

Dean's Newsletter

March 16, 2009

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A Major Vote of Confidence for Science

The March 9th Executive Order signed by President Obama that overturned the moratorium on embryonic stem cell research has been heralded and echoed around the world. It is exciting that this Order will permit scientists and physicians across the US to engage in embryonic stem cell research in a manner similar to what has transpired in California thanks to the California Institute for Regenerative Medicine (CIRM). But the President's historic action has even broader implications. Together with the inclusion of the NIH and NSF in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009, these decisions signal a dramatically more positive level of support for science and technology than has been the case for nearly six years. This bodes well for fostering a spirit of optimism, respect and hope across the entire scientific community – well beyond the impact on stem cell biology and regenerative medicine *per se*.

I hope that each faculty member throughout the School is paying attention to the announcements on ARRA funding and that each of you is included in the informal networks of communication that we have established through our Institutes, Centers and related organizing bodies. If you do not feel you are included please contact David O'Brien, Director of Institutional Planning (dob@stanford.edu) and he will be happy to assist you.

In addition to the outstanding updates you are receiving from Jeanne Heschele about ARRA and other funding opportunities and those that come to you from our informal advisory network, the HHS is also posting weekly updates on ARRA that you might wish to bookmark: <http://www.hhs.gov/recovery/2009/03/10/weekly/index.html>. These include updates on NIH and other opportunities. In addition, the NIH has also posted a helpful FAQ on the Challenge Grants that were recently shared with you at: http://grants.nih.gov/recovery/faqs_challenge.html. Finally, if you learn anything about funding opportunities that you would like to share more broadly, please send this information to me (ppizzo@stanford.edu), Daria Mochly-Rosen (mochly@stanford.edu) or David O'Brien (dob@stanford.edu).

Some Facts on Biomedical Research and Development

When the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009 was announced a few weeks ago, many questions arose about how investments in science and technology would help stimulate the economy. The California Healthcare Institute released some helpful facts that may be of interest to you.

Currently California is the home to more than 2000 companies and over 100 universities and non-profit research institutions that are involved in biomedical research. California also leads the nation in grants received from NIH and is the sole recipient of awards through the California Institute for Regenerative Medicine (CIRM). Given that California already receives 15% of NIH funding, it is likely that it will benefit in a relatively proportional fashion to awards made through the ARRA. This will have an impact on universities and by extension on the biotechnology industry. In fact, the biotechnology sector is second only to computer and electronic products in employing people in California.

Investment in biomedical science engages companies, the venture community and the broad public and private sectors. It is estimated that there are approximately 900 medical products in the pipeline in California with 51% in clinical trials. Further investment in science should continue to prime this pump and create new research discoveries, products – and jobs. All of these are good for the economy and further justify the investments in science and technology that are part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009.

The Continuing Financial and Economic Challenge: Impact for 2010

In the coming weeks we will be announcing the principles and factors guiding our budget planning for FY10. It will not come as a surprise that the economic downturn well known to all of us will have a significant impact on our plans and expectations over the next year(s). In planning for our future in this economic environment we want to preserve what makes Stanford Medicine so outstanding – our excellence in education, research, patient care and our service to our community locally and globally. Naturally this will require some hard choices, and there is no question that we will need to achieve program reductions – almost certainly at around the 10% level – although this will be differentially applied to our various missions. Work on this is already underway in the broader administrative units within the Dean's Office as well as in our Institutes and Centers. We are also planning budget principles for our basic and clinical departments – some of which we will review at the School's Executive Committee on Friday, March 20th.

I do want to let you know that we have decided that the School of Medicine will join with the rest of the University in not having salary increases for FY10 for faculty and staff. I do want to add that salary adjustments for promotions or where market adjustments are clearly justified will be entertained. We are a complex community that

includes, among other constituencies, basic and clinical scientists and physicians whose compensation schedules are quite different and clearly we need to take that into account.

Obviously further details will be forthcoming in the near future.

Biosciences Programs Interview Prospective Students for 2009 Incoming Class

Stanford can boast having among the most outstanding graduate education programs in the biosciences in the nation – a testament to our outstanding faculty, resources and most importantly, the quality of our PhD students. This year we received 1422 applicants to our 13 Bioscience programs (some shared with H&S). On March 5-7th departments and interdisciplinary programs hosted 264 of these applicants for on-campus interviews and the opportunity to meet with faculty and students (eight who couldn't attend interviewed at other times). Based on these applicants' records, interviews and other relevant factors, offers have now been extended to approximately 164 of these applicants – with final decisions expected from the accepted students by April 15th. Without question, among our most important investments are our students, and I know that the entire basic science community is deeply committed to attracting the best and brightest students to Stanford – including attracting as diverse a student body as possible. I heard from many faculty leaders how pleased and impressed they were by the outstanding quality of this year's applicants, and we all look forward to welcoming our incoming class of PhD students in this September. I also want to thank the Biosciences staff, the administrators of the individual graduate programs, and our current students for their enormous efforts in making this year's prospective students campus interview program such a success.

Annual Appreciation Celebration for Medical Education Donors

One of the most joyous and meaningful events I have the privilege to attend each year is the Annual Medical Education Donor Appreciation Dinner, which honors donors and friends who have contributed scholarships and support for medical education over the past year. This year's event was held on Wednesday, March 4th in the Arrillaga Alumni Center. Because of the generosity of these individuals and that of countless others over the years who have made donations to support medical education, Stanford Medical School has the lowest level of medical student indebtedness in the nation. This important issue was discussed in the December 18, 2008 issue of the *New England Journal of Medicine* (<http://content.nejm.org/cgi/reprint/359/25/2629.pdf>), in which it was reported that “the median amounts, including premedical debts, were \$145,000 for students at public medical schools and \$180,000 for those at private medical schools.” Of note, this report, written by Robert Steinbrook, observed that the lowest medical student debt at public medical schools (for 2006) was \$79,562 at the University of California, San Diego – and that it was \$70,235 at Stanford, the lowest in the nation. While this is still a significant amount of student debt, the donors we honored enable our students to pursue careers in science and medicine that are less burdened and influenced by overwhelming debt. Like many others I understand this on a very personal level. While I did not attend

Stanford Medical School, I was the beneficiary of scholarships for my own education. Without that support there would have been no likelihood of my attending college, much less medical school. I feel indebted to those who made that possible – and in that spirit I feel deeply appreciative to the wonderful individuals who make similar opportunities available to our Stanford medical students.

One of the most meaningful aspects of the Medical Education Donor Appreciation Dinner is that it brings together medical students receiving scholarship and financial aid with the donors who provided those contributions. This permits both students and donors to get to know each other on a more personal level, to share their experiences and dreams and to mutually appreciate their interconnectedness. As I had the opportunity to visit with each of the guests attending this event, it was abundantly clear how deeply moving this experience was for both donors and students. Another highlight of the evening was a panel discussion led by Dr. Charles Prober, Senior Associate Dean of Medical Student Education, with six students who shared personal stories about how their life experiences shape their current dreams and aspirations and how those are facilitated by the support they receive at Stanford. The panelists were: Kierann Smith (SMS1), Morgan Theis (SMS1), Joslyn Woodard (SMS1), Joaquin Camara-Quintana (SMS2), Tiffany Castillo (SMS3), and Matt Goldstein (SMS4). It is worth noting that every one of our outstanding students could provide equally compelling perspectives. I want to thank each of our student panelists – and once again, the families and friends who help support their education and careers.

Medical School Reviews Programs and Facilities with University Senate

On Thursday, March 5th we had the opportunity to provide an update to the University Faculty Senate on the status of Phase I planning of our medical school facilities development. This includes the construction of the Li Ka Shing Center for Learning and Knowledge and the Lorry Lokey Stem Cell Research Building/Stanford Institutes of Medicine I. This presentation provided a follow-up to the visit that the School of Medicine hosted for the Academic Council in 2007, which forecast these and other future developments. I underscored in this presentation that new facilities are, of course, essential to renew and help facilitate our missions in education and research – but that what makes Stanford a truly distinguished university is quality of the work carried out by our faculty, students and staff. To help illustrate the work of the Institute, Professor Irv Weissman, Director of the Stanford Institute for Stem Cell Biology and Regenerative Medicine, provided an update on our broad programs in stem cell biology and how these will be further enhanced when the Lorry Lokey Stem Cell Research Building is completed in the summer of 2010. Dr. Renee Reijo Pera, Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology and Director of the Center for Human Embryonic Stem Cell Research and Education, gave an outstanding update on the work she and her colleagues are doing to develop and characterize human embryonic stem cells and to elucidate what makes them unique.

In case you haven't seen updates of the Li Ka Shing Center or the Lorry Lokey Stem Cell Research Building, here are recent photos shown side-by-side with the architectural renderings of these buildings:



Three Neuroscience Professorships Are Celebrated

On March 6th we had the special opportunity to host an Investiture Celebration for three neuroscience professorships. These professorships make it possible to recruit and acknowledge faculty of remarkable talent who bring distinction to our broader neuroscience community. The professorship holders are:

Graham H Creasey, MD, FRCSEd, the second incumbent of the Paralyzed Veterans of America Professor of Spinal Cord Injury Medicine. Dr. Creasy recently joined the Department of Neurosurgery and the Palo Alto VA Health Care System to lead a program on spinal cord injury – a major initiative of the department, the VA and the Stanford Institute of Neuro-Innovation and Translational Neurosciences.

Lawrence Steinman, MD, the first incumbent of the George A. Zimmermann Professorship. Dr. Steinman has been a distinguished member of the Department

of Neurology science 1980 and is a world recognized authority in neuroscience. He has a particular focus on multiple sclerosis.

Thomas C Sudhof, MD, the first incumbent of the Avrum Goldstein Professorship, which was established to honor Dr. Goldstein, one of Stanford's most valued and renowned faculty members. Dr. Sudhof recently joined Stanford from the University of Texas-Southwestern Medical School and is a highly distinguished member of the neuroscience community and the Department of Molecular and Cellular Physiology. He is also a Member of the Howard Hughes Medical Institute.

Please join me in congratulating Drs. Creasey, Steinman and Sudhof.

Awards and Honors

- **Evaleen Jones**, Clinical Associate Professor of Medicine, has been named one of the "2009 Women of Influence in Silicon Valley" by the San Jose Business Journal. She will be honored in San Jose on March 18th.
- **Jerome A. Yesavage**, Professor of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, has been awarded the AAGP Distinguished Scientist Award from the American Association of Geriatric Psychiatry. Each year, the Association chooses a member for his or her original scientific contributions to the field of geriatric psychiatry and mentorship of the careers of successful contributing junior researchers in the field, and invites the Distinguished Scientist to present a session as part of the AAGP Annual Meeting. Congratulations, Dr. Yesavage.

Appointments and Promotions

- **Seth Ammerman** has been promoted to Clinical Professor of Pediatrics (Adolescent Medicine), effective 3/01/09.
- **Sangeeta Chona** has been reappointed as Clinical Assistant Professor of Surgery (Emergency Medicine), effective 9/01/08.
- **Patrick Clyne** has been reappointed as Clinical Assistant Professor (Affiliated) of Pediatrics, effective 1/01/09.
- **Neena Berry Duggal** has been promoted to Clinical Professor (Affiliated) of Obstetrics and Gynecology, effective 9/01/08.
- **Brendan O. Duterte** has been reappointed as Clinical Assistant Professor (Affiliated) of Pediatrics, effective 1/01/09.
- **Francis B. Garrett** has been appointed as Clinical Associate Professor (Affiliated) of Surgery (Emergency Medicine), effective 3/01/09.

- **Thomas Hafkenschiel** has been appointed as Clinical Associate Professor (Affiliated) of Surgery (Emergency Medicine), effective 3/01/09.
- **Magdy Ismail** has been reappointed as Clinical Associate Professor of Pediatrics (Neonatal and Developmental Medicine), effective 1/01/09.
- **Dennis Israelski** has been reappointed as Clinical Professor (Affiliated) of Medicine (Infectious Diseases), effective 9/01/08.
- **Rashmi Kirpekar** has been reappointed as Clinical Assistant Professor (Affiliated) of Pediatrics (Nephrology), effective 1/01/09.
- **Amy Kostishack** has been promoted to Clinical Assistant Professor (Affiliated) of Pediatrics, effective 2/01/09.
- **Leslie H. Lee** has been appointed as Clinical Assistant Professor of Neurology, effective 7/01/09.
- **Michael S. Leong** has been appointed as Clinical Assistant Professor of Anesthesia (Pain Management), effective 3/01/09.
- **Andrew Nevins** has been reappointed as Clinical Assistant Professor of Medicine (Infectious Diseases), effective 3/01/09.
- **Joseph P. O'Hara** has been reappointed as Clinical Assistant Professor (Affiliated) of Pathology, effective 2/01/09.
- **Inger Olson** has been promoted to Clinical Associate Professor of Pediatrics (Pediatric Cardiology), effective 3/01/09.
- **Thomas Rando** has been promoted to Professor of Neurology and Neurological Sciences, effective 3/01/08.
- **Daniel I. Rosenstein** has been promoted to Clinical Assistant Professor (Affiliated) of Urology, effective 3/01/09.
- **Katherine S. Sanborn** has been reappointed as Clinical Assistant Professor of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, effective 10/01/08.
- **Mark Sanders** has been reappointed as Clinical Assistant Professor (Affiliated) of Medicine (General Internal Medicine), effective 9/01/08.
- **Rajesh Shinghal** has been promoted to Clinical Assistant Professor (Affiliated) of Urology, effective 9/01/09.

- ***Eric L. Weiss*** has been promoted to Clinical Associate Professor of Surgery (Emergency Medicine), effective 7/01/08.
- ***Hong Yu*** has been appointed as Clinical Assistant Professor of Neurosurgery, effective 8/01/09.