

Dean's Newsletter

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A Celebration of Stanford Faculty and Basic Science Research

It is through basic research that new knowledge is discovered, some of which helps clarify the way life and our world and universe work, and some of which can be applied to the human condition of the world we live in – and beyond. Over the years Stanford faculty have excelled in basic research, and it is through their creativity that deep contributions have defined Stanford as leading research-intensive medical school and university. Recognition of the contributions of a faculty member can take different forms. Sometimes contributions over the course of a career well spent are honored, whereas in other instances specific achievements that open new insights and pathways of investigation or that result in new innovations and transformations are acknowledged. Today and this week we celebrate the work of six Stanford faculty. One received an award granted only to very few individuals who achieve the pinnacle of science and medicine; two will be recognized as new pioneers and three as new innovators.

Dr. Stanley Falkow, Robert W. and Vivian K. Cahill Professor in the Department of Microbiology & Immunology, will receive the Lasker-Koshland Award on September 26th in recognition of a more than 50-year career, during which he defined the field of bacterial pathogenesis, including the unraveling of mechanisms of antibiotic resistance and the ways in which bacteria cause and spread disease (see: http://med.stanford.edu/news_releases/2008/september/falkow.html and video interview at <http://med.stanford.edu/121/2008/falkow.html>). The Albert and Mary Lasker Foundation recognized Dr. Falkow as “one of the greatest microbiologists of all time” - a distinction appreciated by the legions of students, trainees and colleagues he has taught, guided or collaborated with over the past five decades. He will receive the Lasker-Koshland Award on September 26th, when he will offer additional insights on his life journey including this one: *“I was able to follow my dream to study microbes because of my teachers. The earliest were all women who taught in public schools. I did not realize for many years that I was the beneficiary of the discrimination that for generations led many of the brightest women to find their intellectual outlet by teaching others to be what*

they could not.” This remark is characteristic of Stan Falkow, conveying as it does his humility and the razor-sharp honesty, integrity and insight that have made him successful and beloved by his colleagues and students. Clearly this is a wonderful recognition for Dr. Falkow life’s work, and we congratulate him.

And today, September 22nd, the National Institutes of Health announced the recipients of one of its most prestigious awards as well as the winners of a new award that recognizes new innovators. This year the NIH Director’s Pioneer Award celebrates its fifth year, during which 63 scientists, including 16 today, have been recognized as “Pioneers” for their creative thinking and innovative research proposals. Two School of Medicine faculty members, Dr. James Chen, Assistant Professor in the Department of Chemical and Systems Biology, and Ricardo Dolmetsch, Assistant Professor in the Department of Neurobiology, are among the 2008 recipients. Each will receive \$2.5 million in direct research support over the next 5 years (see http://med.stanford.edu/news_releases/2008/september/pioneer.html). With the awards to Drs. Chen and Dolmetsch, Stanford faculty have received 11 of the 62 awards since their inception. Given the level of competition for the Pioneer Award, this level of institutional success is unprecedented and speaks to the quality and creativity of our basic science faculty and the respect they have garnered from a national review committee.

In addition, the NIH announced today the recipients of its New Innovator Awards – now in their second year. This year 31 awards will be given, each providing \$1.5 million in direct costs over 5 years to each recipient. The three Stanford faculty members who are being recognized as “New Innovators” are Dr. Zev Bryant, Assistant Professor of Bioengineering, Dr. Shelli Kesler, Assistant Professor of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, and Dr. Joe Wu, Assistant Professor of Medicine and of Radiology (http://med.stanford.edu/news_releases/2008/september/pioneer.html). Again, this is a wonderful record of individual and institutional accomplishment.

Clearly this is a celebration of our basic science faculty and the environment that fosters, supports and nurtures them. We are so very fortunate to have such a remarkable group of pioneers, innovators and distinguished leaders shaping our research agenda at Stanford – and creating new venues of investigation for the broader scientific community. In the midst of not infrequently disappointing news from the NIH, it is wonderful to continue to receive affirmation, with these amazing awards, of the excellence of Stanford faculty.

Update on the NIH Director’s Presentation to Congress

The wonderful news about new NIH Director Pioneer and New Innovator Awards noted above, while terrific for the individuals and for Stanford, does not diminish the impact that most faculty are now experiencing from the overall downturn in NIH funding over the past five years. I have commented a number of times about this important issue and have opined that the trend is not likely to be reversed by changes that follow the upcoming presidential elections, primarily because of the serious economic challenges we have been facing during the past year. However that forecast now pales in light of the

economic news of the past 10 days and only affirms the importance of exploring additional ways of supporting our faculty and basic research programs beyond federal funding. A task force is currently examining such options and I will have more to say about that later this year or early next year.

On September 9th the NIH Director, Dr. Elias Zerhouni, testified to the House Committee on Energy and Commerce on the “National Institutes of Health Reform Act of 2006” – various components of which I have also addressed in prior Dean’s Newsletters as part of my comments on the NIH reauthorization. In his testimony to the House Committee, Dr. Zerhouni commented, “We are using new authorities to enable and expedite trans-NIH research, funded through the new Common Fund, an appropriations line authorized by the Act”. Among the projects being supported are the Human Microbiome Project, the Epigenome Project, the Structural Biology Roadmap, and the Clinical and Translational Science Awards (CTSA).

I certainly agree that supporting these areas of investigation and development are important and will yield new knowledge and, in the case of the CTSA, will help academic medical centers enhance their clinical research infrastructure and mission. But it must also be remembered and underscored that major breakthroughs in science, and ultimately medicine, come from basic research. Thus, despite the current economic climate it is imperative that we continue to advocate for support for basic science that is predictable, sustainable and at least keeps pace with inflation or, where possible, exceeds it. Calls by some to have another doubling of the NIH budget seem ill advised given recent history, especially if not coupled with a plan to continue to support the investment in research once an upward adjustment in the federal science budget is achieved.

Despite the challenges we now face as a nation, one of our greatest areas of success has been in biomedical research and, more broadly, in science and technology. In working with the Congress and with the new Administration it will be essential to do all we can to assure that we don’t unravel the 64 years of excellence that has been fostered by the NIH and that we sustain – and enhance – investments in research. I will do everything I can to carry forth that message and hope that you will do the same – with your colleagues at Stanford and throughout the nation and in concert with your professional and scientific societies and organizations.

Evolution of Clinical and Translational Science Research at Stanford University

Opportunities to conduct cutting-edge and innovative clinical and translational research depend heavily on having strong basic research programs. We are fortunate to have an incredibly strong basic science research faculty at Stanford - which must be supported in its own right and which, over time, will also contribute to discoveries and innovations that can translate from the bench to the bedside. That said, until relatively recently, Stanford was not very invested in clinical and translational research – although a number of incredibly important discoveries and innovations have been carried out by

faculty working in specific disciplines and more recently, across disciplines, departments and schools.

A more concerted effort to foster translational and clinical research was envisioned in the 2002 School of Medicine Strategic Plan and, more recently, has been stimulated by our designation by the National Cancer Institute as an NCI Cancer Center and by the NIH CTSA award we received past spring, when we were one of 38 institutions to receive this award. Another key advance was a major gift by John and Jill Freidenrich to develop the Center for Translational Research in their name. These programs are each playing an important role in helping Stanford complement its excellence in basic science with comparable excellence in clinical research. But moving this agenda forward is also quite complicated.

Clinical and translational research can be challenging, takes years to complete, requires a team of investigators and support staff, is expensive, and can be difficult to fund from conventional sponsors. Because it involves human subjects, an array of important compliance issues arise that require considerable institutional knowledge and support. Moreover, most of these institutional support structures are unfunded and add to the cost and complexity of the clinical research infrastructure. Moreover, there has not been a well-developed plan to educate and train clinical investigators or to assure their success once they begin their careers. And because much clinical research is done in collaboration with industry, a complex web of individual and institutional conflict of interest issues must be considered, monitored and managed.

Thankfully, considerable progress has been made at Stanford in addressing these and a number of related issues. With the support of SPCTRM (the Stanford/Packard Center for Translational Research in Medicine, see: <http://spctrm.stanford.edu/>), annual intensive courses in the methodology for conducting clinical research are being conducted. I had the opportunity to address the fourth annual class on Monday September 8th. This year's class was comprised of individuals interested in pediatric research, albeit from a variety of medical, surgical and related disciplines. It was conducted in collaboration with the Children's Health Research Program led by Dr. Christy Sandborg, Professor of Pediatrics, along with Dr. Steve Alexander, Professor of Pediatrics and Medical Director of SPCTRM, and Dr. Phil Lavori, Professor and Chair of the Department of Health Research and Policy.

SPCTRM was launched in 2005 as a multidisciplinary service organization whose mission is to enhance the quality of clinical and translational research performed at Stanford and its affiliated hospitals by aligning organizational "service" based activities; providing education, training and mentoring to clinical research coordinators and staff; and developing an integrated research infrastructure. As detailed on the SPCTRM website, a menu of services are provided including:

- Protocol development through biostatistics and informatics consultation services
- Study budgeting
- Contracts with industry and grant sources

- Automated billing, accounting, and internal financial auditing
- Sponsor billing and study closeout
- Internal compliance monitoring
- Outpatient clinic space
- Clinical laboratory consultation and samples processing
- Study source document archiving
- Research coordinator services: education, orientation and training; health screening; competency testing
- Faculty investigator education and training
- External audit and review support
- Stanford Clinical Trials Website
- Single point of contact for clinical research issues

I also had the opportunity to speak to the SPCTRM annual workshop on September 17th and was impressed by the number of individuals participating and their commitment to clinical research. Hopefully, with the availability of the CTSA, these services and others will be even further enhanced and enriched. Of course it also the people involved who make the programs successful, and I would like to thank, in particular, Dr. Steve Alexander, Nick Gaich, Anna Hu, Linda Walker, Peg Tsao, Jessica Meyer and Geraldine Solon for their leadership in SPCTRM. Key to these initiatives is the leadership of Dr. Harry Greenberg, Senior Associate Dean for Research, who also serves as the PI for the Stanford CTSA. While we have made progress, much remains to be done – but we have excellent leadership and an institutional commitment so that our success seems achievable.

Center for Health Policy Celebrates its 10th Anniversary

On Tuesday September 16th the Center for Health Policy and the Center for Primary Care and Outcomes Research (CHP/PCOR), both in the Department of Medicine, celebrated their 10th Anniversary with a symposium entitled: *Better Health, Lower Cost: Can Innovation Save Health Reform?* Having served on the conference advisory council, I had the opportunity to attend most of the symposium, which featured leaders from academia, government, foundations, industry and the health sector. Speakers focused on a broad array of important topics that ranged from the factors contributing to the cost of health care to the demographics that impact access and expenditures. How innovation impacts health care cost and outcome was addressed along with the necessity for reform of health care in the USA. A final section of the symposium dealt with innovation and health care in developing nations.

While the conference was impressive, more noteworthy are the accomplishments of CHP/PCOR faculty, students and staff during the past decade. These successes have been enhanced and supported by the exceptional leadership of Dr. Alan Garber, the

Henry J Kaiser, Jr. Professor in the Department of Medicine. An internationally acclaimed scholar and leader, Dr. Garber has also assembled the team that now constitutes CHP/PCOR and has provided an environment that fosters creativity, collaboration and interactions across the university. So this is an opportunity not only to celebrate CHP/PCOR but also a time to recognize and thank Dr. Garber.

Respect and Tolerance in the Workplace

We initiated our program on the Respectful Workplace in May 2002 and over the past 6 years have worked diligently to promote a work environment that is valued by faculty, staff and students. When infractions or problems have arisen, we have reacted swiftly and have tried to do all we can to continue to uphold our values and reprimand or discipline disruptive or disrespectful behavior, whether by faculty, staff or students. This includes the disrespectful behavior or interactions among individuals or groups as well as more hidden disrespect such as written communications or the defaming or desecrating of communications or rights of expression based on race, gender, sexual choice, or religion, among others. This is something that I personally take quite seriously, and I know that other leaders in the School and the University share my concern.

Thus, I was upset to learn recently that a member of one of our student groups that participate in the Intervarsity Graduate Christian Fellowships found that a number of the posters they had placed in approved sites announcing an upcoming welcome dinner or provided contact information for those who might be interested in the organization had been removed from medical school buildings. This is unacceptable and inappropriate and defies freedom of expression and communication.

I hope that the removal of these posters and fliers was inadvertent and not evidence of discrimination or intolerance. But I did want to take this opportunity to let you know that this act has taken place and that I sincerely hope and expect that it will not reoccur. Thank you.

Update on CME Policy: The Frequently Asked Questions

In the August 25th Dean's Newsletter I reported on our new policy on the use of industry support of Continuing Medical Education (CME). This policy, which became effective September 1, prohibits new direct commercial support of specific CME activities. Since the announcement of the policy, Associate Dean for CME Dr. Robert Jackler and Executive Director Terry O'Grady have prepared a very helpful set of FAQs (i.e., responses to "frequently asked questions") that provide additional guidance about the use of the policy (<http://cme.stanford.edu/>). I encourage you to consult these FAQs and to work closely with the Center for CME in planning future CME activities in your department.

Touchdown Space for Emeritus Faculty

As we go forward with our various new construction and renovation plans, we are looking for space that emeriti faculty can use when they come to campus. With that in mind, we would like to invite emeriti faculty to use the "hotel" or "touchdown" space, affectionately known as "Club Med," as a central location to work while on campus. Club Med is located on the garden level of the Alway building, directly below the dean's office, and is accessed from the stairs in the dean's courtyard. Additionally, elevators located in the Always and Grant buildings, will provide transportation to this level. Club Med is a comfortable, well-equipped space that can accommodate more than two dozen people at a time; included are lockers for daily use, terminals that boot up either Mac or PC, space for laptop plug in, wireless access to the network, office supplies, copying and printing, faxing and scanning. More details on the space, policies, contact information, and directions can be found at <http://med.stanford.edu/smp/hotelling/campus.html>. Both faculty who are located off campus and emeriti faculty are welcomed to use this hotel space. Please feel free to stop by and take a tour--the office is staffed during working hours.

Thanks to Professor Ellen Porzig

For the past 8 years, Dr. Ellen Porzig, Professor (Teaching) in Developmental Biology, has served as Associate Dean for Graduate Education. Beginning October 1, 2008, Professor Porzig will be returning to full time teaching in the Department of Developmental Biology and to upcoming sabbatical leaves. She will also continue to serve on the Stanford School of Medicine Alumni Board of Governors, the Diversity Cabinet, the Advisory Board of the Stanford Medical Youth Program, and the faculty advisory committees for the Masters of Science in Medicine and the Masters of Human Genetics-Genetic Counseling.

I would like to thank Dr. Porzig for her many accomplishments as Associate Dean for Graduate Education. Indeed, listing Dr. Porzig's accomplishments highlight the depth and breadth of her involvement in graduate education across the School of Medicine as well as in many of the programmatic initiatives that have taken place in recent years.

The primary mission of Biosciences graduate education is to maintain Stanford's leading role in excellence and diversity. As Associate Dean, Dr. Porzig's major responsibilities have included:

- Oversight and management of admissions to the 12 Biosciences Ph.D. programs
- Serving as cognizant Dean for the University in the mandated reviews of the Inter-Departmental Programs in Biomedical Informatics, Cancer Biology, Neurosciences, Immunology, Epidemiology and Health Services Research, and
- Management of the Office of Graduate Education, including Biosciences diversity programs.

Dr. Porzig's commitment to recruiting outstanding applicants, improving the efficiency and accuracy of the Ph.D. admissions process, and keeping our diversity commitments central to this process has been fundamental to the success of our graduate

education programs. Working closely with the Committee on Graduate Admission and Policy (CGAP), Dr. Porzig made improvements in the admissions process and in Stanford's success in attracting the well-qualified applicants to whom admission was offered. Applications increased in this period by more than fifty percent. Particularly meaningful to me were Dr. Porzig's significant efforts, along with those of former Assistant Dean Anika Green (recently promoted to the University position of Director of Educational Programs) in substantially increasing our success in recruiting underrepresented minority students to Ph.D. programs in the Biosciences. During her tenure, Dr. Porzig led highly successful recruitments of outstanding students to Stanford's graduate Biosciences programs and to careers in science.

In addition, Dr. Porzig has served as Principal Investigator for the Amgen Foundation grant that for the past two years has provided much of the support for the Stanford Summer Research Program. This program allows talented undergraduate researchers from across the country to train in the laboratories of Stanford Biosciences faculty members. More than 20 former participants in this Program have entered Stanford's Ph.D. and M.D. programs. She has also supported faculty with interdisciplinary courses, played an important role in two new graduate programs (Masters in Genetic Counseling and Masters in Medicine), and created teaching awards to recognize graduate student educators, among many other achievements.

Importantly, throughout her years as Associate Dean, Dr. Porzig continued her commitment to teaching in Developmental Biology and other medical school programs, for which she received a number of teaching honors, including the Henry Kaiser award for excellence in pre-clinical teaching and the Walter Gores Award for Excellence in Undergraduate or Graduate Teaching. The Gores award is "Stanford University's highest teaching honor."

I want to thank Dr. Porzig and wish her continued success in her teaching roles.

Announcements

Dr. Audrey Shafer asked me to let you know about two important upcoming events:

- The first is the ***Jonathan King Lecture*** that will be given this year by *Dr. Danielle Ofri*, Editor-in-Chief of the Bellview Literary Review. Her lecture entitled "*Tools of the Trade: Old and New Technologies in Medicine*" will be given on Tuesday, October 14th, at 5 pm in the Clark Center Auditorium. A reception will follow. For further information contact Paula Bailey at pbailey@stanford.edu.
- Second, on Wednesday October 8th, Linda and Michael Hutcheon will give a presentation on the "***Last Works, Late Style: The Case of Benjamin Britten***" – addressing opera, mortality, illness and creativity. It will be held in the

Wallenberg Theater at 5:30 pm. A reception will follow. For additional information contact David Palumbo-Liu at Paloliu@stanford.edu.

Awards and Honors

- **Mark Genovese**, Associate Professor of Medicine (Immunology and Rheumatology) will receive the Kunkel Young Investigator Award from the American College of Rheumatology at its national meeting in late October. Please join me in congratulating Dr. Genovese.
- **Bilal Shafi**, former Fellow from the Biodesign Innovation Program at Stanford, has just received the TR35 award from Technology Review magazine; he was selected from more than 300 nominees as one of the world's top innovators under the age of 35 for his work in medical device development. Congratulations, Dr. Shafi.
- **Paul Sigala**, Graduate student in Biochemistry, has been selected to receive a Lieberman Fellowship; this Fellowship honors the qualities of outstanding scholarship, teaching and university service. Please join me in congratulating Dr. Sigala.
- **Erik Corona**, a graduate student in Biomedical Informatics (BMI), has just received the new Linda and Amin Miller Fellowship awarded to graduate students. Erik works in the translational bioinformatics lab of Dr. Atul Butte, studying the role of evolution in human disease, using the HapMap project.
- **Thomas Rando**, Associate Professor of Neurology and Neurological Sciences, was one of two recipients of the 2008 Breakthroughs in Gerontology Award sponsored by the Glenn Foundation for Medical Research and the American Federation for Aging Research. This award provides funding for a small number of pilot research programs that may be of relatively high risk but which offer significant promise of yielding transforming discoveries in the fundamental biology of aging.

Appointments and Promotions

- **Craig Albanese** has been reappointed to Professor of Surgery (Pediatric Surgery) at the Stanford University Medical Center, effective 9/01/08.
- **Vivek Bhalla** has been appointed to Assistant Professor of Medicine (Nephrology), effective 9/01/08.
- **Michael Fredericson** has been promoted to Professor of Orthopaedic Surgery at the Stanford University Medical Center, effective 9/01/08.
- **Jaimie M. Henderson** has been promoted to Associate Professor of Neurosurgery, and, by courtesy, of Neurology and Neurological Sciences at the Stanford University Medical Center, effective 9/01/08.
- **Mickey C-T Hu** has been appointed to Associate Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology, effective 9/01/08.

- **Laura J. Johnston** has been promoted to Associate Professor of Medicine (Blood and Marrow Transplantation) at the Stanford University Medical Center, effective 9/01/08.
- **Jonathan W. Kim** has been appointed to Assistant Professor of Ophthalmology at the Stanford University Medical Center, effective 9/01/08.
- **Y. Joyce Liao** has been appointed to Assistant Professor of Ophthalmology at the Stanford University Medical Center, effective 9/01/08.
- **Alan C. Pao** has been appointed to Assistant Professor of Medicine (Nephrology), effective 9/01/08.
- **Rafael Pelayo** has been promoted to Associate Professor of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at the Stanford University Medical Center, effective 9/01/08.
- **Terence D. Sanger** has been appointed to Associate Professor of Neurology and Neurological Sciences at the Stanford University Medical Center, effective 9/01/08.
- **Barbara Sourkes** has been reappointed to Associate Professor of Pediatrics and, by courtesy, of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at the Lucile Salter Packard Children's Hospital, effective 9/01/08.
- **Phillip C. Yang** has been reappointed to Assistant Professor of Medicine (Cardiovascular Medicine) at the Stanford University Medical Center, effective 9/01/08.