

Dean's Newsletter

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Continued Progress Toward Our Application to Become an NCI-Designated Comprehensive Cancer Center

On Saturday morning February 26th, faculty gathered in the Clark Center for a Scientific Retreat that updated plans for our application to the National Cancer Center to become a designated Comprehensive Cancer Center. At this time we hope to submit our application in October of 2005. During the past year we accomplished a number of key elements that will enable our ultimate success. These included:

- ***Leadership***
 - The appointment of Dr. Irv Weissman as the Principal Investigator of the proposed Comprehensive Cancer Center.
 - The decision to search for a Deputy Director of the Comprehensive Cancer Center who will work with Dr. Weissman to direct the program operationally and provide scientific oversight. A search has been carried out for this position and we hope to name the successful candidate shortly.
 - The appointment of key Associate Directors including:
 - Dr. Mike Cleary as Associate Director for Basic Science
 - Dr. Ron Levy as Associate Director for Translational Science
 - Dr. Steve Leibel as Associate Director for Clinical Research and Care
 - Dr. Dee West as Associate Director for Population Sciences
 - Ms. Joanne Murphy as Associate Director for Administration and Planning (Ms. Murphy began officially on March 1st)
 - Still to be named is the Associate Director for Shared Resources.
- ***Program Development***

- Since the last External Advisory Committee meeting in March 2004, continued development has taken place regarding the scientific programs that will comprise the Comprehensive Cancer Center application. Going in to the Scientific Retreat on Saturday there were nine proposed projects (4 basic, 4 clinical and one population sciences). As a result of the discussion, it is likely that two of the programs will be combined and one expanded. Accordingly the current iteration of proposed projects is as follows:

- **Basic Science Programs**

<i>Program</i>	<i>Principal Investigators</i>
Cancer/Stem Cell Biology	Drs. Irv Weissman & Roel Nusse
Radiation Biology	Drs. Amato Giaccia & Quynh Le
Cancer Biology	Drs. Mike Cleary & Linda Boxer
Cancer Imaging	Drs. Sam Gambhir & Chris Contag

- **Clinical Sciences Programs**

<i>Program</i>	<i>Principal Investigators</i>
Systematic Molecular Profiling of Cancer	Drs. Pat Brown and Stephanie Jeffries
Program in Lymphoma	Drs. Ron Levy and Sandra Horning
Cancer Immunology	Dr. Edgar Engleman and Mark Davis
Hematopoietic Cell Transplantation and Immune Reconstitution	Drs. Robert Negrin and Kenneth Weinberg

- **Population Science Program**

<i>Program</i>	<i>Principal Investigators</i>
Cancer Epidemiology, Prevention, Outcomes, & Education	Drs. Dee West and Alice Whittemore

We heard updated progress reports for these program areas, and they were superb. Significant progress has been made in each area, and we now have a greater understanding of how the Comprehensive Cancer Center would enable each to engage a wider community. We had the benefit of two external consultants (Dr. Beverly Mitchell, Professor of Medicine at UNC, and Dr. Michael Clarke from U. Michigan), who offered an important perspective on the individual projects and how they might fare within our proposal. The next steps are to gather comments from those who attended

the retreat and to further refine the program proposals for presentation to our External Advisory Group on May 26th.

An additional notable programmatic accomplishment was the finalization of our Stanford-Northern California Cancer Center (NCCC) affiliation agreement in December 2004.

In addition to the program project proposals, the application we plan to submit to the NCI on October 1st will contain 13 shared resource proposals, as follows:

<i>Share Resources/ Cores</i>	<i>Principal Investigators</i>
Cancer Biostatistics	Drs P. Lavori and T. Lai
Clinical Trials Support	Drs. G. Fisher & M. Bischoff
Protocol Review & Monitoring Systems	Drs. S. Knox, S. Horning, R. Carlson, S. Srinivas
Informatics Core	Dr. H. Lowe
Animal Colonies	Drs. R. Tolwani & M. Garcia
Transgenic & Knock-Out Mice	Drs. M. Cleary, D. Felsher, Y. Chen Tsai
Cell & Tissue Procurement	Drs. J. Pollack & J. Norton
Cancer Imaging Core	Drs. C. Contag, S. Gambir, B. Daniel
Confocal & Immunoelectron Microscopy	Drs. S. Smith & J. Mulholland
Flow Cytometry	Drs. G. Nolan & L. Herzenberg
DNA Microarrays	Dr. G. Sherlock, M. Fero, C. Ball
High Throughput Genomics	Drs. R. Davis, M. Mindrinos, W. Xiao, H. Li
Proteomics	Dr. P. Jackson

- **Facilities**

One of the major limitations we currently face is research space. To help during the immediate period ahead, the School has leased off-campus space on Arastradero Road to provide an interim home for our Cancer/Stem Cell Institute and cancer related programs. While we certainly recognize the limitations associated with research space that is remote from the central campus, it is our hope that this off-site space will enable us to launch key programs and recruitments while we are working on the planning and development of the Stanford Institutes of Medicine #1 facility that will be just south of the CCSR building.

Overall, we are continuing to make important progress in our quest to become an NCI-designated Comprehensive Cancer Center. While we still have much work to do, I am very encouraged by what has been accomplished to date and believe that if we stay on the current trajectory, we will be successful in submitting our proposal this October. Continuing appreciation to Dr. Karl Blume for all that he has done to get us to this point.

Launch of the Protocol Review and Monitoring System

In April 2005 we will take another significant step towards Stanford's proposed Comprehensive Cancer Center with the launch of the Protocol Review and Monitoring System (PRMS) Core under the direction of Susan Knox, Ph.D., M.D. This core will operate two important committees required for a Comprehensive Cancer Center: the *Scientific Review Committee* and the *Data and Safety Monitoring Committee*.

The *Scientific Review Committee (SRC)* will review for scientific merit all cancer-related clinical research protocols involving human subjects, including prevention, translational, and psychosocial studies. Cancer studies can be submitted in parallel to Stanford's Administrative Panels on Human Subjects in Medical Research (IRBs). Both the Scientific Review Committee and the IRB must approve each cancer-related clinical research study before it can be opened to accrual. The Scientific Review Committee is being led by Sandra Horning, M.D. and Robert Carlson, M.D.

The *Data and Safety Monitoring Committee (DSMC)* will monitor all cancer-related investigator-initiated trials and will monitor safety reports for all cancer-related studies. The Data and Safety Monitoring Committee is being led by Susan Knox, Ph.D., M.D., and Sandy Srinivas, M.D.

In order to support these efforts, the Biostatistics Core, led by Philip Lavori, Ph.D., and the Cancer Clinical Trials Office (CCTO), led by George Fisher, M.D., Ph.D. and Miriam Bischoff, M.S., M.B.A., are available to support clinical investigators' efforts to initiate their trials. There will be a presentation on Tuesday March 29, 2005 at 8AM in the Cancer Center Conference Rooms to discuss the three cores (Biostatistics, CCTO, and PRMS), the new committees (SRC and DSMC), and the new standard operating procedures. All cancer center faculty involved in clinical research are encouraged to attend since the committees' activities will officially begin on Monday April 4, 2005.

Stanford Hosts the ICOC

On Tuesday, March 1st Stanford hosted the 3rd (official) meeting of the Independent Citizen's Oversight Committee (ICOC) in the Fairchild Auditorium. The ICOC serves as the equivalent of a Board of Trustees for the California Institute for Regenerative Medicine (CIRM), which came into being following the passage of Proposition 71 by the citizens of California on November 2nd 2004. Because all meetings of the ICOC are public, the 29-member committee carried out its work in an open forum, with opportunities for public comment throughout the meeting. As you may know, State Controller Steve Westly appointed me to the ICOC on November 4, 2004.

While the goal of the CIRM is to fund research proposals and facilities, its first steps have necessarily been focused on building the infrastructure to support its activities and establishing the standards that will guide them. Accordingly, special attention has been given to the best practices in such areas as grant making and conflict of interest at organizations including the National Academy of Sciences, NIH, NSF and non-profit foundations like the Juvenile Diabetes Foundation and the Gates Foundation. Some of the best practice guidelines are generic, whereas others are specific to stem cell research.

In this context, the National Academic of Sciences is expected to issue a report this April on guidelines that might be used to regulate stem cell research, including embryonic stem cell research and somatic cell nuclear transfer. This report, which we are eagerly anticipating, is being prepared by the Life Sciences Board of NAS and is co-chaired by Richard Hynes from MIT and Jonathan Moreno from UVA. The stimulus for this report came from the Health Science Policy Board of the Institute of Medicine (which I chair) and from very important insights from individuals, including Drs. Paul Berg and Irv Weissman. It is hoped that these guidelines will provide the same safeguards for assuring the highest quality stem cell research along with the highest ethical and safety standards as the guidelines developed a quarter of a century ago for recombinant DNA technology.

Despite the fact that nearly 60% of the citizens of California voted for Proposition 71, stem cell research remains controversial throughout the nation and indeed the world. In just the past couple of weeks, selected countries in the United Nations (including the US) increased their efforts to have the UN take an international stance against cloning that would include somatic cell nuclear transfer (sometimes inappropriately referred to as “therapeutic cloning”). Of course there is concurrence that reproductive cloning should be banned. But there is considerable support and scientific interest in somatic cell nuclear transfer, which most do not view as a form of cloning per se.

In addition to the actions being sought at the UN, efforts are underway to ban embryonic stem cell research (and somatic cell nuclear transfer) in a number of states, including, most recently, Missouri, Texas, and Massachusetts. Moreover, the debate continues in the Congress and especially in the Senate. Some senators (e.g., Brownback) are seeking to ban and even criminalize embryonic stem cell research whereas others (e.g., Orrin Hatch) continue to offer their support for this research. This is occurring at the same time that several other states (e.g., Wisconsin, New Jersey, Connecticut, Maryland) are in the process of passing or have passed funding mechanisms to support embryonic stem cell research. Clearly this issue continues to divide communities, political leaders and religious organizations. While recognizing the rights of individuals to have different points of view, I personally believe that this research can and should be conducted with the highest ethical standards, that it will foster new knowledge, and that it has the potential to result in new therapies for an array of serious medical disorders. This is what the citizens of California wanted as well when they voted on Proposition 71. Nevertheless, it is notable that in the past days two lawsuits questioning the authority of the CIRM to fulfill its mandate have been filed.

Of course all of this makes it incredibly important that the California Institute for Regenerative Medicine be as successful as possible. I have been quite encouraged by the efforts and commitments of my co-members on the ICOC. Whether disease advocates, academic leaders or industry leaders, everyone has been working diligently to help fully initiate and support the CIRM. An important step occurred at the March 1st meeting when Dr. Zach Hall was named Interim President/CEO and Senior Science Policy Advisor for the CIRM. As a number of you likely know, Dr. Hall has had a stellar career in science and administration. An internationally recognized neuroscientist with a long career at UCSF, Dr. Hall also served as the Director of the National Institute of Neurological Diseases and Stroke and subsequently as a vice provost for research, first at UCSF and more recently at USC. His appointment will be for one year. During that time he will play a key role in establishing the infrastructure and the policies that will guide the CIRM. Having Zach as Interim President and CEO is enormously valuable. Among many other benefits, his presence will permit the search for the permanent president for the CIRM, which is now underway, to proceed with resolve.

Of course the primary and critical purpose of the CIRM is to award grants to scientists conducting research in stem cell biology and regenerative medicine in California. Naturally we would all like that process to commence as soon as possible. But it is imperative that the ICOC assures that funding, when it begins, supports the highest quality research proposals with the highest ethical standards. With the appointment of an Interim President, more rapid progress can now be made to make this happen – hopefully by summer. More details will follow in future Newsletters.

A Lesson in Bicycle Safety

It has been a while since I have written about bicycle safety on campus, even though I worry about it every day- especially when I drive home at night and see many individuals riding bicycles without helmets or any forms of lighting or reflections. But my concerns were rekindled this past week when I was walking to the Campus Drive/Roth Way garage across from the medical school. It was about 8 PM, and it had begun raining just a short time prior. As I entered the garage I heard squealing brakes at the Campus Drive crosswalk and then a shout of “Oh my God!” Rushing to the scene I saw a bicycle trapped under the front wheels and hood of a BMW. Amazingly, the rider – who had been thrown off the bike – had already risen from the ground and was alert, although with arm and shoulder discomfort. Thankfully the rider had been wearing a bike helmet, which, as it turned out, was cracked at the point of contact where he had hit the ground. He did not sustain a serious injury and it is clear that the helmet was most important in preventing that. But, as I looked at his bike under the car’s tires I did not see any visible headlight! Given the fact that much of the campus is dark at night, this incident only further emphasizes how important it is to for all bikers to wear a helmet and to have a head and tail light. That the injured biker turned out to be one of our medical students made this lesson all the more real and personal to me.

Bottom line: If you are a bike rider please make sure to wear a helmet and use head and tail lights. Prevention is key and these simple measures can prevent disasters.

Biosciences Interview Weekend

This past weekend was the Biosciences Interview Weekend. This year the Stanford Biosciences program received some 1015 applicants, of whom 239 were invited for interviews. During their visit, approximately 6 faculty members interviewed each of the applicants. In addition to these one-on-one interviews, applicants also met informally with faculty to discuss scientific projects and had informal time at lunches and dinners to meet with faculty and other students. Students who are accepted to the program will need to make their final decision by April 15th.

In addition, on Saturday morning, March 5th, applicants who self-identified as under-represented minority students joined current Stanford students and faculty for a breakfast meeting that highlighted Stanford's commitment to enhancing diversity. I want to thank Anika Green, who joined Stanford this past year as the Assistant Dean for Graduate Education and the Director of the Biosciences Diversity Program, for the exceptional work she and her colleagues have done to share the excellence of our bioscience program and to further our efforts to enhance diversity among our students, faculty and staff.

Many faculty, students and staff worked diligently to make the interview weekend successful. I want to particularly thank John Bray, Interim Director of Biosciences Admissions, who has played an important role in make this year's admissions process successful. I also want to thank Velessa Peairs, Shannon Monahan, Julia Tussing and Ellen Porzig for all of their contributions.

Upcoming Medicine and the Muse Symposium

Dr. Audrey Shafer has informed me that this year's Medicine and the Muse Symposium will be held on Thursday, April 21st, at 5:00 p.m. at the Cantor Arts Center Auditorium. The program will include, in addition to presentations, music, and an art exhibit by Stanford medical students, a keynote address by David B. Morris, PhD entitled "Pain and Narrative: Where Does It Hurt?" Dr. Morris is University Professor at the University of Virginia and the author of *The Culture of Pain; Illness and Culture in the Postmodern Age.* The Symposium is free and open to the public, and a reception will follow the symposium. For further information, contact Dr. Shafer at ashafer@stanford.edu.

Events

- ***Working Group on Parkinson's Disease at Stanford:*** On Saturday morning, March 5th, the Neuroscience Institute at Stanford (NIS) and its Work Group on Parkinson's Disease conducted an educational dialogue with interested community members, including patients, that addressed new research breakthroughs on the use of stem cell research, the use of growth factors, and other novel interventions. Drs. Clive Svendsen and Olle Lindvall gave presentations, and Drs. Theo Palmer and Jamie Henderson served as hosts. I had

the opportunity to address the group and to share our vision both for the Neuroscience Institute of Stanford and for the important opportunities emanating from the California Institute on Regenerative Medicine (see above). I want to thank Drs. Palmer, Assistant Professor of Neurosurgery, and Henderson, Assistant Professor of Neurosurgery, for organizing and leading this program. It was clearly very much appreciated by all who attended, and it represents an additional way in which Stanford is helping to engage our community to advance *Translating Discoveries*.

- **Community Lecture Series:** On Wednesday evening March 2nd, Dr. Steve Galli, Mary Hewitt Loveless Professor of Pathology and of Microbiology and Immunology and Chair of Pathology, gave an excellent presentation on "Individualized Medicine: Revolutionary Developments in the Understanding, Classification, Diagnosis and Prevention or Treatment of Disease". This was one of our ongoing series of community lectures, which continue to draw large audiences and receive outstanding praise for our community.

In Memoriam

I have recently learned that Dr. John Luetscher, who came to Stanford University School of Medicine some five decades ago, recently expired. Dr. Luetscher was an outstanding clinical scientist who carried out seminal studies on the hormonal regulation of salt and water metabolism. He was an individual of enormous intellectual rigor, which he effectively incorporated in his activities as teacher, clinician and investigator, and he played an important role in helping to make Stanford a great School of Medicine.

Awards and Honors

- **Dr. Marilyn Winkelby**, Professor of Medicine, has been named the recipient of the Roland Volunteer Service Prize from the Haas Center this year. The award will be presented in a ceremony on May 3. The Miriam Aaron Roland Volunteer Service Prize provides "an award to Stanford faculty who--over and above their normal academic duties--engage and involve students in integrating academic scholarship with significant volunteer service to society." The prize was established by alumna Miriam Roland ('51, International Relations) of Montreal, Canada, as an endowment at the Haas Center for Public Service. The inaugural prize was presented on March 31, 2004. Congratulations to Dr. Winkelby.
- **Dr. Mary Lake Polan** has been selected as one of Women's eNews 21 Leaders for the 21st Century. Profiles of all the honorees can be found at www.womensenews.org/21leaders2005.cfm. Dr. Polan, along with 20 other women was selected from more than 200 nominees. She will be honored at a gala on May 17th at the Tavern on the Green in New York City. Congratulations to Dr. Polan.

Appointments and Promotions

- ***Sally Arai*** has been appointed to Assistant Professor of Medicine (Bone Marrow Transplantation), effective 3/01/2005.
- ***Andrew Connolly*** has been appointed to Assistant Professor of Pathology, effective 3/01/2005.
- ***Gary Luxton*** has been reappointed to Associate Professor of Radiation Oncology, effective 9/01/2005.
- ***Ellen Porzig*** has been reappointed Associate Professor of Developmental Biology, effective 9/01/2005.
- ***Yuen Tat So*** has been promoted to Professor of Neurology and Neurological Sciences, effective 3/01/2005.