

## DRIVEN TO CURE

### Young CC Patient Donates to Cancer Research

BY DANA TALESNIK

Andrew Lee, 19, had just finished his freshman year at the University of New Hampshire when he received the devastating news. He was diagnosed with a rare form of kidney cancer; it was stage 4 and incurable. Nearly 2 years later, on a day when he was receiving one of his biweekly treatments at the Clinical Center, Lee presented a large donation to the Foundation for the NIH to support kidney cancer research.

“I was sent here, admitted to an NCI trial, which is one of the luckiest things that probably ever happened to me,” Lee said



CC patient Andrew Lee and his Nissan GTR

when presenting the \$200,000 check at a small ceremony held recently at the CC.

“When we heard about this fantastic and generous offer, I thought this is a winning team,” said FNIH president Dr. Maria Freire. “It is about vision, hard work, fundraising and it is about courage. And those are what we need to get fantastic partnerships going.”

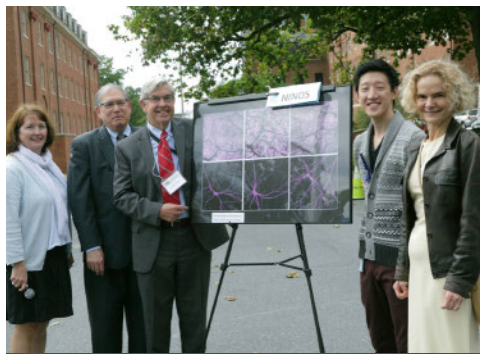
The contribution, collected through Lee’s fundraising efforts, will support the research of Dr. W. Marston Linehan, chief of urologic surgery and the Urologic Oncology Branch at NCI, whose work led to the development of an experimental therapy with NCI’s Dr. Ramaprasad Srinivasan that has been prolonging Lee’s life.

“Andrew, we consider you a partner,” said then-CC director Dr. John Gallin. “Volunteering to participate in one of our clinical trials is the engine that drives this place so we can discover tomorrow’s cures.”

But Lee was revved up to do even more to support cancer research. Shortly after his diagnosis, Lee’s father bought him his dream car, a Nissan GTR. “I then had the idea I could take it on the road and maybe start helping raise awareness for rare kidney cancers,” Lee said.

The young entrepreneur reached out

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CFC says thank you. See season’s images, p. 12.

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Dr. Wendy Suzuki speaks at NIH.

### Exercise Improves Mood, Focus, Aids Memory

BY ERIC BOCK

Dr. Wendy Suzuki’s career was going great. She earned tenure at New York University, met lots of people in her field and published exciting findings about brain plasticity. Nothing else was going great, she explained at an NIH Director’s Lecture held recently in

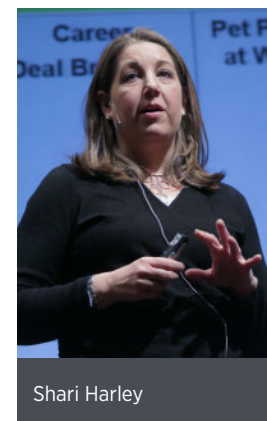
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#### KEYS TO DEVELOPING TRUST

### Set Expectations, Build Agreement, Harley Advises

BY ERIC BOCK

Your mother always told you: don’t say anything if you’ve nothing nice to say. That



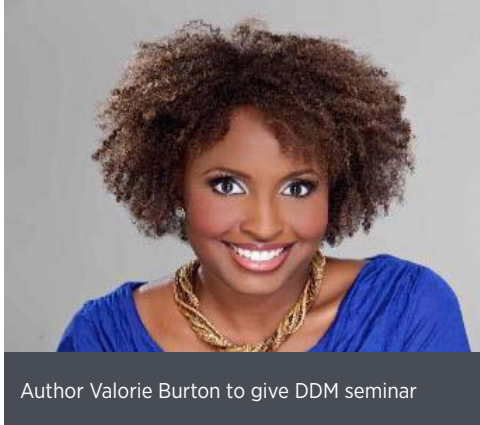
Shari Harley

advice, according to Shari Harley, is a hindrance to building effective relationships in the workplace.

“We aren’t saying what we want to say, not because we don’t know how, but because we are afraid the other person is going to

freak out,” said Harley, president of Candid Culture, at a recent Deputy Director for

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Author Valorie Burton to give DDM seminar

### Author Burton To Present at DDM Seminar, Feb. 16

The Deputy Director for Management (DDM) announces the second DDM seminar of the 2017 series "Management and Science: Partnering for Excellence." The event on Thursday, Feb. 16 from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. in Masur Auditorium, Bldg. 10, will feature Valorie Burton, who will discuss "Resilient and Ready: How to Thrive Through Challenge and Change." She will present a survival toolkit to face any challenge that comes your way.

Videocasting and sign language will be provided. Individuals with disabilities who need reasonable accommodation to attend should call (301) 496-6211 or the Federal Relay Service at 1-800-877-8339.

For more information about the series, visit [www.ddmseries.od.nih.gov](http://www.ddmseries.od.nih.gov) or call (301) 496-3271.

### 2018 FARE Awards Competition Gets Under Way

The FARE competition provides recognition for outstanding intramural scientific research. FARE 2018 winners will each receive a \$1,000 travel award to facilitate presentation of their research at a scientific meeting. Eligible fellows may submit an abstract of their current research Feb. 16-Mar. 16 online to [www.training.nih.gov/felcom/fare](http://www.training.nih.gov/felcom/fare).

Abstracts will be evaluated anonymously on the basis of scientific merit, originality, experimental design, overall quality and presentation. The top 25 percent of applicants will receive a travel award to be used between Oct. 1, 2017, and Sept. 30, 2018. (NHLBI fellows do not receive the travel grant, but will still be acknowledged as FARE winners if selected.)

Winners will be announced by Aug. 15. For more information, go to [www.training.nih.gov](http://www.training.nih.gov) and search for "FARE," or contact the FARE 2018 committee at [FARE@mail.nih.gov](mailto:FARE@mail.nih.gov).

FARE, or the Fellows Award for Research Excellence, began in 1995 to recognize outstanding scientific research performed by intramural postdoctoral fellows.



### NIAMS Hosts Career Development Forum

NIAMS recently hosted its fifth annual career development forum for extramural researchers who are in the third year of a mentored clinical scientist development (K08) or patient-oriented research (K23) grant. In addition to the K awardees, the forum included physician-scientists who recently received R01 awards, established researchers and representatives of professional and voluntary organizations. The group discussed challenges junior investigators face when pursuing research independence. The meeting included presentations on mentoring, the NIAMS intramural program and resources and opportunities for early stage researchers offered by professional and voluntary groups. The K awardees also had an opportunity to present their research and to interact with NIAMS leadership and program, review and grants management officials. These included Dr. Amanda Boyce (front, third from r), Dr. Marie Mancini (front, second from l) and Dr. Kristy Nicks (middle row, fifth from l) as well as NIAMS leaders including director Dr. Stephen Katz (front, fourth from l), deputy director Dr. Robert Carter (front, fourth from r), Dr. Susana Serrate-Sztejn (front, second from r) and Dr. Richard Siegel (front, l).

PHOTO: JONELLE DRUGAN

### NIH To Host Rare Disease Day Event, Feb. 27

Rare diseases affect an estimated 25 million Americans. On Feb. 27, NIH will host an event to raise awareness about rare diseases, the people they affect and current NIH research collaborations.

Sponsored by the National Center for Advancing Translational Sciences and the Clinical Center, Rare Disease Day at NIH will take place from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. in Masur Auditorium, Bldg. 10. The event will feature presentations, posters and exhibits, tours of the Clinical Center and an art show. Admission is free and open to the public. In association with Global Genes, participants are encouraged to wear their favorite pair of jeans.

Learn more about Rare Disease Day at NIH at <https://ncats.nih.gov/rdd>, visit [https://events-support.com/events/NIH\\_Rare\\_Disease\\_Day](https://events-support.com/events/NIH_Rare_Disease_Day) to register and view the agenda and follow the event on social media at #RDDNIH.

### Sailing Association Open House, Mar. 8

The NIH Sailing Association invites everyone to its open house on Wednesday, Mar. 8 from 5 to 8 p.m. at the FAES House at the corner of Old Georgetown Rd. and Cedar Ln. Explore your interest in learning to sail and discover opportunities for sailing with NIHSA. There will be information about 6-week basic training classes, the club's racing program and social activities offered by NIHSA. A fee of \$5 at the door includes pizza, drinks and snacks. Cash bar for beer and wine—\$2 each. Look for NIHSA posters and flyers around campus. For more information, visit [www.nih sail.org/](http://www.nih sail.org/).

### Circus Premiere Night Mar. 30 Benefits Charities

Join the NIH R&W at 7 p.m. on Thursday, Mar. 30 as it celebrates the final appearance of the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus at Verizon Center. For 20 years, R&W has been able to bring joy to patients and families at the Children's Inn, at-risk youth and others.

Purchase your ticket at the R&W stores in Bldg. 31 (1st floor) or Rockledge or call (301) 496-2670. If you know of a group or organization that may be interested in purchasing a large quantity of tickets to the circus, have them contact David Browne at [browned2@mail.nih.gov](mailto:browned2@mail.nih.gov).

## NIH Steps It Up, Takes the Stairs

Following their own best advice, NIH staff reported increased stair usage in response to a Take the Stairs campaign implemented agency-wide by Public Health Service officers.

An employee survey found that 69 percent of respondents had seen the point-of-decision motivational signs posted by elevators and stairwells. Of them, 35 percent reported that they had increased their stair usage as a result. Overall, 55 percent of respondents had a very positive response to the campaign.

★ ★ ★

*“We were very heartened to have wide coverage and remarkably positive response, but in future efforts we have to keep in mind people with mobility issues.”*

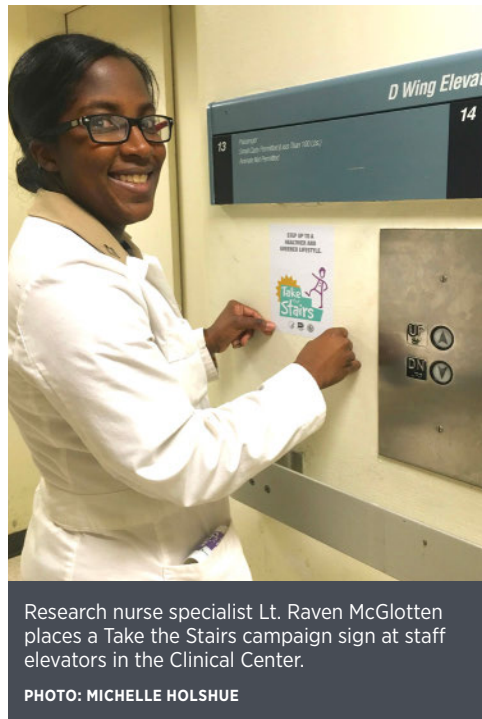
—DR. PETER KILMARX

★ ★ ★

Survey response comments included: “I noticed more people taking the stairs after the signs appeared compared to before. I pass many more people in the stairway now,” and “I think the campaign signs are a good reminder to me to take the stairs. Now, I actually feel guilty when I don’t take the stairs.”

Eight percent of survey respondents reported a negative reaction. Comments reflected concerns about shaming people with mobility issues.

The survey was disseminated in September 2016 and had a response rate of 8 percent, which is typical of NIH-wide surveys.



Research nurse specialist Lt. Raven McGlotten places a Take the Stairs campaign sign at staff elevators in the Clinical Center.

PHOTO: MICHELLE HOLSHUE

The Take the Stairs campaign was implemented in June 2016 by PHS officers at NIH as a part of Surgeon General Vivek Murthy’s Call to Action to Promote Walking and Walkable Communities. Officers from more than a dozen ICs came together to post the proven-effective motivational messages to increase stair usage, which reduces environmental impact and saves money in addition to the health benefits.

ORS provided funding for the signs and other support for the campaign, which was launched by NIH director Dr. Francis Collins at last year’s Take a Hike Day. Nearly 40 PHS officers posted more than 3,500 vinyl stick-on signs at elevator banks and stairwell doors on most NIH campuses and buildings, from the main campus in Bethesda to Baltimore, Ft. Detrick, North Carolina and Montana.

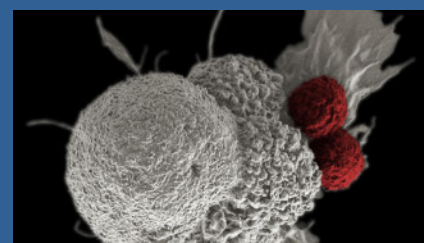
“The response from the officers and the NIH community has been outstanding,” said Rear Admiral Peter Kilmarx, FIC’s deputy director, who helped

lead the campaign implementation. “We were very heartened to have the wide coverage and remarkably positive response, but in future efforts we have to keep in mind people with mobility issues,” he added.

Shuntrice Holloman, a program specialist in the ORS Fitness and Well-Being Program, noted, “Take a Hike Day was a wonderful opportunity to partner with PHS officers to support this initiative and to further promote employee well-being. We look forward to continuing to promote the Take the Stairs campaign and the opportunity to partner with PHS officers in the future.”

The survey also solicited reports about specific stairwell issues, which were forwarded to ORF for followup. To report stairwell problems in NIH worksites, call (301) 435-8000 or submit a maintenance request at <https://58000.nih.gov/>.

To request Take the Stairs signs for your workplace, contact [peter.kilmarx@nih.gov](mailto:peter.kilmarx@nih.gov) or [edward.pfister@nih.gov](mailto:edward.pfister@nih.gov). **R**



ON THE COVER: Pseudo-colored scanning electron micrograph of an oral squamous cancer cell (white) being attacked by two cytotoxic T cells (red), part of a natural immune response

IMAGE: RITA ELENA SERDA, DUNCAN COMPREHENSIVE CANCER CENTER AT BAYLOR COLLEGE OF MEDICINE, NCI

### The NIH Record

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### FAES Announces Endocrinology Course

The Foundation for Advanced Education in the Sciences at NIH is holding its 2017 Endocrinology Review and Update Course Sept. 11-15. The course will prepare participants for the American Board of Internal Medicine endocrinology certification and recertification examinations.

The class will provide details on how to evaluate and apply new treatments in the diagnosis of endocrine disorders and to identify the risks and benefits of each treatment. The course will provide case studies as examples of examination questions. Participants will learn cost-effective approaches to clinical, laboratory and radiologic diagnosis of endocrine disease with emphasis on recent advances.

The week-long review will cover presentations and problem sets from experts in the field. Speakers include Dr. Francesco Celi of VCU Medical Center, Dr. Beverly Biller of Harvard Medical School and Massachusetts General Hospital, Dr. Electron Kebebew of NCI and Dr. Kristina Rother and Dr. Lee Weinstein, both of NIDDK.

Participants can earn up to 37 CME (continuing medical education) credits. Registration is required. Visit <https://faes.org/events/endocrinology-board-review-and-update-course-2017>.

## Suzuki

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Masur Auditorium. All she did was work.

To rebalance her life, she started to go to the gym regularly. She got in shape and her mood and focus improved dramatically. One day, Suzuki noticed that writing an NIH grant proposal was going surprisingly well. For her, grant writing had never been easy.

“When I thought a little bit more about it, I noticed that it was going well because I was able to focus my attention deeper and longer,” said Suzuki, professor of neural science and psychology at NYU. “That really got me thinking.”

Up until that point, Suzuki had studied the brain’s ability to form and retain new memories and, more specifically, the hippocampus. Resembling a sea horse, the hippocampus is a region in the brain critical to declarative memory, or the recollection of facts. Her research focus was on how the patterns of electrical activity in the hippocampus could help us form new memories for facts and events.

After her experience writing grants, she wanted to learn more about what exactly improved her memory.

“When you are a professor at an undergraduate institution and you want to learn a new topic—like the effect of exercise on the brain—the first thing you do is decide to teach a new undergraduate course on it. So I decided to develop and teach a new undergraduate class that I called ‘Can exercise change your brain?’” Suzuki said.

As she prepared for the course and reviewed literature on exercise and the brain, she discovered three things. Exercise improves mood, increases focus and stimulates neurogenesis, or the birth of neurons, in the hippocampus.

Most research on this topic, however, had only been conducted in elderly populations or in children, Suzuki said. There were no studies on young or middle-age adults or research on exercise’s effect on the hippocampus.

She decided to have her students exercise before class, then teach them about what was happening to their brains. Suzuki herself began to train physically as preparation to teach. On Sept. 7, 2009, class began.

“The level of engagement I got was transformative,” she said. “It made me really

think twice about how fascinating the effect of exercise on the brain was.”

After the class, Suzuki switched her research focus. She set out to define the exercise prescription for optimal brain health depending on age, genetic background and fitness level. She also wanted to understand what exactly happens in the brain.

In one of her first experiments, she recruited healthy volunteers between ages 18 and 35 and divided them into two groups. One group rode an exercise bike for an hour while the other watched an action television show. Those who biked improved their attention. They reported an increase in the ability to focus between 30 minutes and 2 hours after they had exercised.

Suzuki is also measuring the long-term effects of exercise on the brain. In another experiment, she recruited healthy volunteers ages 13 to 59. One group rode an indoor exercise bike 3 times a week for 12 weeks. A second group played video games as the first group exercised. Before the participants began the study, Suzuki tested their cognitive ability. One cognitive test specifically measured hippocampal function.

After 3 months, she noted that bikers’

moods improved significantly when cardiovascular function improved. She also observed an increase in hippocampal function in the group that exercised compared to the group that played video games.

Studies in rodents suggest that exercise releases brain-derived neurotrophic factor. BDNF plays an important role in hippocampal neurogenesis, Suzuki noted. Researchers are studying why this is the case.

Recently, Suzuki started a pilot study with first-year students at NYU. She is observing the effects of exercising for one semester and then not exercising for another semester. She hopes to learn more about how exercise affects students’ cognitive function, study habits, drug use and academic performance.

So, what’s the ideal exercise prescription for brain health? Right now, Suzuki said, we don’t know the answer to that question. We do know that the optimal level is “something in between walking and being a triathlete,” but when we do find out, this will be one of the most effective cognitive enhancers we have today, she concluded.



Suzuki said her work “made me really think twice about how fascinating the effect of exercise on the brain was.”

PHOTOS: BILL BRANSON

MARCH 2

## Aiken To Give NINR Director's Lecture

Dr. Linda H. Aiken will present the first of this year's four NINR Director's Lectures on Thursday, Mar. 2 from 11 a.m. to noon in Lipsett Amphitheater, Bldg. 10. In her talk, "Nursing's Impact on Patient Outcomes," Aiken will describe her program of research showing that nurses with higher levels of qualifications, fewer patients to care for and improved working environments have better patient outcomes.

Aiken is the Claire Fagin leadership professor of nursing, professor of sociology and director of the Center for Health Outcomes and Policy Research at the University of Pennsylvania. She conducts research on the use of performance measures to demonstrate relationships between nursing care and patient outcomes and is the author of more than 300 scientific papers. Her research awards include the Baxter Health Services Research Prize, the AcademyHealth Distinguished Investigator Award, the Individual Codman Award from the Joint Commission and the National Academy of Medicine's 2014 Lienhard Award for the cumulative impact of her research on the improvement of personal health services. She has directed studies of the impact of nursing on patient outcomes in more than 30 countries.

Aiken is a former president of the American Academy of Nursing, an honorary fellow of the Royal College of Nursing, an elected fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and a member of the National Academy of Medicine.

The NINR Director's Lecture series is designed to bring the nation's top nurse scientists to NIH to share their work and interests with a transdisciplinary audience. The event is free and open to the public. For more information and to register, visit [www.ninr.nih.gov/directorslecture](http://www.ninr.nih.gov/directorslecture).

## Grady Speaks at International Nursing Research Conference

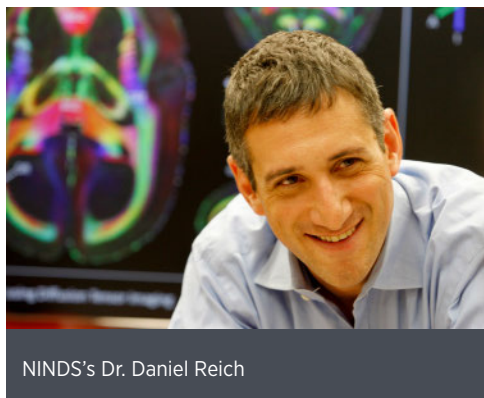
NINR director Dr. Patricia Grady recently spoke at the opening plenary session of the 20th International Nursing Research Conference held in A Coruña, Spain.

She and fellow presenters discussed nursing science advances over the past 20 years, as well as what the future holds.

Grady described NINR-funded achievements in the areas of symptom science, wellness, self-management and end-of-life and palliative care. For instance, discussing one study proving that water filtration using sari cloth reduced the incidence of water-borne cholera, Grady noted that "innovative technology need not be costly but, rather, may represent a novel approach or new application of a simple, readily available item."

She also described the 2014 World Health Organization resolution, "Strengthening of palliative care as a component of comprehensive care throughout the life course." Noting NINR's commitment to palliative care research, Grady said, "Nursing research has a vital role to play in both developing the evidence base for more effective palliative care interventions, as well as helping to address the obvious disparities that exist in its availability and use."

While envisioning the future of nursing research, Grady cited NINR's support of research training for nurse scientists, as well as the priorities outlined in NINR's Strategic Plan, expressing her confidence that going forward, "nursing science will be the keystone to secure health, health care and desirable quality of life."



NINDS's Dr. Daniel Reich

## NINDS's Reich Wins Barancik Prize

Dr. Daniel Reich, chief of the translational neuroradiology section in the NINDS Division of Neuroimmunology and Neurovirology, recently won the 2016 Barancik Prize for Innovation in Multiple Sclerosis Research.

The prize recognizes an exceptional scientist or a team of scientists whose MS research has demonstrated outstanding innovation and originality. The award further honors research that has the potential to impact or lead to the treatment and cure for MS and scientific accomplishments that merit recognition as a future leader in MS research.

Reich was honored for his innovative ways of looking at the brain to advance knowledge of MS. In his research, he uses advanced magnetic resonance imaging techniques to understand the origins of disability in MS and related disorders.

With his team, he has developed and evaluated an imaging approach that detects inflammation of the meninges (the tissue layer that surrounds the brain). Reich has made several important observations, including showing three major patterns of acute MS lesion evolution, which can be used to assess the ultimate degree of tissue damage or recovery. This approach is now being considered for clinical trials of myelin repair therapies in MS.

"I feel especially proud that the prize committee recognized the novelty of our work linking MRI to pathology in MS," Reich said.

Reich earned his doctorate in visual neurophysiology from the Rockefeller University in 2000 and his medical degree from Cornell University in 2002. He completed residencies in neurology and diagnostic radiology and a clinical fellowship in neuroradiology at Johns Hopkins Hospital.

Before coming to NIH, Reich performed postdoctoral research at Hopkins, during which he applied MRI—particularly diffusion-weighted imaging—to study MS.

The international Barancik Prize is made possible by the Charles and Margery Barancik SO Foundation and is administered through the National MS Society. Reich received the prize at a special ceremony recently in Washington, D.C.—**Shannon E. Garnett**



NINR director Dr. Patricia Grady (second from l) at the 20<sup>th</sup> International Nursing Research Conference



On hand for the check presentation are (from l) Lee's parents Sarah and Bruce, Lee, then-CC director Dr. John Gallin, Dr. W. Marston Linehan, FNIH president Dr. Maria Freire and Dr. Ramaprasad Srinivasan.

PHOTOS: BILL BRANSON

## Donation

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

to other car enthusiasts with his idea and founded the nonprofit Driven to Cure. Mechanics and auto detailers donated their services to enhance Lee's GTR. Lee then took to the streets with his customized hot rod, painted bright orange, which represents kidney cancer awareness. He attended car events around the country to raise awareness and research dollars for rare kidney cancers in children and young adults.

According to NCI, nearly 63,000 Americans are diagnosed with kidney and renal pelvis cancers annually and more than 14,000 die. Linehan, recently named the CC's surgeon in chief, is pioneering cutting-edge therapies that are showing promise in treating multiple forms of kidney cancer, including HLRCC (hereditary

leiomyomatosis and renal cell cancer), the rare type Lee developed.

"Without Marston's team's hard work, their dedication to their patients and their families, I think we would be years behind

• • •

*"We've come a long way. This is a crucial time for us right now because we're really ready... Now that we understand these genes and are learning more and more about the gene pathways, it should just be a matter of time and resources."*


-DR. W. MARSTON LINEHAN

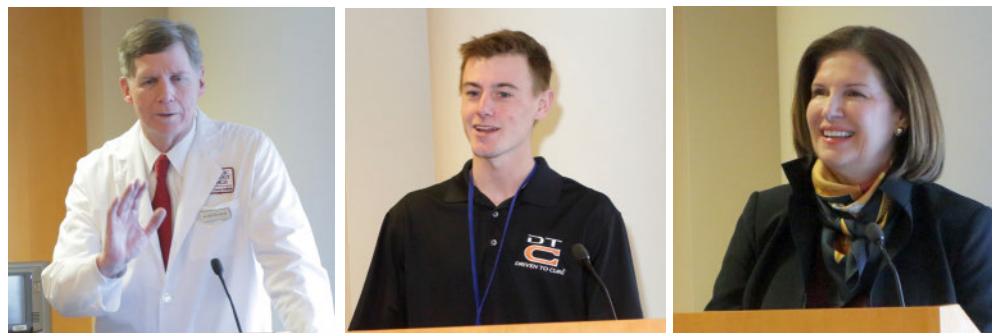
of where we are today in our understanding of rare forms of kidney cancer," said Freire. "Their work and their vision and commitment allow us to treat these patients in this amazing facility."

• • •

The Driven to Cure donation is a helpful resource on the road to discovery. "It takes enormous courage for someone to say I want to be a partner in this research enterprise, that I want to be part of giving of myself so that others will reap the benefit of this research," said Freire. "Andrew, what you're doing is nothing short of heroic. Without people like you, no new medicines and no new treatments would be possible."

When asked how much longer he'll be returning to NIH for treatment, Lee responded, "As long as it keeps working. Together, and with the support of many, we will find a cure one day."

To learn more about Lee's work, visit [www.driventocure.org](http://www.driventocure.org). 



Power of three. Linehan, Lee and Freire represent a vital combo—research + resources + partnership.



Investigators found that children of obese mothers were more likely to fail tests of fine motor skill, children of obese fathers were more likely to fail measures of social competence and those born to extremely obese couples also were more likely to fail tests of problem-solving ability.

## Parental Obesity Linked to Delays in Child Development, Study Suggests

Children of obese parents may be at risk for developmental delays, according to a study by researchers at NIH. The investigators found that children of obese mothers were more likely to fail tests of fine motor skill—the ability to control movement of small muscles, such as those in the fingers and hands. Children of obese fathers were more likely to fail measures of social competence and those born to extremely obese couples also were more likely to fail tests of problem-solving ability.

The study, which appeared in *Pediatrics*, was conducted by scientists at NICHD.

“The previous U.S. studies in this area have focused on the mothers’ pre- and post-pregnancy weight,” said the study’s first author, Dr. Edwina Yeung, an investigator in NICHD’s Division of Intramural Population Health Research. “Our study is one of the few that also includes information about fathers, and our results suggest that dad’s weight also has significant influence on child development.”

Yeung and her coauthors cited research indicating that about 1 in 5 pregnant women in the United States is overweight or obese.

More than 5,000 women enrolled in the study roughly 4 months after giving birth between 2008 and 2010.

Compared to children of normal weight mothers, children of obese mothers were nearly 70 percent more likely to have failed the test indicator on fine motor skill by age 3. Children of obese fathers were 75 percent more likely to fail the test’s personal-social domain—an indicator of how well they were able to relate to and interact with others by age 3. Children with two obese parents were

nearly three times more likely to fail the test’s problem-solving section by age 3.

It is not known why parental obesity might increase children’s risk for developmental delay.

If the link between parental obesity and developmental delays is confirmed, the authors wrote, physicians may need to take parental weight into account when screening young children for delays and early interventional services.

## TCGA Study Identifies Genomic Features of Cervical Cancer

Investigators with the Cancer Genome Atlas (TCGA) Research Network have identified novel genomic and molecular characteristics of cervical cancer that will aid in the sub-classification of the disease and may help target therapies that are most appropriate for each patient.

The new study, a comprehensive analysis of the genomes of 178 primary cervical cancers, found that over 70 percent of the tumors had genomic alterations in either one or both of two important cell signaling pathways. The researchers also found, unexpectedly, that a subset of tumors did not show evidence of human papillomavirus (HPV) infection. The study included authors from NCI and NHGRI and appeared Jan. 23 in *Nature*.

Cervical cancer accounts for more than 500,000 new cases of cancer and more than 250,000 deaths each year worldwide. “The vast majority of cases of cervical cancer are caused by persistent infection with oncogenic types of HPV,” said NCI acting director Dr. Douglas Lowy. “Effective preventive vaccines against the most oncogenic forms of HPV have been available for a number of years, with vaccination having the long-term potential to reduce the number of cases of cervical cancer. However, most women who will develop cervical cancer in the next couple of decades are already beyond the recommended age for vaccination and will not be protected by the vaccine. Therefore, cervical cancer is still a disease in need of effective therapies. This latest TCGA analysis could help advance efforts to find drugs that target important elements of cervical cancer genomes in addition to the HPV genes.”

An aspect of the study that is of particular interest was the identification of a unique set of eight cervical cancers that showed molecular similarities to endometrial cancers. These endometrial-like cancers were mainly HPV-negative.

“The identification of HPV-negative endometrial-like tumors confirms that not all cervical cancers are related to HPV infection and that a small percentage of cervical tumors may be due to strictly genetic or other factors,” said Dr. Jean-Claude Zenklusen, director of the TCGA program office. “This aspect of the research is one of the most intriguing findings to come out of the TCGA program, which has been looking at more than 30 tumor types over the past decade.”



Researchers discovered molecular mechanisms that may underlie a woman’s susceptibility to disabling irritability, sadness and anxiety in the days leading up to her menstrual period.

## Sex Hormone-Sensitive Gene Complex Linked to Premenstrual Mood Disorder

NIH researchers have discovered molecular mechanisms that may underlie a woman’s susceptibility to disabling irritability, sadness and anxiety in the days leading up to her menstrual period. Such premenstrual dysphoric disorder (PMDD) affects 2 to 5 percent of women of reproductive age, whereas less severe premenstrual syndrome (PMS) is much more common.

“We found dysregulated expression in a suspect gene complex which adds to evidence that PMDD is a disorder of cellular response to estrogen and progesterone,” said Dr. Peter Schmidt of NIMH’s Behavioral Endocrinology Branch. “Learning more about the role of this gene complex holds hope for improved treatment of such prevalent reproductive endocrine-related mood disorders.”

Schmidt, Dr. David Goldman of NIAAA and colleagues reported on their findings Jan. 3 in the journal *Molecular Psychiatry*.

“This is a big moment for women’s health, because it establishes that women with PMDD have an intrinsic difference in their molecular apparatus for response to sex hormones—not just emotional behaviors they should be able to voluntarily control,” said Goldman.

“For the first time, we now have cellular evidence of abnormal signaling in cells derived from women with PMDD and a plausible biological cause for their abnormal behavioral sensitivity to estrogen and progesterone,” said Schmidt.

Using cutting edge “disease in a dish” technologies, the researchers are now following up the leads discovered in blood cell lines in neurons induced from stem cells derived from the blood of PMDD patients. They hope to gain a more direct window into the gene complex’s role in the brain.

## Harley

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Management Seminar Series in Masur Auditorium.

And that's where candor comes in. She defined it as "how we agree to work together; here is what a good job looks like and here's how we're going to interact." When this framework is absent, employees are apt to talk about their coworkers rather than talking to them. Another drawback: managers don't make clear to their employees what the expectations of the job are.

"If you want to control your career and experience here, you have to find out what people want," Harley said.

Supervisors must set clear expectations so their employees don't have to guess. "People aren't you," she noted. "They don't approach work the same way you do."

As an example, Harley said one of her clients spent a considerable amount of time and effort each week assembling a 30-page business report for his boss. One day, the client personally delivered the report. The boss flipped to the final page, read a chart and stopped reading. The employee was wasting time on a paper his boss never read. However, the employee never knew that because he always emailed the report.

Almost all communication breakdowns are predictable and preventable, says Harley. To avoid these problems, workers must know about each other's deal breakers, pet peeves, likes and dislikes.



***"What makes work hard is the humans.  
It's not the work at hand.***

***It's the people, it's the personalities, the power struggles."***

-SHARI HARLEY



Knowing about deal breakers is especially important. Last year, Harley had a baby. Before she had the baby, she traveled to 4 or 5 states each week for work. Since she's had her child, she will only travel to one location a week.

Ideally, workers and their supervisors are able to build trust in their relationship by asking more questions and getting to



Giving a recent management seminar, Harley suggests almost all communication breakdowns are predictable and preventable.

PHOTOS: BILL BRANSON

know each other better, so they don't have to rely solely on feedback, which is plan B. But you can't anticipate and ask about everything. Sometimes it's not possible to prevent a breakdown.

"What makes work hard is the humans," Harley said. "It's not the work at hand. It's the people, it's the personalities, the power struggles."

behavior. People interpret vagueness as judgmental. The feedback should also be short, because "no one wants to hear for 20 to 40 minutes that they're not performing."

Feedback conversations should be just that, a dialogue. Both people talk. Harley suggests the recipient of feedback says "thank you" to the giver. Acknowledging feedback can be disarming and buys time to respond. Don't trust what will come out of your mouth when you're upset. Wait to respond, she counseled.

After that, the feedback providers should request a specific change or behavior he or she wants the recipient to replicate, then try to build a consensus on what happens next. The conversation should end with a "thank you."

Those who attempt to get to know others better and build trust by asking more questions might not succeed, she warned. Coworkers might not respond, they may lie or say what they think their coworker wants to hear. In those cases, "at least you're someone who asked.

"Everything we did today is very simple, but very hard to do," Harley concluded. **R**





Dr. Kenneth Gibbs, Dr. Irina Krasnova (c) and Dr. Amanda Melillo join NIGMS scientific staff.

### Three New Program Directors Join NIGMS Scientific Staff

NIGMS recently added three new program directors to its scientific staff.

Dr. Kenneth Gibbs joins the Division of Training, Workforce Development and Diversity, where he will handle fellowships, training grants and the Coordination and Evaluation Center, a component of the NIH Diversity Program Consortium. He will also manage research grants in the Division of Genetics and Developmental Biology. Additionally, he will interact directly with trainees through the Postdoctoral Research Associate Program.

Gibbs was previously a program analyst in the institute's Office of Program Planning, Analysis and Evaluation. Before joining NIGMS, he was a cancer prevention fellow at the National Cancer Institute. Gibbs earned a B.S. in biochemistry and molecular biology from the University of Maryland, Baltimore County, a master of public health from Johns Hopkins University and a Ph.D. in immunology from Stanford University, where he also conducted postdoctoral research.

Dr. Irina Krasnova joins the Center for Research Capacity Building. She manages Centers of Biomedical Research Excellence and Support of Competitive Research grants.

Before coming to NIGMS, Krasnova was a staff scientist in the Molecular Neuropsychiatry Research Branch at NIDA. Formerly, she was a research scientist in the department of molecular neurobiology at the Institute of the Human Brain in Russia. Krasnova earned a B.S. in analytical

chemistry and a Ph.D. in biochemistry from St. Petersburg State University in Russia.

Dr. Amanda Melillo joins the Division of Genetics and Developmental Biology. She administers research grants on cell growth and differentiation and the cell cycle. Melillo comes to NIGMS from NIDCR, where she was a program director in the Integrative Biology and Infectious Diseases Branch.

Formerly, she was a technology transfer coordinator assistant at the Food and Drug



Dr. Delia Olufokunbi Sam recently was named chief of a CSR review group.

Administration, where she also conducted postdoctoral research. Melillo earned a B.S. in biology and biochemistry from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University and a Ph.D. in microbial disease from Albany Medical College in New York.

### Olufokunbi Sam Named Chief of CSR Review Group

Dr. Delia Olufokunbi Sam has been named chief of the population sciences and epidemiology integrated review group at the Center for Scientific Review. She had been scientific review officer for CSR's health disparities and equity promotion review panel.

Olufokunbi Sam will oversee nine study sections and many special emphasis panels that review NIH grant applications related to the distribution of health conditions and health behaviors in many different human populations and socioeconomic contexts; the determinants of diseases, disease transmission and prevention; and the development and improvement of research designs and methodologies addressing epidemiologic and demographic questions in public health and clinical medicine.

During her tenure at CSR, Olufokunbi Sam has served as coordinator of SRO training workshops and as coordinator of CSR's Patient Centered Outcome Research Institute. She also represents CSR on the NIH extramural staff training advisory committee and has managed multiple, high profile special reviews for NIH.

She earned a Ph.D. in clinical and health psychology from the University of Florida and received postdoctoral training in mental health services research and policy at the University of South Florida department of mental health law and policy.

Before joining CSR, she was deputy director of the Center for Integrated Behavioral Health Policy at George Washington University, where she managed a diverse portfolio of behavioral health research and policy. She was also an assistant professor of health policy in the department of health policy at GW.

Her research has focused on behavioral health services and policy, substance abuse prevention and treatment, minority health and child welfare.



NIMHD Executive Officer Donna Brooks retired recently after four decades of service.

PHOTO: EDGAR B. DEWS III

## NIMHD Executive Officer Brooks Retires

BY GERDA GALLOP-GOODMAN

Donna A. Brooks, executive officer at NIMHD, retired recently after four decades of service.

“I have had an incredible journey at the National Institutes of Health with many great people for almost 43 years and now I’m embracing the opportunity to start a new phase of my life,” she said.

Brooks started at NIH in 1973 as a summer aide for the Personnel Staffing Branch, Office of the Director (later the Recruitment and Employee Benefits Branch). She continued with the branch as a clerk-typist in the Stay-In-School Program and joined NHLBI as a personnel assistant in 1977.

After 1 year at the National Library of Medicine as a personnel assistant, she returned to NHLBI in 1980 to serve as a personnel management specialist until 1989. Brooks went on to serve as a supervisory personnel management specialist at NIDCD for 9 years before joining the predecessor of NIMHD, the Office of Research on Minority Health, as a program coordinator in 1998.

As ORMH continued to grow, becoming the National Center on Minority Health and Health Disparities in 2001 and the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities in 2010, Brooks played a key role as part of the leadership team providing administrative management.

She served as acting executive officer (2007-2010), deputy ethics counselor (2007-2009) and executive officer (2010-2016).

“Donna Brooks was totally dedicated to the mission of NIMHD and she nurtured its development from office to institute at NIH alongside the leadership of Dr. John Ruffin,” said NIMHD director Dr. Eliseo Pérez-Stable. “We are all proud of Donna’s

accomplishments and commitment and wish her nothing but the best in this new phase of her life.”

During her career, Brooks received the Outstanding Summer Employee Award, the NHLBI EEO Achievement Award, the NIH Director’s Award, NIH Merit awards and NIMHD Merit awards.

As one of its longest-tenured employees, Brooks served as a passionate, loyal and dedicated ambassador of NIMHD and advocate of its mission. With each transition, she provided strong and steady leadership and vision.

Each year, Brooks rallied institute employees to give generously during the Combined Federal Campaign and helped make NIMHD a consistent leader in donations among NIH ICs. She was instrumental in planning NIH’s first Science of Eliminating Health Disparities Summit, hosted by NCMHD in 2008, which attracted 4,000 attendees. She also led coordination of Take Your Child to Work Day at the institute, helping to ensure a fun and educational experience for all involved. With her trademark smile, congeniality and infectious enthusiasm, Brooks brought joy and dedication to her work at the institute and NIH.

She credited many people at NIH who were her role models and provided encouragement and wisdom in pursuit of her career goals. In return, Brooks served as a catalyst in helping others advance in their careers as a mentor and a frequent speaker on career enhancement, diversity and employment opportunities at NIH-wide events.

A native of Washington, D.C., Brooks attended Woodrow Wilson High School then went to Hampton Institute and Howard University. During her retirement, she plans to remain active in her church, where she teaches Sunday school and works with the music ministry, spend more time with her family and do some traveling and reading, among other pursuits. Brooks was known for wearing colorful butterfly pins on her shoulder. She said it represented the transformation from caterpillar to butterfly, which symbolizes beauty, hope and change—a fitting symbol as she takes flight for new adventures in life.

## NIDCD’s Platt Bids Farewell

As Dr. Christopher Platt—who joined NIDCD as a program director in 2003 and retired at the end of December—will tell you, all species of fish do not navigate through their liquid habitat in the same way. Flounders can swim tilted on one side, catfish graze along the water surface while inverted and other fish can point their nose either upward or downward. Fascinated since youth by the range of balancing acts, Platt applied his scientific mind toward explaining how the vestibular system in the inner ear functions for maintaining posture and balance.

Platt’s passion for fish and biology in general began during his boyhood

in a University of Chicago faculty neighborhood. He visited the aquarium and zoo, dipped his toe into marine biology on the East Coast on summer breaks and majored in zoology in college. In 1967, at the Scripps Institution of Oceanography in La Jolla, Calif., he discovered neuroscience and applied it to behavioral biology, especially spatial orientation and navigation in fish.

“Fish don’t have necks or legs,” said Platt, an NIDCD extramural program director. “The way they tilt is a reflection of what their ears are telling them. The vestibular sense, which has been called a sixth sense, is not well studied in comparison to sight, hearing, touch, smell and taste. It is so critical to overall health that it is an important specific mission area for NIDCD.”

After earning a Ph.D. in marine biology from Scripps and becoming an assistant professor at the University of Southern California and later a research assistant professor at Georgetown University, Platt continued to focus on how fish use their inner ears for hearing and balance. He transitioned into research administration at the National Science Foundation by first becoming a “rotator” program officer, later the sensory systems program director and ultimately the neuroscience cluster director within the biological sciences directorate.

When Platt decided to join the NIDCD Division of Scientific Programs, he had been with NSF for 19 years and already had attended several advisory council meetings at NEI, NIDCD, NIMH and NINDS as a federal official.

“I came here after NSF and was simply stunned,” said Platt of the NIH investments in research grants. “The scale of activity is hugely different.”

Platt is highly regarded and has earned recognition and awards for his collaborative spirit, not just within the institute but in trans-NIH activities such as the BRAIN (Brain Research through Advancing Innovative Neurotechnologies) Initiative, NIH Blueprint for Neuroscience Research and NIH Academic Research Enhancement Award Program.

Platt also earned recognition beyond NIH. On his desk, he displayed an award from Advances and Perspectives in Auditory Neuroscience “for his steadfast support and significant impact on auditory neuroscience and hearing research.”



NIDCD’s Dr. Christopher Platt retired at the end of December.

Recently, coworkers, friends and his three adult children gathered to celebrate his more than 30 years of federal service.

“Christopher’s light-hearted nature, keen intellect, honesty and openness have made us better people and the institute a better place,” said Dr. Judith Cooper, NIDCD deputy director and director of the Division of Scientific Programs. “Christopher has been an invaluable colleague to us in the institute and an equally invaluable resource to the hearing and balance/vestibular research community.”

During retirement, Platt said he would certainly continue his daily practice of donning his helmet and yellow vest to ride his bike, even on days when most others wouldn’t want to be outside, let alone on a bike. And he might volunteer with some local scientific or natural resource institutions or pursue research collaborations. Platt also plans to attend national meetings on neuroscience, as well as talks on the NIH campus.

“It’s exciting to be part of this world at NIH,” he concluded. “But it’s really time to give new people a chance.”



Lois Kochanski served for many years as executive director of the Foundation for Advanced Education in the Sciences, Inc.

## Former FAES Executive Kochanski Mourned

Lois Whidden Kochanski, 93, who served for many years as executive director of the Foundation for Advanced Education in the Sciences, Inc., died Jan. 12 in Bethesda.

She was born in San Angelo, Tex., and earned a B.A. in political science from the University of Texas, Austin, in 1945. She moved to Washington, D.C., to work in military intelligence and began her job at the Pentagon on VE Day. She was an intelligence analyst for the Defense Intelligence Agency.

Kochanski then worked as assistant to the vice president for academic affairs at George Washington University, 1964-1967. In 1970, she began a 35-year career at FAES, where she served as executive director until 2005, leading graduate education and cultural programs funded privately for the NIH community.

“During Mrs. Kochanski’s 35 years as executive director of FAES, she oversaw—initially from a single room in the bowels of Bldg. 31 that doubled as a textbook repository—its conversion from a small organization offering several courses for NIH staff to its present form with many diverse programs essential for NIH and its community to function as much like a university as possible,” said Dr. Alan Schechter, chief of NIDDK’s Molecular Medicine Branch and a former member of the FAES board.

“Everyone on campus interacted with her, from NIH directors, to institute directors, to scientific and clinical directors, to scientists and trainees,” said Dr. Susan Leitman, FAES president. “She cheerfully, competently and efficiently enabled hundreds of collaborations between NIH scientific staff and non-NIH sponsors, managed a health insurance program for tens of thousands of fellows, ran a



*“For 35 years, Lois was the heart and soul of the FAES.”*

—DR. ROBERT ADELSTEIN



graduate school program taught by NIH senior scientists and managed the NIH Bookstore. She was liked and admired by all who interacted with her.”

Said NHLBI’s Dr. Robert Adelstein, a former FAES president, “For 35 years, Lois was the heart and soul of the FAES.”

Kochanski belonged to Concord-St. Andrews United Methodist Church, the Society of Mayflower Descendants, the American Association of University Women, the NIH Camera Club and the National Genealogical Society. Her hobbies included photography, tennis, genealogy, bridge and piano. She was author of *The Mullican Family of Warren County, Tennessee*, 1991.

She married Joseph T. Kochanski in 1949 in Arlington, Va. They were married for 47 years when he died in 1996.

Survivors include her sister, Mary Bess Whidden of Albuquerque, N.Mex.; daughter Mary Ann Daly of Bethesda; son James Kochanski of Austin, Tex.; daughter Constance Wetterer of Colorado Springs, Col.; and seven grandchildren.

Church funeral services and burial at Arlington National Cemetery will take place at a later date. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the Parkinson’s Disease Foundation, 1359 Broadway, Suite 1509, New York, NY 10018 or the charity of your choice. **R**

## Study Seeks Healthy Older Adults

Healthy older adults, ages 55-70, are invited to participate in an outpatient research study investigating the benefits of tart cherry and aroniaberry supplementation on vascular health. The goal of the study is to determine whether the supplements improve blood flow and blood vessel function that can affect your heart. Eligible participants must be medication-free and in good general health. The study will be carried out in an outpatient clinic and includes 7 visits over 3-4 months. Compensation is provided. For more information, call 1-800-411-1222 (TTY 1-866-411-1010) and refer to study 15-NR-0085 or visit [www.clinicaltrials.gov](http://www.clinicaltrials.gov).

## NIAID Needs Healthy Volunteers

NIAID study seeks healthy adult volunteers, 18-64 years old. Researchers want to better understand the effects of glucocorticoids on the body. These medications are commonly used to treat conditions that cause inflammation on the skin and in the body like lupus, asthma and eczema. Participants will receive one intravenous dose of a glucocorticoid and a glucocorticoid cream will be applied to a small area of the skin. Blood and skin samples will be collected. Two outpatient visits at the Clinical Center are required. Compensation provided. Contact the Office of Patient Recruitment, 1-866-444-2214 (TTY 1-866-411-1010). Refer to study 16-1-0126.

## Antidepressant Study Recruiting

Depression, ketamine and alcohol researchers are evaluating rapid antidepressant effects in the brain. This inpatient study is enrolling eligible adults ages 21 to 65, who are free of other serious medical conditions, for 4-7 weeks as research participants. Procedures may include tapering off antidepressants, a medication-free period, 2 infusions of alcohol and 1 infusion of low-dose ketamine (FDA-approved anesthetic) and 2 brain scans (MRI). No cost to participate. Compensation provided. Study enrolls participants from across the U.S. Travel arrangements provided; costs covered by NIMH. After completing the study, participants receive short-term follow-up care at NIH while transitioning back to a provider. For more info, email [moodresearch@mail.nih.gov](mailto:moodresearch@mail.nih.gov), or call 1-877-MIND-NIH (1-877-646-3644), TTY 1-866-411-1222. Refer to protocol 14-M-0085.

## Volunteers Needed for Unipolar, Bipolar Depression Studies

Studies are enrolling eligible participants ages 18-65 with unipolar or bipolar depression symptoms for a 2-3 month inpatient stay. Study compares ketamine, an experimental medication, to placebo and evaluates rapid reduction of depressive symptoms (within hours). For details, visit [www.nimh.nih.gov/labs-at-nimh/join-a-study/index.shtml](http://www.nimh.nih.gov/labs-at-nimh/join-a-study/index.shtml) or call 1-877-MIND-NIH (1-877-646-3644) TTY 1-866-411-1010, email [moodresearch@mail.nih.gov](mailto:moodresearch@mail.nih.gov). Refer to protocol 04-M-0222.



THANK YOU, NIH!

### Message from NIH Combined Federal Campaign Co-Chair

Dear Colleagues,

We did it! [NIH director] Dr. [Francis] Collins and I are delighted to report that we have exceeded our NIH CFC 2016 goal and have raised \$2,400,154 for CFC charities. This achievement reflects the NIH community's outstanding commitment to improving the lives of others, both through our professional roles and personally through generous contributions to the nonprofit community. Thank you to the many in our NIH community who contributed to this effort.

There were over 20,000 nonprofit organizations participating in the campaign this past year, including local, national and international organizations. From supporting medical research and patients in need to providing sanctuaries for the homeless, helping people with mental health and substance use disorders, and funding for the arts, these organizations help make our communities and our world a better place. Our CFC donations contribute to making these organizations and the work they do possible.

I would like to extend a special thank you to the many keyworkers and campaign coordinators whose time, creativity and enthusiasm made this year's campaign so successful. Your efforts are appreciated.

Thank you all for helping us to achieve this outstanding accomplishment.

Sincerely yours,

*Dr. Nora Volkow, NIDA director & NIH CFC co-chair*

*Jan. 17, 2017*

