase significantly above baseline following primary exposure to HMBPP-deficient 
Listeria-based vaccine (Figure 12B). Secondary exposure to the vaccine showed a comparable 
increase in Vy2Vδ2 T cell percentage as the first exposure. Contrary to HMBPP-producing 
Listeria-based vaccine, tertiary administration of HMBPP-deficient Listeria-based vaccine
induced an increase in Vγ2Vδ2 T cell percentage compared to the first and second administration, suggesting that Vγ2Vδ2 T cells activated with the HMBPP-deficient Listeria-based vaccine maintain high sensitivity to phosphoantigens.

4.4. **Decreased sensitivity of Vγ2Vδ2 T cells from Listeria monocytogenes ΔactA prfA**

* vaccinated macaques to ex vivo phosphoantigen stimulation*

Because the magnitude of Vγ2Vδ2 T cell expansion decreases over time in macaques vaccinated with the HMBPP-producing Listeria-based vaccine, we examined whether cells derived from these macaques show decreased proliferative response following *ex vivo* stimulation with phosphoantigens. Stimulation of PBMCs with phosphoantigens in the presence of IL-2 and HMBPP or other phosphoantigens typically results in massive expansion of Vγ2Vδ2 T cells. Macaques that are naïve for phosphoantigen show potent responses to HMBPP stimulation. Because a previous study performed in our lab had demonstrated a protective effect of administering 1 dose of the Listeria-based Tuberculosis vaccine to macaques (Chen et. al. 2014 - manuscript in preparation), we compared the proliferative response of Vγ2Vδ2 T cells following stimulation with various doses of HMBPP in macaques vaccinated with 2 doses of the Listeria-based tuberculosis vaccine with macaques exposed to 3 doses. While 40ng/mL HMBPP is sufficient for stimulation and expansion of the vast majority of Vγ2Vδ2 T cells, significant proliferation of Vγ2Vδ2 T cells is seen after culture of PBMCs with lower concentrations of HMBPP (Figure 13A,B). Following repeated vaccination, however, most macaques show decreased percentages of Vγ2Vδ2 T cells proliferating in response to HMBPP stimulation (Figure 13B). Vγ2Vδ2 T cells derived from macaques vaccinated 3 times with HMBPP-producing
Figure 13. Decreased sensitivity of Vγ2Vδ2 T cells from *Listeria monocytogenes ΔactA prfA* vaccinated macaques to *ex vivo* phosphoantigen restimulation

A) Representative flow histograms of Vγ2+ T cell proliferation following *ex vivo* stimulation of PBMCs from macaques after the second (II) or third (III) administration of HMBPP producing *Listeria*-based vaccine strain *ΔactA prfA*. PBMCs derived from naïve or vaccinated macaques were stained with CytoTracker Violet dye (Invitrogen) and stimulated with the indicated concentrations of HMBPP in the presence of media containing 100U/mL rhIL-2 for 7 days. After 7 day culture, cells were washed, stained with CD3 and Vγ2 fluorescent antibodies, fixed, and analyzed by flow cytometry. Proliferating cells were determined by CytoTracker Violet dye dilution. Percentages on the histogram represent the percentages of proliferating cells as determined through Cytotracker Violet dye dilution. B) Graphs of proliferative responses of individual Rhesus macaques prior to *Listeria*-based vaccination (pre-vaccination), after administration of 2 doses of the HMBPP producing *Listeria*-based vaccine through intratracheal inoculation (II), and after third (III) dose of the vaccine. Macaques were challenged with the indicated concentrations of HMBPP for 7 days in the presence of 100U/mL IL-2 and percentages of proliferating Vγ2+ T cells were determined as described previously.
Listeria-based vaccines show decreased proliferative responses to both high and low dose phosphoantigen restimulation. Interestingly, a decreased proliferative response to low dose phosphoantigen is more pronounced than high dose stimulation, suggesting that repeated stimulation of Vγ2Vδ2 T cells with potent phosphoantigens may result in decreased sensitivity of Vγ2Vδ2 T cells to subsequent phosphoantigen exposure. By contrast, macaques receiving the HMBPP deficient *Listeria ΔactA ΔgcpE prfA* vaccine showed strong proliferative responses to HMBPP that were preserved after repeated vaccine exposure (Figure 14A). In addition, while the percentage and total number of Vγ2Vδ2 T cells in ex vivo PBMC cultures of macaques vaccinated with HMBPP-producing *Listeria* remained the same or decreased in number following 7 day culture in most cases, Vγ2Vδ2 T cell percentage and absolute numbers in ex vivo PBMC cultures of macaques vaccinated with HMBPP-deficient *Listeria* increased significantly in number (Figure 14B) suggesting that Vγ2Vδ2 T cells activated in vivo with HMBPP may undergo activation-induced cell death when re-stimulated ex vivo, resulting in fewer total cells after 7 days.

We next examined whether Vγ2Vδ2 T cells from macaques vaccinated with HMBPP producing *Listeria*-based vaccines would show decreased cytokine production following HMBPP stimulation. Surprisingly, we see a significant decrease in TNFα production from Vγ2+ T cells from macaques vaccinated with 3 doses of the *Listeria*-based vaccine compared to macaques vaccinated with 2 doses (Figure 15A). Similar decreases in IFNγ secretion were seen in these macaques (data not shown), suggesting that Vγ2Vδ2 T cells from macaques vaccinated with 3 significantly less amounts of Th1 cytokines. Although Vγ2Vδ2 T cells from macaques repeatedly
Figure 14. *Ex vivo* proliferative responses of Vγ2Vδ2 T cells maintained in *Listeria monocytogenes* ΔactA ΔgcpE prfA* vaccinated macaques

A) Representative flow histograms of Vγ2+ T cell proliferation following ex vivo stimulation of PBMCs from macaques after the third (III) administration of the indicated *Listeria*-based vaccine strain. B) Percentages (top) and absolute number (bottom) of Vγ2+ T cells in *ex vivo* cultures of PBMCs derived from macaques vaccinated 3 doses (III) of HMBPP producing or HMBPP deficient *Listeria*-based vaccine strains before and after restimulation with 40ng/mL HMBPP (top), Percentages of Vγ2+ T cells in PBMCs prior to restimulation were determined by staining 0.5x10^6 PBMCs for CD3 and Vγ2 immediately following PBMC isolation.
doses of the *Listeria*-based Tuberculosis vaccine are less sensitive to HMBPP and secrete challenged with HMBPP synthase-deficient *Listeria*-based Tuberculosis vaccines also show decreases in sensitivity to HMBPP stimulation, these generally remain more responsive to low dose HMBPP stimulation than macaques repeatedly challenged with the HMBPP producing *Listeria*-based vaccine (Figure 15B), suggesting that these cells may respond to a lower amount of phosphoantigen exposure *in vivo*. 
Figure 15. Cytokine production of Vy2Vδ2 T cells from macaques repeatedly vaccinated with *Listeria monocytogenes ΔactA prfA* after ex vivo phosphoantigen restimulation  
A) Representative flow histograms of Vy2+ T cell TNFα production by PBMCs from macaques after the second (II) or third (III) administration of the HMBPP producing *Listeria*-based vaccine strain. Flow histograms were gated on CD3+ lymphocytes. Percentages represent the percentages of Vy2+ T cells that stain positive for TNFα.  
B) Representative flow histograms of Vy2+ T cell TNFα production by PBMCs from macaques after the third (III) administration of the HMBPP producing (left) or HMBPP deficient (right) *Listeria*-based vaccine strain.
CHAPTER 5

Investigating the contribution of HMBPP production on *Listeria monocytogenes*-based vaccine efficacy

5.1. Rationale

To date, all vaccination efforts in clinical trials for controlling *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* have included the use of administering a *Mycobacterium* such as the *Mycobacterium bovis* BCG vaccine to infants followed by a construct designed to boost vaccine-induced immunity generated by the initial vaccine\(^{46,47}\). Many other laboratories searching for replacement vaccines for the BCG vaccine look to other species of the *Mycobacterium* or genetically attenuated forms of *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* itself\(^{119-121}\). All of these organisms express the MEP pathway of isoprenoid biosynthesis and induce strong expansion of V\(\gamma \delta\) T cells in hosts containing these cells\(^56\). Our work examining the consequences of repeated exposure to the HMBPP producing *Listeria monocytogenes*-based vaccine delivery system suggests that priming hosts with an HMBPP producing organism and providing booster doses with an organism that expresses HMBPP may have a detrimental effect to the anti-microbial activity of these cells. Indeed, our studies demonstrate that the V\(\gamma \delta\) T cells in macaques stimulated repeatedly with HMBPP-producing *Listeria*-based Tuberculosis vaccines so hyporesponsiveness and decreased cytokine secretion following HMBPP re-exposure in comparison to cells taken from naïve macaques. Interestingly, the *Listeria monocytogenes* strain lacking the enzyme necessary for HMBPP production is still capable of stimulating V\(\gamma \delta\) T cell activation and memory develop, although expansion occurs to a significantly attenuated magnitude. V\(\gamma \delta\) T cells
derived from macaques receiving this HMBPP-deficient *Listeria*-based Tuberculosis vaccine maintain high sensitivity to HMBPP following repeated administration of the vaccine. In our current study, we examine the consequence of *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* challenge of macaques vaccinated with three doses of the HMBPP producing and HMBPP deficient *Listeria* based Tuberculosis vaccines to compare the impact that Vγ2Vδ2 T cell hyporesponsiveness induced by excess HMBPP exposure may have had on vaccine efficacy.

5.2. Tuberculosis-induced Pathology and Bacterial Burden Decreased by HMBPP deficient *Listeria ΔactA ΔgcpE prfA*-based vaccine but not HMBPP producing *Listeria ΔactA prfA*-based vaccine

To determine the impact of vaccine-induced immune responses against the *Listeria*-based Tuberculosis vaccines, Rhesus macaques were vaccinated 3 times with HMBPP producing *Listeria ΔactA prfA*-based vaccine expressing Tuberculosis antigens ESAT6 and Ag85B or HMBPP deficient *Listeria ΔactA ΔgcpE prfA*-based vaccine expressing the same antigens according to the schedule indicated in figure 8. Macaques were challenged with 80 CFU of *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* Erdman strain in the right caudal lung lobe. Macaques were monitored for an 8 week period for respiratory distress, lethargy and weight loss. Throughout the 8 week period, 1 naïve macaque and 1 macaque vaccinated with the *Listeria ΔactA prfA*-based vaccine reached the humane endpoint criteria of 20% weight loss during week 8 and were euthanized. 8 weeks following infection, all macaques were euthanized to compare the severity of gross pathology following infection. All naïve Rhesus macaques infected with *M.tb. Erdman* presented with coalescing granulomas and extensive damage extensive damage to
right caudal lung lobe as well as granulomatous lesions in all lung lobes. While macaques vaccinated with the HMBPP-producing \textit{Listeria} Δ\textit{actA} \textit{prfA}*-based vaccine showed extensive damage to the right caudal lung lobe of similar severity to naïve Rhesus macaques, gross pathologic damage was restricted to the right caudal, or right caudal and right medial lung lobes in these macaques. Surprisingly, Rhesus macaques vaccinated with the HMPP deficient \textit{Listeria} Δ\textit{actA} Δ\textit{gcpE} \textit{prfA}*-based vaccine showed significantly attenuated lung pathology in the right caudal lung lobe and restriction of pulmonary lesions to the right lung lobes in all cases (Figure 16). Furthermore, while naïve macaques showed extensive extrapulmonary granulomas in the spleen, liver, and kidneys, vaccinated macaques demonstrated a significant decrease in extrapulmonary gross lesions (Table IV). Collectively, these data demonstrate macaques vaccinated with the Listeria-based Tuberculosis vaccine deficient for HMBPP production exhibit a more significant protection against \textit{M. tb}.-induced pathology and dissemination than the HMBPP producing Listeria-based Tuberculosis vaccine.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organ Involved</th>
<th>rLm x 1</th>
<th>rLm x 3</th>
<th>rLm ΔgcpE x 3</th>
<th>Control</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spleen</td>
<td>1/5 (20%)</td>
<td>1/6 (16.7%)</td>
<td>2/6 (33.3%)</td>
<td>8/12 (66.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liver</td>
<td>1/5 (20%)</td>
<td>2/6 (33.3%)</td>
<td>3/6 (50%)</td>
<td>9/12 (75%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kidney</td>
<td>2/5 (40%)</td>
<td>1/6 (16.7%)</td>
<td>2/6 (33.3%)</td>
<td>3/12 (25%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table IV. Limited Extrapulmonary Dissemination in Vaccinated Macaques
Number and percentages of Rhesus macaques with granulomas detected on gross examination after necropsy
Figure 16. **Gross pathology and bacterial burden of Rhesus macaques vaccinated with 3 doses of HMBPP producing *Listeria*-based Tuberculosis vaccine or HMBPP deficient *Listeria*-based Tuberculosis vaccine.**

Representative images of lungs vaccinated with 3 doses of HMBPP producing *Listeria*-based Tuberculosis vaccine *rLm ΔactA prfA* (top), HMBPP deficient *Listeria*-based Tuberculosis vaccine *rLm ΔactA ΔgcpE prfA* (middle) or naïve macaques (bottom). Macaques were euthanized 8 weeks following Tuberculosis infection in the right caudal lobe. Lungs were harvested and each lobe was cut open and examined for gross granulomatous lesions in the lung parenchyma.
5.3. **Decreased Bacterial Burden in lungs of macaques vaccinated by HMBPP deficient Listeria ΔactA ΔgcpE prfA*-based vaccine but not HMBPP producing Listeria ΔactA prfA*-based vaccine**

To determine the impact of the *Listeria*-based vaccines on *M.tb* bacillary load in the lungs throughout the pulmonary Tuberculosis infection of macaques, Bronchoalveolar Lavage was performed on macaques, and BALF was placed on 7H11 media to determine CFU counts in macaque lungs. While BAL CFU counts remained low throughout the 6 weeks macaques vaccinated with the HMBPP deficient *Listeria*-based Tuberculosis vaccine were studied, naïve macaques and macaques vaccinated with the HMBPP producing *Listeria*-based vaccine showed accumulation of *M.tb* bacilli in the BALF of macaques starting at week 4 post-infection (Figure 17A). To determine bacillary load in lungs, tissue samples taken from the right caudal, right medial, right cranial, and left caudal lobes of the lungs of necropsied macaques were homogenized CFU counts retrieved from tissue sections in each lobe were determined. Macaques vaccinated with the HMBPP deficient *Listeria ΔactA ΔgcpE prfA*-based vaccine also demonstrated significantly fewer decreased bacterial burdens in tissue homogenates generated from each of the lung lobes (Figure 17B).

5.4. **PPD-specific αβ T cell responses decreased in macaques vaccinated with HMBPP producing *Listeria ΔactA prfA*-based vaccine and HMBPP deficient *Listeria ΔactA ΔgcpE prfA*-based vaccine**

Many previous studies examining correlates of *M.tb*-induced severity have established that hyperactivation of the adaptive immune system can result in severe immunopathology and extensive lung damage in *M.tb*-infected individuals. Vaccine efficacy of BCG and other
Figure 17. **Bacterial burden of Rhesus macaques vaccinated with 3 doses of HMBPP producing *Listeria*-based Tuberculosis vaccine or HMBPP deficient *Listeria*-based Tuberculosis vaccine.**

A) Bacterial burden of naïve and vaccinated macaques obtained from bronchoalveolar lavage (BAL) fluid. B) CFU counts from tissue homogenization and plating of serial dilutions of 1 cm$^3$ section of tissue derived from the indicated lung lobes after gross pathologic analysis of necropsied macaques.
Tuberculosis vaccine regimens have been correlated with a decreased PPD-specific αβ T cell response. To determine whether the increased pathology seen in the macaques vaccinated with the HMBPP-deficient Listeria-based vaccine was due to an increased PPD-specific αβ T cell response following infection, we examined the pulmonary PPD-specific αβ T cell responses of macaques throughout infection. By week 4, all macaques exhibited a decrease in weight and an increase in erythrocyte sedimentation rate (data not shown), suggesting an ongoing inflammatory response in all macaques by this timepoint. At week 4, macaques vaccinated with either the HMBPP producing or HMBPP deficient Listeria-based vaccines demonstrate decreased pulmonary PPD-specific Th1 responses compared to naïve macaques (Figure 18 top left and top middle histograms). By week 6, however, pulmonary PPD-specific PPD-specific Th1 responses are high in all groups, reaching 45-50% of all αβ T cells in the pulmonary compartment. These data suggest that both the HMBPP producing or HMBPP deficient Listeria-based vaccines downmodulate PPD-specific αβ T cells early on in Tuberculosis infection to a similar degree, but neither are incapable of preventing severe immunopathology and dissemination later in infection in the current model.

5.5. Pulmonary and Circulating Vy2Vδ2 T cells in macaques vaccinated with HMBPP producing Listeria ΔactA prfA*-based vaccine decrease throughout M.tb. challenge

Macaques vaccinated multiple times with the HMBPP producing Listeria-based Tuberculosis vaccine demonstrated decreased sensitivity to phosphoantigen restimulation. We sought to determine whether there was a significant difference in the kinetics or activity of Vy2Vδ2 T cells
Figure 18. **Antigen-specific αβ T cell responses throughout *M.tb.* Challenge**

Histograms of percentages of IFNγ, TNFα or Granulysin-producing αβ T cells in the pulmonary compartment during Week 4 (top) or Week 6 (bottom) post-infection. PBMCs derived from naïve or vaccinated *M.tb.*-infected macaques were stimulated with CD28 and CD49d in the absence (Unstimulated) or presence of 1μg/mL *M.bovis* PPD (PPD-stim) or pooled peptides derived from ESAT6 and Ag85B (A/E-stim) for 6 hours and percentages of αβ T cells expressing Th1 or Cytolytic cytokines were determined by FACS analysis.
following Tuberculosis challenge of these vaccinated macaques. The percentage and absolute number of circulating \( V_\gamma V_\delta2 \) T cells were significantly higher in macaques vaccinated with the HMBPP producing Listeria-based Tuberculosis vaccine than in macaques vaccinated with the HMBPP deficient Listeria-based Tuberculosis vaccine prior to infection (Figure 19A). Macaques vaccinated with the HMBPP deficient Listeria-based Tuberculosis vaccine had significantly higher levels of circulating \( V_\gamma V_\delta2 \) T cells than naïve macaques. Surprisingly, macaques vaccinated with HMBPP producing Listeria-based Tuberculosis vaccine showed a progressive decrease in circulating \( V_\gamma V_\delta2 \) T cell percentage and absolute number throughout infection with significant decreases in circulating \( V_\gamma V_\delta2 \) T cell numbers occurring as early as 14 days post Tuberculosis challenge. By contrast, macaques vaccinated with the HMBPP deficient Listeria-based Tuberculosis vaccine saw increases in circulating \( V_\gamma V_\delta2 \) T cells throughout infection. Naïve macaques also showed a significant increase in circulating \( V_\gamma V_\delta2 \) T cells during infection, although this increase in circulating \( V_\gamma V_\delta2 \) T cells occurs later in infection than in macaques vaccinated with the HMBPP deficient Listeria-based vaccine.

Similar to circulating \( V_\gamma V_\delta2 \) T cells, pulmonary \( V_\gamma V_\delta2 \) T cells in vaccinated macaques were more abundant than in naïve macaques, and macaques vaccinated with the HMBPP-producing vaccine show decreases in percentage throughout \( M.\text{tb.} \) infection, although these decreases were less robust than changes seen in blood. Collectively, these data indicate a high representation of circulating and pulmonary \( V_\gamma V_\delta2 \) T cells in macaques that received the HMBPP producing Listeria-based Tuberculosis vaccine that decreases throughout \( M.\text{tb.} \) infection, while macaques that received the HMBPP deficient Listeria-based Tuberculosis vaccine show a lower level of \( V_\gamma V_\delta2 \) T cells pre-infection that increases throughout infection.
Figure 19. **Pulmonary and Circulating Vy2Vδ2 T cells decrease throughout *M. tb.* infection of HMBPP producing Listeria-based Tuberculosis Vaccinated Macaques**  
Graphs of Vy2Vδ2 T cell percentage in Blood (A) or BAL (B) of naïve or vaccinated Rhesus macaques throughout *M. tb.* infection. PBMCs or BAL lymphocytes were isolated from macaques at the indicated times, stained for antibodies against CD3 and Vy2, and analyzed by FACS.
5.6. Increased apoptosis in \( \text{V} \gamma \text{2V} \delta \text{2} \) T cells derived from macaques vaccinated with HMBPP producing Listeria \( \Delta \text{actA prfA}^+ \)-based vaccine during \( \text{M}.t.b. \) infection

Because persistent antigen presence and repeated activation of antigen-specific T cells has been associated with activation-induced cell death in a variety of models, we examined whether the decrease in circulating \( \text{V} \gamma \text{2V} \delta \text{2} \) T cells throughout infection of the macaques vaccinated with HMBPP producing Listeria-based Tuberculosis vaccine was due to an increase in cell death. Because \( \text{V} \gamma \text{2V} \delta \text{2} \) T cells increase following infection until week 2, and subsequently in activated caspase-3 in \( \text{V} \gamma \text{2V} \delta \text{2} \) T cells. While PBMCs harvested from macaques vaccinated with the HMBPP producing Listeria-based Tuberculosis vaccine showed low levels of activated caspase-3 in all groups, the majority of pulmonary \( \text{V} \gamma \text{2V} \delta \text{2} \) T cells from macaques vaccinated with the HMBPP producing Listeria-based Tuberculosis vaccine expressed activated caspase-3 (Figure 20). Activated caspase-3+ \( \text{V} \gamma \text{2V} \delta \text{2} \) T cells were less abundant in naïve macaques and macaques vaccinated with the HMBPP-deficient Listeria-based vaccine, suggesting that these cells are less likely to undergo activation-induced cell death \textit{in vivo}. \textit{Ex vivo} antigen restimulation of the peripheral blood mononuclear cells also results in a dramatically increased percentage of apoptotic \( \text{V} \gamma \text{2V} \delta \text{2} \) T cells as opposed to naïve macaques or macaques vaccinated with HMBPP deficient Listeria-based vaccine. Collectively, these data suggest that repeated phosphoantigen stimulation through Listeria-mediated HMBPP production leads to increased activation-induced cell death following antigen re-exposure. This activation-induced cell death may decrease the ability of macaques to
limit *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* growth early in infection. This hypothesis will be discussed further in Chapter 6.
Figure 20. **High Activated Caspase-3+ expression from Vγ2Vδ2 T cells of macaques vaccinated with HMBPP producing Listeria-based Tuberculosis Vaccinated Macaques**

A) Representative histograms of pulmonary Vγ2+ T cells expressing activated caspase-3. BAL cells were harvested from macaques on day 14 following *M. tb.* infection, fixed with Foxp3 Cytofix/Cytoperm (Biolegend) and stained for antibodies against CD3, Vγ2 and activated Caspase-3. Histograms generated from FACS plots gated on CD3+ lymphocytes. B) Bar blots of Activated Caspase-3+ Vγ2+ T cells in blood (left) and BAL (right) of naïve or vaccinated rhesus macaques on day 14 following *M. tb.* infection. Percentages indicate percent of total CD3+ Vγ2+ T cells that stain positive for activated caspase-3.
CHAPTER 6

Discussion

6.1. *In vivo* expansion of Vy2Vδ2 T cells after intratracheal administration of attenuated *Listeria monocytogenes ΔactA prfA*

The current study is the first to examine the safety and immunogenicity of a Listeria-based vaccine vector into the lungs of macaques. Contrary to the attenuated strains of *Listeria monocytogenes* deficient for alanine production\(^1\), our particular strain of *Listeria monocytogenes* used is replication competent in the absence of any particular supplementation, suggesting that bacilli will be able to complete multiple rounds of replication *in vivo* without supplementation, but virulence will be decreased due to the inability of the organism to spread from cell to cell through actin nucleation and motility\(^2\).\(^3\). Macaques showed no signs of clinical distress following the vaccination, and developed robust Vy2Vδ2 T cell activation and accumulation in the pulmonary compartments. Interestingly, the percentage of Vy2Vδ2 T cells that accumulate in the pulmonary compartment following pulmonary vaccination was significantly higher than the levels seen following systemic administration of our attenuated *Listeria* vector (Figure 8 and Reference 61). Additionally, significant increases in the percentage and number of circulating Vy2Vδ2 T cells are seen despite an inability to detect *Listeria* bacilli in the blood of macaques vaccinated through the intratracheal route. This suggests that Vy2Vδ2 T cells may become activated in the pulmonary compartment or the hilar and tracheobronchial lymph nodes, and subsequently recirculate in the blood stream. Indeed, increases in activated Vy2Vδ2 T cells were seen in the small and large intestine of 1 rhesus
macaque euthanized following vaccination with the attenuated *Listeria* based vector (data not shown), suggesting that these Vy2Vδ2 T cells activated through pulmonary exposure to phosphoantigens may recirculate and traffic to other mucosal environments. Similarly, cynomolgus macaques colonized with *Helicobacter pylori* infection have been shown to be more resistant to developing active Tuberculosis infection when exposed to lose dose *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* Erdman\(^{123}\). Because *Helicobacter pylori* infection in macaques results in a significant increase in Vy2Vδ2 T cells\(^{124}\), the activation of these Vy2Vδ2 T cells in cynomolgus macaques in the GI tract by *H.pylori* could result in increased pulmonary resistance against *M.tb.* through recirculation and trafficking out to the pulmonary compartment. Our current data provides further support for the hypothesis that activated Vy2Vδ2 T cells significantly contribute to minimizing pulmonary damage following infection with *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* and possibly other HMBPP-producing pulmonary pathogens.

6.2. *In vivo* stimulation of Vy2Vδ2 T cells through Mevalonate or MEP Pathway from *Listeria monocytogenes*

This study provides the first *in vivo* comparison of HMBPP-mediated Vy2Vδ2 T cell expansion, differentiation, and memory formation following exposure to IPP-mediated Vy2Vδ2 T cell stimulation in the context of a bacterial infection. *In vivo* expansion and effector-function maturation of Vy2Vδ2 T cells during bacterial infections can be mediated by HMBPP or IPP\(^{125,126,127,128}\). It has been postulated that other speculative microbial antigens also contribute to immune expansion of γδ T cells\(^{125,126}\). Cytokines alone during infection have also been implicated for activation/expansion of Vy2Vδ2 T cells\(^{59}\). These fundamental immunologic questions have not been addressed in humans and animal models, and now the current study is
starting to dissect them in nonhuman primates using genetically-modified *Listeria monocytogenes*. Our *Listeria ΔactA ΔgcpE prfA* mutant provides a unique opportunity to investigate the impact of IPP in *Listeria* on Vγ2Vδ2 T-cell immune responses, as *gcpE* knock out in *Listeria ΔactA ΔgcpE prfA* would not further attenuate *Listeria* replication and infectivity *in vivo* while losing the ability to produce HMBPP, and therefore allow us to compare parental *Listeria ΔactA prfA* for studies comparing HMBPP and IPP-driven immune biology and responses of Vγ2Vδ2 T cells.

HMBPP-synthase-deficient *Listeria ΔactA ΔgcpE prfA* showed a significant loss of the ability to induce *in vivo* expansion of Vγ2Vδ2 T cells in macaques compared to the parental strain. Such a loss was most striking in the circulation during the primary pulmonary exposure to ΔactA *Listeria ΔgcpE prfA*, suggesting that HMBPP is needed to fully expand Vγ2Vδ2 T cells in primary *Listeria* infection of naïve macaques. Moderate increases in percentages of circulating Vγ2Vδ2 T cells were seen following secondary pulmonary exposure to HMBPP-deficient *Listeria ΔactA ΔgcpE prfA*. These results suggest that IPP produced by *Listeria* or *Listeria*-mediated IPP induction in host cells contribute to activating Vγ2Vδ2 T cells, and that IPP-primed Vγ2Vδ2 T cells could undergo enhanced expansion after the secondary exposure to HMBPP-deficient *Listeria ΔactA ΔgcpE prfA*. This notion is supported by the published observation that orthopoxvirus incapable of producing HMBPP appears to prime and activate Vγ2Vδ2 T cells perhaps through “cellular stress” production of IPP by infected cells. Such “cellular stress”-induced production of IPP stimulating Vγ2Vδ2 T cells has also been reported in the setting of flu and oncogenesis.
The current study also extends previous work by examining the role of microbial HMBPP in pulmonary Vγ2Vδ2 T cell responses during infections. Earlier studies have shown that infections with HMBPP-producing bacteria including *Listeria*, BCG and *Mtb* \(^{59,62,64}\) could remarkably activate and expand Vγ2Vδ2 T cells, and these activated γδ T cells could readily traffic to and accumulate in the pulmonary compartment. Now the results from the current study suggest that bacterially-derived HMBPP and IPP delivered through the pulmonary mucosa greatly contributes to the pulmonary accumulation of Vγ2Vδ2 T cells after *Listeria* exposure. In addition, an increase in circulating Vγ2Vδ2 T cells occurs in response to pulmonary delivery of *Listeria*. The accumulation of Vγ2Vδ2 T cells in the blood likely occurs as a result of migration and recirculation of these clonally-expanded γδ T cells, as ΔactA prfA* *Listeria* is remarkably attenuated and we did not detect recoverable CFU of *Listeria* bacteria or large numbers of neutrophils/macrophages in BAL fluid or blood(data not shown). Since clonal expansion of Vγ2Vδ2 T cells is accommodated in lymphoid tissues instead of lung tissues, the increased numbers of Vγ2Vδ2 T cells in the pulmonary compartment may result from *Listeria*-driven expansion of these cells in peripheral lymphoid tissues including tracheal or nasal-associated lymphoid tissue (NALT) after intra-tracheal *Listeria* exposure. Our results consist with highly immunogenic features of ΔactA prfA* *Listeria* as seen during intranasal immunization of mice\(^{76}\), and implicate the utility of potential immunization for eliciting anti-microbial immune responses of Vγ2Vδ2 T effector cells in the pulmonary compartment\(^{64,131,61,132}\).

Interestingly, the current study showed the predominant CD28- memory phenotype of Vγ2Vδ2 T cells in macaques re-exposed to *Listeria ΔactA prfA* while animals exposed to HMBPP-deficient *Listeria ΔactA ΔgcpE prfA* maintained higher frequencies of CD28+ memory Vγ2Vδ2 T
cells. These results suggest that HMBPP in *Listeria* is a major driver polarizing cells toward a late-stage memory phenotype\(^98\). While immunological memory is a hallmark of adaptive immune responses, accumulating evidence implicates that Vγ2Vδ2 T cells demonstrate adaptive features with immunologic memory-like responses in infections\(^{56,59,62,129}\). Many previous studies have determined that CD28 signaling helps to mediate a more pronounced expansion of memory T cells following re-exposure, suggesting Vγ2Vδ2 T cells activated through an IPP-dependent mechanism may retain a greater capacity to expand and respond to subsequent antigen exposure. Indeed, Vγ2Vδ2 T cell exhaustion has been demonstrated by repeated exposure to potent synthetic phosphoantigen stimulation when pure compounds have been administered in combination with IL-2. Stimulation of Vγ2Vδ2 T cells using an IPP-producing bacterium or viral pathogen may serve as a mechanism through which Vγ2Vδ2 T cell exhaustion can be avoided or prevented. Given that immune memory often confers protection against re-infection, our finding provides rationale to manipulate HMBPP or IPP-specific γδ T cells for immune intervention.

### 6.3. *Vγ2Vδ2 T cell hyporesponsiveness and exhaustion following repeated phosphoantigens exposure in HMBPP producing Listeria ΔactA prfA*

The current study demonstrates a potential detrimental effect of repeated vaccination with HMBPP-producing organisms on the host immune response of human and non-human primates due to the desensitization of Vγ2Vδ2 T cells to phosphoantigens. In response to repeated administration of a HMBPP-producing *Listeria*-based vaccine expressing *M.tb.* antigens ESAT6 and Ag85B, we see a decrease in the magnitude of expansion in the pulmonary and circulating compartments, decreased proliferative responses to antigenic stimulation, and decreased
cytokine production following antigen re-exposure. Clinical efforts to prevent spread of Tuberculosis involve the use of live *Mycobacterium bovis* BCG administration at doses that range from $1-8 \times 10^8$ CFU\(^{107}\). As a result, significant phosphoantigen delivery occurs as a result of the initial BCG vaccination. Studies are ongoing to find a good candidate for a second agent, either viral or bacterial vector-delivered *M.tuberculosis* antigens or subunit vaccines, to boost BCG-induced immunity\(^{46}\). Our data suggests that high dose administration of a vector containing HMBPP as a booster agent may result in significant exhaustion of V\(\gamma\)2V\(\delta\)2 T cells. Indeed, our preliminary data from Tuberculosis challenge of these macaques demonstrates a decrease in V\(\gamma\)2V\(\delta\)2 T cell number throughout Tuberculosis infection in macaques repeatedly given Listeria-based vaccine vectors that express the potent phosphoantigen HMBPP, and that elimination of HMBPP production decreases activation-induced cell death and increases phosphoantigen-induced proliferation of these cells. Many human cohort studies have determined that revaccination with BCG does not increase protection against Tuberculosis\(^{133}\). Repeated BCG at the high doses given may result in a similar exhaustion of V\(\gamma\)2V\(\delta\)2 T cells as we have seen in our experiments. Our previous studies using purified synthetic phosphoantigen, Picostim, and IL-2 to treat cynomolgus macaques infected with *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* demonstrated significant protective effect of this compound in minimizing Tuberculosis-induced pathology and spread (Chen et. al. manuscript in preparation). In the previous studies, Picostim and IL-2 were given three times throughout tuberculosis infection at 2 week intervals following infection. Interestingly, while the first administration of Picostim and IL-2 caused a significant increase in pulmonary and circulating V\(\gamma\)2V\(\delta\)2 T cells, subsequent treatments showed either diminished V\(\gamma\)2V\(\delta\)2 T cell expansion or no V\(\gamma\)2V\(\delta\)2 T cell expansion following treatment.
Previous studies using potent synthetic phosphoantigen BrHPP and IL-2 in healthy cynomolgus macaques showed that when the same dose of BrHPP and IL-2 is given to healthy macaques at 4 week or 8 week intervals, a expansion of Vγ2Vδ2 T cells occurs, followed by a sharp contraction in cell number. Peak Vγ2Vδ2 T cell expansion decreases in magnitude after each administration, and by dose 4, there is no significant increase in Vγ2Vδ2 T cells above baseline\textsuperscript{95}. Interestingly, a single treatment of macaques infected with Yersinia pestis was sufficient to significantly decrease pulmonary pathology associated with pneumonic plague, but was insufficient to prevent spread of pneumonic plague to other organs or prevent mortality\textsuperscript{61}. Collectively, previous studies as well as our current data suggest that single high dose or repeated low dose phosphoantigen exposure appears to be beneficial to macaques, while repeated high dose potent phosphoantigen exposure seems to be detrimental to the host.

In addition to vaccine-mediated phosphoantigen exposure, many bacterial and protozoan pathogens use the MEP pathway for isoprenoid production and make HMBPP\textsuperscript{92}. As a result, repeated infection with these microorganisms may also result in Vγ2Vδ2 T cell hyporesponsiveness, anergy, and activation-induced cell death. Indeed, studies examining fetal blood, neonates, children, adults, and the elderly have shown a progressive increase in Vγ2Vδ2 T cells represented in the blood as an individual develops\textsuperscript{134,135}. By adulthood, most Vγ2Vδ2 T cells are no longer naïve, suggesting that humans encounter many sources of Vγ2Vδ2 T cells throughout their lifetime\textsuperscript{118}. Future studies examining the effect of Vγ2Vδ2 T cell exhaustion on vaccine efficacy will combine our previous experience of vaccine construction and phosphoantigen treatment of macaques to induce Vγ2Vδ2 T cell exhaustion through repeated
phosphoantigen exposure in macaques vaccinated with Listeria-based vaccines or the BCG vaccine to determine the impact of Vγ2Vδ2 T cell exhaustion on the efficacy of these constructs.

Our data suggests that repeated exposure to potent phosphoantigens results in decreased sensitivity of Vγ2Vδ2 T cells to infection. Due to the low infectious dose necessary for Tuberculosis infection, a high sensitivity to phosphoantigen would be beneficial for allowing rapid host detection of Mycobacterium tuberculosis by Vγ2Vδ2 T cells. While the exact mechanism through which Vγ2Vδ2 T cells contribute to decreasing M.tb. pathology is not well understood, activated Vγ2Vδ2 T cells are potent producers of Th1 cytokines IFNγ and TNFα. IFNγ and TNFα are known to work in a synergistic manner to limit the intracellular growth of M.tb. inside macrophages and spread of M.tb. throughout the lung and extrapulmonary sites. In addition, Vγ2Vδ2 T cells produce a number of cytokines and chemokines that could allow for recruitment of other cell types to the site of infection. Indeed, preliminary data from our Listeria-based vaccine studies show an increase in CD3 lymphocyte number in the lung at 2-4 weeks following Tuberculosis challenge of macaques, and these CD3- lymphocytes express abundant amounts cytolytic molecules such as Granulysin and Perforin. These CD3- lymphocytes may have been recruited directly or indirectly by Vγ2Vδ2 T cells and could contribute greatly to limiting M.tb. infection. Further studies are needed to determine the chemoattractant molecules produced by Vγ2Vδ2 T cells upon activation as well as the phenotype and function of the CD3- lymphocytes that appear in M.tb.-infected lungs of macaques.
6.4. **Phosphoantigen production in *Listeria*-based Tuberculosis Vaccine Efficacy**

In Chapter 5, we examined the pathologic and immunologic consequences of *M.tb.* infection of rhesus macaques and the impact of *Listeria*-based Tuberculosis vaccines to minimize pathology. Our study was the first to challenge Rhesus macaques with the 80 CFU dose of the *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* Erdman strain. Surprisingly, despite the selection of a low dose inoculum, naïve macaques developed a rapidly progressive and widely disseminating Tuberculosis infection. In all naïve macaques, the lobe of inoculation showed extensive damage, and in some cases edema and adherence to the diaphragm. Dissemination to other organs occurred in all cases of naïve animals, and macaques demonstrated weight loss up to 20% of total bodyweight within an 8 week period. A 2-dose homologous vaccine-boost regimen using the HMBPP producing *Listeria*-based vaccine was previously shown to cause significant decreases in pulmonary pathology against *M.tb.* infection in a cynomolgus macaque model of infection. By contrast, our 3-dose homologous vaccine boost regimen was largely ineffective in decreasing pulmonary pathology in Rhesus macaques challenged, but was effective in minimizing extrapulmonary dissemination. It is possible that differences in vaccine efficacy may be due to differences in the animal models. Active pulmonary Tuberculosis is typically induced in cynomolgus macaques through inoculation with 500 CFU *M.tb.* Erdman\(^3\). Active pulmonary Tuberculosis in cynomolgus macaques rarely results in pulmonary dissemination, and the pulmonary pathology of Tuberculosis is much less severe than that seen in rhesus macaques\(^4\). A previous study comparing BCG vaccine efficacy in cynomolgus macaques and rhesus macaques showed a robust protection of pathology in BCG-vaccinated cynomolgus macaques, but a much less robust level of protection seen in BCG-vaccinated rhesus macaques\(^{136}\).
In addition to the difference in animal models, our current vaccination schedule consisted in a 3-dose homologous vaccine-boost regimen. Our studies described in chapters 4 and 5 have elucidated significant detrimental consequences to Vy2Vδ2 T cell sensitivity and increased apoptosis of Vy2Vδ2 T cells following infection, which could contribute to a decrease in the level of protection seen in our 3-dose vaccine regimen. Our comparison of HMBPP producing *Listeria*-based Tuberculosis Vaccine to HMBPP deficient *Listeria*-based Tuberculosis Vaccine efficacy in the 3-dose vaccine regimen model allowed us to compare the impact of repeated high dose phosphoantigens exposure on the vaccine-elicited response. Interestingly, we saw significant decreases in pulmonary pathology and bacterial burden in the HMBPP deficient *Listeria*-based Tuberculosis Vaccine compared to naïve macaques. Because a loss of HMBPP synthetic ability of the *Listeria*-based Tuberculosis vaccine abrogated the vaccine-induced exhaustion of Vy2Vδ2 T cells seen in the HMBPP producing *Listeria*-based Tuberculosis vaccine, this vector could potentially be used to boost BCG vaccine-induced responses without causing Vy2Vδ2 T cell exhaustion and death.

6.5. **Pattern-specific Immunity to *Mycobacterium tuberculosis***

Vy2Vδ2 T cells represent a class of pattern recognizing T cells with high proliferative capacity and potent responses to *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* that could potentially be harnessed as immunotherapeutic agents against *M.tb* strains that have developed resistance to current antibiotic treatment. Similar studies examining a class of lipid recognizing T cells, the CD1d-restricted NKT cells, showed that NKT cell activation through α-galactosylceramide corresponded with a decrease in bacterial burden and pathology in mice infected with *M.tb*137.
In vitro studies showed that NKT cells could respond to *M.tb*.-infected macrophages and inhibit the intracellular growth of *M.tb* \(^{138}\). High dose or repeated administration of α-galactosylceramide resulted in decreased response of CD1d-restricted NKT cells in vitro and in vivo \(^{139,140}\), reflecting a similar pattern of high dose antigen-related exhaustion and death seen with the Vy2Vδ2 T cell subset. Although the specific lipid antigens that can be detected by CD1d-restricted NKT cells are only recently being characterized, increasing numbers of studies have identified lipids derived from various bacterial species that can be loaded into CD1d molecules and presented to CD1d-restricted NKT cells \(^{141,142}\). As a result, it is possible that decreased BCG vaccine efficacy and overall decreased host T cell response to *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* may be due to repeated exposure to non-protein antigens resulting in exhaustion, anergy, and death of innate-like T cells responsible for early control of *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*.

Collectively, our work points out a subset of pattern recognizing cells whose exhaustion as a consequence of aging and repeated exposure to pathogens may contribute to the wide variation in vaccine efficacy seen both in terms of geography and vaccination age. Interventions that restore the sensitivity of these pattern-recognizing T cells or adoptive transfer of responsive cells remain possible avenues for decreasing *M.tb*. burden.

6.6. Pitfalls and Considerations

A major pitfall of our current study design is that we were unable to analyze the expansion, memory formation, and functional hyporesponsiveness of the αβ T cell responses generated from the *Listeria*-based vaccines. As a result, we are unable to conclusively determine whether
repeated vaccination of our macaques with *Listeria*-based Tuberculosis vaccines expressing ESAT6 and Ag85B resulted in the exhaustion of the ESAT6 and Ag85B-specific peptide responses of CD4 and CD8 T cells along with the phosphoantigen specific Vγ2Vδ2 T cell responses. Our lab has over 10 years of experience in using MHC class II tetramer technology to study peptide-specific responses generated in response to infection or vaccination of macaques, but the particular MHC alleles necessary for the use of this tetramer technology were not present in the macaques used in this study\textsuperscript{143}. Due to the significant genetic heterogeneity of macaques used in research, identification and recruitment of macaques with specific MHC alleles would require extensive screening of macaques. Our lab continues to expand the repertoire of MHC class II tetramers we have available as well as screen macaques for detailed studies of CD4 and CD8 T cell dynamics following vaccination and Tuberculosis infection of macaques in future studies.


38. Flynn, J.L., Goldstein, M.M., Triebold, K.J., Koller, B. & Bloom, B.R. Major histocompatibility complex class I-restricted T cells are required for resistance to Mycobacterium tuberculosis


February 5, 2010

Zheng Chen
Microbiology & Immunology
MC 790

Dear Dr. Chen:

The protocol indicated below was reviewed at a convened ACC meeting in accordance with the Animal Care Policies of the University of Illinois at Chicago on 1/19/2010. The protocol was not initiated until final clarifications were reviewed and approved on 2/3/2010. The protocol is approved for a period of 3 years with annual continuation.

Title of Application: Listeria-Based Vaccination of Macaques for SIV/SHIV Infection

ACC Number: 2009253

Initial Approval Period: 2/3/2010 to 1/19/2011

Current Funding: Portions of this protocol are supported by the funding sources indicated in the table below.

Number of funding sources: 1

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<td>200906395</td>
<td>PSI</td>
<td>Miroslav Malovskiy (U of WI), Zheng Chen (UIC-PF on subcontract)</td>
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</table>
This institution has Animal Welfare Assurance Number A3460.01 on file with the Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare, NIH. This letter may only be provided as proof of IACUC approval for those specific funding sources listed above in which all portions of the grant are matched to this ACC protocol.

Thank you for complying with the Animal Care Policies and Procedures of UIC.

Sincerely yours,

Richard D. Marshall, PhD
Chair, Animal Care Committee

cc: BRL, ACC File, James Frenche, PAF 200905395
March 24, 2011

Zheng Chen
Microbiology & Immunology
MC 790

Dear Dr. Chen:

The protocol indicated below was reviewed at a convened ACC meeting in accordance with the Animal Care Policies of the University of Illinois at Chicago on 1/20/2011. The protocol was not initiated until final clarifications were reviewed and approved on 3/23/2011. The protocol is approved for a period of 3 years with annual continuation.

Title of Application: Analysis of Virulence of actA gcpE Double-knockout Listeria Monocytogenes

ACC Number: 10-228

Initial Approval Period: 3/23/2011 to 1/20/2012

Current Funding: Currently protocol NOT matched to specific funding source. Modification will need to be submitted prior to Just in time or acceptance of award to match protocol to external funding source. All animal work proposed in the funding application must be covered by an approved protocol. UIC is the only performance site currently approved for this protocol.

This institution has Animal Welfare Assurance Number A2460.01 on file with the Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare (OLAW), NIH. This letter may only be provided as proof of IACUC approval for those specific funding sources listed above in which all portions of the funding proposal are matched to this ACC protocol.

In addition, all investigators are responsible for ensuring compliance with all federal and institutional policies and regulations related to use of animals under this protocol and the funding sources listed on this protocol. Please use OLAW’s “What Investigators Need to Know about the Use of Animals” (http://grants.nih.gov/grants/olaw/InvestigatorsNeedToKnow.pdf) as a reference guide. Thank you for complying with the Animal Care Policies and Procedures of UIC.

Sincerely yours,

Richard D. Minshall, PhD
Chair, Animal Care Committee

RDM/min
cc: BRL, ACC File, James Frencher
January 27, 2012

Zheng Chen
Microbiology & Immunology
MC 790

Dear Dr. Chen:

The modifications requested in modification indicated below pertaining to your approved protocol indicated below have been reviewed and approved in accordance with the Animal Care Policies of the University of Illinois at Chicago on 01/27/2012.

Title of Application: IL-2/Treg Based Immunity to TB and AIDS Related TB

ACC Number: 10-122

Modification Number: 04

Nature of Modification: Addition of ART treatment to animals added under mod #3. This will allow original control group to severe as the control for these animals and for comparison across all groups. ART treatment will be as described in original protocol.

Protocol Approved: 07/21/2010

Current Approval Period: 07/20/2011 to 07/20/2012. Protocol is eligible for 1 additional year of renewal prior to expiration and resubmission.

Current Funding: Portions of this protocol are supported by the funding sources indicated in the table below.

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Grant Number: RO1 HL064360 (years 12-16) (201001989)

Current Status: Funded

UIC PAF NO.: 201001989

Site: UIC

PI: Zheng Chen

This institution has Animal Welfare Assurance Number A3460.01 on file with the Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare, NIH. This letter may only be provided as proof of IACUC approval for those specific funding sources listed above in which all portions of the grant are matched to this ACC protocol.

Thank you for complying with the Animal Care Policies and Procedures of UIC.

Sincerely yours,

Bradley Merrill, Ph.D.
Chair, Animal Care Committee
BM/5
cc: BRL, ACC File, Crystal Ying Chen, Dan Huang

Phone (312) 996-1972 • Fax (312) 996-9088
March 22, 2012
Zheng Chen  
Microbiology & Immunology  
M/C 790  

Dear Dr. Chen:

The modifications requested in modification indicated below pertaining to your approved protocol indicated below have been reviewed and approved in accordance with the Animal Care Policies of the University of Illinois at Chicago on 03/26/2012.

Title of Application: IL-2/Treg Based Immunity to TB and AIDS Related TB

ACC Number: 10-122

Modification Number: 05

Nature of Modification: Change in study design to focus on the effect of Listeria-based vaccines on TB infection and not HIV-related TB reactivation. Addition of 8 cynos without prior vaccination as controls.

Protocol Approved: 07/21/2010

Current Approval Period: 07/20/2011 to 07/20/2012. Protocol is eligible for 1 additional year of renewal prior to expiration and resubmission.

Current Funding: Portions of this protocol are supported by the funding sources indicated in the table below.  
Number of funding sources: 1

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Grant Number  
Current Status  
UIC PAF NO.  
Performance Site  
Grant PI

ROI HL064360 (years 12-16)  
Fundand  
201001989  
UIC  
Zheng Chen

This institution has Animal Welfare Assurance Number A3460.01 on file with the Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare, NIH. This letter may only be provided as proof of IACUC approval for those specific funding sources listed above in which all portions of the grant are matched to this ACC protocol.

Thank you for complying with the Animal Care Policies and Procedures of UIC.
Sincerely yours,

Bradley Merrill, PhD  
Chair, Animal Care Committee  
BM:35  
cc: BRL, ACC File, Crystal Ying Chen, Dan Huang

Phone (312) 996-1972 · Fax (312) 994-9088
July 30, 2012

Zheng Chen
Microbiology & Immunology
M/C 790

Dear Dr. Chen:

The modifications requested in modification indicated below pertaining to your approved protocol indicated below have been reviewed in accordance with the Animal Care Policies of the University of Illinois at Chicago on 07/30/2012.

Title of Application: IL-2/Treg Based Immunity to TB and AIDS Related TB

ACC Number: 10-122

Modification Number: 10-122-07

Nature of Modification: PI is requesting to add another booster injection for Listeria TB antigen vaccines to boost Th17 immune response prior to the start of challenge.

Protocol Approved: 7/21/10

Current Approval Period: 7/20/12 - 7/20/13.

Current Funding: Portions of this protocol are supported by the funding sources indicated in the table below.

Number of funding sources: 1

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Grant Number: RO1 HL064960 (years 12-16)

Current Status: Funded

UIC PAF NO: 2010-01989

Performance Site: UIC

Grant PI: Zheng Chen

This institution has Animal Welfare Assurance Number A3460.01 on file with the Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare, NIH. This letter may only be provided as proof of IACUC approval for those specific funding sources listed above in which all portions of the grant are matched to this ACC protocol.

Thank you for complying with the Animal Care Policies and Procedures of UIC.

Sincerely yours,

Bradley Merrill, PhD
Chair, Animal Care Committee

BM/s
cc: BRL, ACC File, Crystal Ying Chen, Dan Huang
October 17, 2012

Zheng Chen
Microbiology & Immunology
M/C 790

Dear Dr. Chen:

The modifications requested in modification indicated below pertaining to your approved protocol indicated below have been reviewed in accordance with the Animal Care Policies of the University of Illinois at Chicago on 10/16/12.

Title of Application: IL-2/Treg Based Immunity to TB and AIDS Related TB

ACC Number: 10-122

Modification Number: 10-122-08

Nature of Modification: Request for reduction of M.tb Erdman dose to 80 CFU.

Protocol Approved: 7/21/10

Current Approval Period: 7/20/12-7/20/13.

Current Funding: Portions of this protocol are supported by the funding sources indicated in the table below.

Number of funding sources: 1

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This institution has Animal Welfare Assurance Number A3460.01 on file with the Office of Laboratory Animal Welfare, NIH. This letter may only be provided as proof of IACUC approval for those specific funding sources listed above in which all portions of the grant are matched to this ACC protocol.

Thank you for complying with the Animal Care Policies and Procedures of UIC.

Sincerely yours,

Bradley Merrill, PhD
Chair, Animal Care Committee

cc: BRL, ACC File, Crystal Ying Chen, Dan Huang

Phone (312) 996-1972 • Fax (312) 996-9088
August 5, 2013

Zheng Chen
Microbiology & Immunology
M/C 790

Dear Dr. Chen:

The protocol indicated below was reviewed at a convened ACC meeting in accordance with the Animal Care Policies of the University of Illinois at Chicago on 7/16/2013. The protocol was not initiated until final clarifications were reviewed and approved on 8/5/2013. The protocol is approved for a period of 3 years with annual continuations.

Title of Application: Vg2-Vd4 T Cell Exhausation in TB Vaccines

ACC Number: 13-122

Initial Approval Period: 8/5/2013 to 7/16/2014

Current Funding: Portions of this protocol are supported by the funding sources indicated in the table below.

Number of funding sources: 1

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sources listed on this protocol. Please use OLAW's "What Investigators Need to Know about the Use of Animals" (http://grants.nih.gov/grants/olaw/InvestigatorsNeed2Know.pdf) as a reference guide. Thank you for complying with the Animal Care Policies and Procedures of UIC.

Sincerely yours,

Bradley Merrill, PhD
Chair, Animal Care Committee

BM/mdb
cc: BRL, ACC File, James Frencher
March 3, 2014

Zheng Chen
Microbiology & Immunology
M/C 790

Dear Dr. Chen:

The modifications requested in modification indicated below pertaining to your approved protocol indicated below have been reviewed and approved in accordance with the Animal Care Policies of the University of Illinois at Chicago on 3/3/14.

Title of Application: Vg2-Vd2 T Cell Exhausation in TB Vaccines

ACC Number: 13-122

Modification Number: 2

Nature of Modification: Addition of control group (6 animals) to ensure that non-specific peptide-specific T cells stimulated by Listeria monocytogenes administration are not providing significant contribution to the protective response seen. 1 dose of Listeria based vaccine strain (del acA4del gcscPrfA) that does not express any TB antigens and will be given through IT inoculation in order to activate listeria protein-specific T cells and challenge these animals to see if these cells would contribute to protection against M. tb challenge (challenged on week 12). Blood, BAL, and rectal biopsies will be collected periodically and study endpoint is week 20.

Protocol Approved: 8/5/2013

Current Approval Period: 8/6/2013 to 7/16/2014. Protocol is eligible for 2 additional years of renewal prior to expiration and resubmission.

Current Funding: Portions of this protocol are supported by the funding sources indicated in the table below.

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Year, month, volume, issue, pages, and DOI:


Names of all authors:

Frencheer, JT, Shen, H, Yan, L, Wilson, S, Freisinger, NE,
Rizzo, AN, Chan, Y, Chan, ZW

Description of the desired material (use extra pages if necessary): Republish figures 1-5 of this text as part of the thesis of James Frencheer (first author).

Journal/publication in which the material is to be republished (please use full title): Thesis: Dissertation: Role of Lipoprotein Biosynthesis in Lipotoxin-Based Tuberculosis Vaccine Efficacy.

Company/organization that owns this journal: The College of Medicine

Person making the request: James Frencheer

Fax number: 312-413-8222

Staff will attempt to fix a reply within one week. Please be sure to provide an accurate fax number and to verify that the receiving fax machine is working properly.

Date received: ___________ Date processed: 2/27/15

Permission granted:

Comments:
VITA

James T. Frencher     jfrenc4@uic.edu

Education and Training

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<th>Degree</th>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Discipline</th>
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| B.S.       | 2005-2007 | University of Michigan Ann Arbor, MI | Microbiology  
GPA: 3.3   MCAT: 35 |
| M.S.       | 2007-2008 | University of Michigan Ann Arbor, MI | Molecular and Cellular Biology |
| M.D./Ph.D.| 2008-2015 | University of Illinois College of Medicine Chicago, Illinois | Ph.D. in Immunology  
USMLE Step 1: 251 |

Professional Experience

2008-2015  **PhD Thesis Research**: Laboratory of Zheng W. Chen M.D. Ph.D. at the University Of Illinois College Of Medicine at Chicago. My PhD research project employed a multi-faceted approach to examining the impact of repeated stimulation of the immune system by bacterial-associated molecular patterns on the development and maintenance of vaccine-induced immune responses in non-human primate models of Mycobacterium tuberculosis infection. In addition, I planned and participated in projects examining the prognostic utility of platelet parameters in HIV-related fatal malaria infections and assisted in the development of a macaque model for HIV-related TB infection.

2007  **Graduate Research Assistant**: Laboratory of David Irani, M.D. at the Holtom-Garrett Neuroimmunology Laboratory at the University of Michigan. My research in the lab of Dr. David Irani examined the mechanism of neuroprotection conferred by the the FDA approved, highly lipophilic ARB candesartan on in a mouse model of neurovirulent West Nile Virus.

2005-2006  **Undergraduate Research**: Laboratory of Alfred Chang M.D.. at the University of Michigan Medical Center Department of Surgery. As an undergraduate I was awarded the Cancer Center Undergraduate Research Fellowship, which provided me institutional funding to carry out an independent research project. My research examined the role of co-stimulatory molecules on the ability of T cells to develop strong anti-tumor responses.
RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

Original Peer Reviewed Publications


Invited Talks


2012 Biological Research Laboratory Seminar Series, University of Illinois College of Medicine: “Macaques as a Model organism for Infectious Diseases”. October 25th, 2012.

2012 International Gamma Delta T Cell Conference, Freiburg Germany “Knock out of HMBPP Synthase in recombinant Listeria vaccine vector reduced the ability of the vaccine to induce Vγ2Vδ2 T-cell expansion and elicit Th17 and Th22 αβ T cell responses in macaques” June 1, 2012


EDUCATION ACTIVITIES

Teaching

2013-2015 Adjunct Professor in Biology – Malcolm X College
1. Hold Course Lectures for various courses including Anatomy and Physiology, Cell Biology and Medical Terminology
2. Prepare, administer and grade examinations, quizzes, presentations,
3. hold office hours
4. Counsel students on academic achievement, difficulty, and career development
5. Write letters of recommendation

2011-2012 Urban Health Program Teaching Assistant - UIC College of Applied Health Sciences
1. Conduct review lectures in Physiology to applied health science undergraduates at UIC
2. Hold tutoring sessions for individuals or small groups who were in danger of failing physiology

2009-2013 Urban Health Program Peer Educator – UIC College of Medicine
1. Conduct review lectures in Biochemistry, Histology, Physiology, Microbiology, Immunology, and Step 1 Preparation to first and second year medical students at UIC
2. Tutor individuals and small groups of medical students preparing for USMLE step1

2007-2008 Graduate Student Instructor – University of Michigan
1. Hold discussions sections for undergraduate students in the courses of Introductory Biology, Genetics, and Molecular and Cell Biology Lab
2. Prepare, administer and Grade Examinations
3. Hold office hours for struggling students

2005-2006 Science Learning Center Tutor – University of Michigan
1. Tutor small groups of undergraduate students in the subjects of Chemistry and Biology

**Mentoring**

2013 Zhouran (Alvin) Zhang – Graduate Student in Laboratory of Zheng W. Chen M.D. Ph.D.

2011 Arwa Qaqish – Graduate Student in Laboratory of Zheng W. Chen, M.D. Ph.D.

**ORGANIZATIONAL ACTIVITIES**

**Professional Societies**

2014 Society for Interventional Radiology (SIR)

2013 American Physician Scientist Association (APSA)

2012 American College of Physicians (ACP)

2011 Infectious Disease Society for America (IDSA)

2011 Association for Immunologists (AAI)

2011 American Society for Microbiology (ASM)

2008 American Medical Association (AMA)
Leadership Positions

2012-2014  MSTP Admissions Committee Member
2010-2012  Gold Humanism Honor Society Selection Committee Member
2008-2010  Chicago Medical Student Counsel – M3/M4 Subcommittee Member
2008-2010  Medical School Class of 2012 Class Board Vice President

RECOGNITION

Honors and Awards

2014  UIC Urban Health Program Jose Celso Barbosa Scholarship Award
2013, 2014  UIC Medical Scientist Training Program Travel Award
2012  International Gamma Delta T Cell Conference Travel Award
2011  University of Illinois College of Medicine Research Day Gold Prize Winner
2006  University of Michigan Cancer Center Research Fellowship