

THE NIH RECORD

Still The Second Best Thing About Payday



NIH deputy director Dr. Ruth Kirschstein cuts the ribbon to open NIH's Work and Family Life Center, part of the agency's response to HHS Secretary Donna Shalala's Quality of Work Life Initiative. Employees are welcome to explore the center's vast selection of resources and services—benefits counseling, Employee Express, and computer and Internet access, to name a few—to help workers balance career and home-life issues. Joining in the opening celebration are (from l) NIAID director Dr. Anthony Fauci, NIDDK director Dr. Phillip Gorden and NIAMS director Dr. Stephen Katz, whose institutes collaborated with the NIH Office of the Director to help launch the project (see full story in the Nov. 18 Record). The center is located in Bldg. 31C, Rm. B3C15.

NIH Hosts MLK Program, Jan. 16

NIH will hold its annual tribute to slain civil rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., on Friday, Jan. 16 at 11:30 a.m. in Masur Auditorium, Bldg. 10. The keynote speaker will be King's son, Martin Luther King III, newly elected president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. In addition, the Aurora Dance Company is scheduled to perform a special tribute to the King legacy. For reasonable accommodation, contact Carlton Coleman of the Office of Equal Opportunity, 496-2906 (v/tty). For more information about the program, contact Jackie Dobson, 496-3670, or O.H. Laster, 496-6302.

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U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
National Institutes of Health

January 13, 1998
Vol. L, No. 1

Same Job, New Space? Flexiplace

NIH Telecommuters Put More Miles Into Work, Spend Fewer on the Road

By Carla Garnett

Cheryl Moxley, a telecommunications specialist in NIH's Office of Research Services, used to travel about 56 miles to work every day from her home in Harper's Ferry, W.Va. That's 112 miles round trip—no small journey, she's quick to point out. The commute made her work days longer and more hectic and made her life in general much more stressful. So, last spring she decided to try an alternative work place arrangement. She's been singing the praises of doing her job at a flexiplace ever since.

"The advantages for me are many—decreasing traffic, parking congestion, energy consumption, and air pollution," said Moxley, who still drives to work

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Telecommuter Cheryl Moxley completes one of her on-campus tasks—a site visit to NHGRI offices in Bldg. 10.

Favorable Forecast for 1998

Filling Top Jobs, Boosting AIDS Vaccine Work Among ACD Topics

By Carla Garnett

Although attendees may not have found many items on the agenda "as gripping as the latest novel," said NIH director Dr. Harold Varmus in opening remarks at the Dec. 4 session of the advisory committee to the director (ACD), the issues that were covered "are of tremendous importance to the future of the NIH."

Notwithstanding Varmus's caveat, ACD members were greeted warmly with news of NIH's \$13.6 billion FY1998 budget appropriation. At once basking in the agency's fiduciary success and cautioning that "appropriations is an annual game," he said the 7 percent increase, the third and largest increase in as many years, underscores the confidence and trust the President and members of Congress place in NIH's leaders—and the added responsibility—to spend the nation's money wisely. Later in his remarks, Varmus addressed the issue of the public's perception about how NIH manages and distributes its funds. He noted that Congress

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'Doctors at the Gate' Exhibit

As part of the bicentennial commemoration of the U.S. Public Health Service in 1998, an exhibit entitled "Doctors at the Gate: The U.S. Public Health Service at Ellis Island" will be on display at the National Museum of Health and Medicine, Armed Forces Institute of Pathology, Washington, D.C., from Feb. 5 through June 21. The exhibit will focus on the role played by PHS in the medical inspection of arriving immigrants at Ellis Island from the time it opened in 1892 until more restrictive laws greatly slowed the flow of immigrants to the United States in 1924. It will also discuss the care provided on the island to those immigrants who required hospitalization.

The Office of the PHS Historian (National Library of Medicine) and the media arts branch of the Department of Health and Human Services collaborated with the museum in preparing the exhibit. Prof. Alan Kraut of American University, an expert on immigration history, served as consultant.

The National Museum of Health and Medicine is located at Walter Reed Army Medical Center, Georgia Ave. and Elder St. NW, Washington, D.C. For museum hours and directions, call (202) 782-2200. ■

Software Agreement Yields Big Savings

A 3-year licensing agreement between HHS and major software companies gives NIH employees from participating organizations access to a wide range of PC and Macintosh software at a greatly reduced cost to the ICDs. "At the end of 3 years, this agreement will have saved HHS an estimated \$40 million to \$60 million," says Jim Del Priore, DCRT assistant to the director, who negotiated the agreement.

The software includes: operating systems; integrated application suites; email; video broadcasting; Internet browsers; antivirus protection; network operating systems; technical support; and electronic software distribution.

For installation, contact your local network administrator. For more information, visit the NIH campus network distribution system (CandyLAN) Web site at <http://candyland.nih.gov>. ■

Three NIH'ers Named AAM Fellows

Three NIH scientists have been named fellows of the American Academy of Microbiology, the only honorific leadership group devoted entirely to microbiologists. They are Dr. John Robbins, chief of NICHD's Laboratory of Developmental and Molecular Immunity; Dr. Kiyoshi Mizuuchi, head of the molecular virology section in NIDDK's Laboratory of Molecular Biology; and Dr. Howard Nash, chief of the Laboratory of Molecular Biology, NIMH.

More than 1,300 academy fellows from over 27 countries have been elected; each has demonstrated scientific excellence, originality and leadership, and high ethical standards. ■



The Leukemia Society of America, Maryland chapter, recently honored five LSA-funded NIH researchers with 1997 LSA Research Star awards for significant contributions to the chapter. Above, NHGRI's Dr. Pu Paul Liu, who presented the featured paper on acute myelogenous leukemia, appears with Trish Greene, LSA senior vice president of patient services. Below, Dr. David Gdula of NCI accepts the congratulations of LSA trustee Kathleen Hays. Other society fellows honored included Drs. Jill Schumacher and Daniel Fowler of NCI, and Dr. Weiguo Zhang of NICHD. The Leukemia Society funds researchers at institutions in the United States, Canada and abroad to investigate the cause, prevention, diagnosis and management of leukemia, lymphoma, Hodgkin's disease and myeloma.



NIH RECORD

Published biweekly at Bethesda, Md., by the Editorial Operations Branch, Division of Public Information, for the information of employees of the National Institutes of Health, Department of Health and Human Services. The content is reprintable without permission. Pictures may be available on request. Use of funds for printing this periodical has been approved by the director of the Office of Management and Budget through Sept. 30, 1998.

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Genetic 'Short Circuit' Leads to Cleft Palate

Scientists have identified not just a single gene but a genetic circuit that, when broken, causes cleft palate in newborn mice. The critical points of the circuit represent genes and gene products that interact with one another to direct palate formation. The "surge" that causes the circuit to break is an environmental assault in the form of steroid hormones given to the female mice during pregnancy. This is the first time that a cause-effect scenario for cleft palate has been worked out at the molecular level.

The findings may help define the genetic components of cleft palate in humans and also explain the link between clefting and risk factors such as stress, smoking, and certain medications, all of which are known to elevate the level of steroids in the body. The study was carried out by Drs. Michael Melnick, Tina Jaskoll, and colleagues at the University of Southern California through support from the National Institute of Dental Research, and appears in the January issue of *Developmental Dynamics*.

Facial clefting disorders are among the most common human birth defects. Cleft palate occurs in about 1 in 2,000 live births and can range in severity from a relatively minor split uvula at the rear of the mouth, to a cleft that runs the length of the hard and soft tissues that form the roof of the mouth. The more severe forms require surgery and are often associated with both psychological and physical problems including difficulties with feeding, breathing and speech development.

Cleft palate is thought to result from a combination of genetic and environmental factors, yet attempts to identify these components in human populations have so far produced inconclusive results. Investigators feel that the mouse model will provide the clues that eventually unravel the mysteries of cleft palate.—Wayne Little ■



More than 150 NINDS employees and other invited guests gathered recently to say goodbye, thanks, and congratulations to Dr. Zach W. Hall at a farewell reception held at the Mary Woodard Lasker Center. He began his term as NINDS director in September 1994, and recently left NIH to become associate dean for research at the School of Medicine, University of California, San Francisco. Shown above with his sister Jane Manus, Hall was presented with several gifts including a director's chair displaying the NINDS logo, an inscribed clock and a plaque from the NINDS EEO office, a large framed picture of NINDS employees, and a certificate for a "spotting scope" (a telescope for birding). In a prepared statement, he said, "Although I look forward to the challenge of my new job, I feel a deep sense of regret as I leave the NIH. This is an exciting time in research on brain disease and...I have enjoyed enormously working with the many talented people at NIH in advancing the cause of research on the brain."

Parents Help in Study of Kids with Attention Deficit

With the cooperation of Johnston County, N.C., schools and parents, NIEHS is launching a pioneering effort to pinpoint what percentage of children have attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder, or ADHD, and what environmental factors may cause it. In addition to the \$1 million NIEHS may spend, county students will also benefit from a grant of \$586,000 from the Kate B. Reynolds Trust to help provide medical and educational support for the youngsters.

Principal investigator Dr. Andrew Rowland says there are no good estimates of the number of youngsters who have the problem in the general population—much less what factors may cause it. "To help find out, we picked Johnston County (southeast of Raleigh) because it is diverse," he said, "with parts that are rural and parts that are urban-suburban, and with many different types of people."

As a result of the Reynolds grant, he added, "We won't just study the kids and then say goodbye. This project will show county teachers, parents and doctors what ADHD is and how to work better with kids who have it."

The study will ask teachers a series of questions about each first to fifth grade Johnston County child whose parents agree. The children themselves will not be tested or questioned. The researchers will ask parents a series of questions about occurrences when the child was not yet born, at birth and thereafter. The questions may run from, "Was the pregnancy difficult?" to "How much TV is the child permitted to watch?" Parents will also be asked about any family history of ADHD. ■

Do You Have Dry Eyes?

Do your eyes feel irritated? Do you often need to use artificial tear drops? Are you 18 or older? If this sounds like you, you may be eligible to participate in a dry eye study at NIH. The National Eye Institute is enrolling individuals with dry eye to a protocol using a new kind of treatment for this condition, Cyclosporine A eye drops. You must not be pregnant or nursing during the study. You may not take antihistamine pills during the study. Call Phyllis Friello, study coordinator, for more details, 435-4337 or Dr. Janine Smith, principal investigator, 435-5139.



Katherine E. Crosson, chief of the NCI Patient Education Branch, recently received the Distinguished Professional Career Award from the public health section and health promotion section of the American Public Health Association at its annual meeting in Indianapolis. The annual award recognizes "an individual who has continually provided outstanding contributions and leadership to the practice and profession of health education." Crosson has worked in the field of health education for more than 20 years. She is considered one of the leading practitioners in cancer patient education in the U.S.

ACD MEETING, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

included \$300,000 in the current appropriation for a study to be conducted by the National Academy of Science's Institute of Medicine on how NIH sets its research priorities and how it decides which science to support.

Reflecting on the "extremely dramatic" changes he's witnessed in the budgetary climate during his 4 years as NIH director, Varmus recalled his arrival in 1993 to threats that he should expect serious cuts in funding for NIH.

"The threats seemed so serious," he said, "that my own approach to the problem was to try to argue that NIH should at least maintain pace with inflation...Despite dire prognostications, we've drawn 3 years of increases."

The healthy growth in its coffers each year has enabled NIH to enhance the extramural research program, which accounts for more than 85 percent of the agency's total spending. NIH will count about 7,700 grant holders in 1998, Varmus reported, compared to 6,000 2 years ago. Referring to recent suggestions by several congressional leaders that NIH's annual appropriation should be doubled in the near future, the director noted, "Now minds seem again to be shifting in an even more favorable direction," but February [when the next fiscal year's budget plan is first introduced to Congress] is never far away.

Undoubtedly one of the hottest health topics, both in the media and in Congress, is investigation into the validity and proper uses of alternative medicine. Addressing the issue, Varmus mentioned that although NIH's Office of Alternative Medicine received a generous budgetary increase for 1998, the increase came with no additional grant-making authority for the office. He said the office remains committed to using traditional scientific methods to validate alternative therapies. OAM has been most effective, Varmus continued, in its collaborative arrangements with NIH institutes such as recently launched studies by NIMH of St. John's wort for depression and by NIAMS of acupuncture for osteoarthritis. "With the substantial increase in funding for the office this year," he remarked, "I hope to see a large number of other such studies."

In addition, Varmus said he will establish an interagency group on alternative medicine that would include NIH institute representatives and representatives from the Food and Drug Administration, the Agency for Health Care Policy and Research, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. This group will recommend research projects and stimulate collaboration among agencies and institutes in the conduct of this research.

Noting several vacancies among top NIH posts, Varmus said he is at or nearing the interview stage for the directorships of NIDCD and NINDS, and that searches have recently gotten under way for a

director of the Office of AIDS Research, a chief information officer, a director for the AIDS Vaccine Research Center and an NIH associate director for international research, who will also serve as director of the Fogarty International Center.

On the subject of AIDS vaccine research, Varmus said that in the 7 months since conception of the special vaccine effort, 58 awards had been given to scientists investigating the field—half went to researchers new to the AIDS vaccine arena. The Vaccine Research Center—currently operating as a "research center without walls," Varmus quipped—is to have a new campus building, construction of which has been funded in the current budget. The special interest group established to discuss AIDS vaccine research continues to meet every 2 weeks, Varmus reported, and his current priority is selecting a VRC director.

In addition, a group of representatives of large pharmaceutical companies has met at NIH to discuss the center's ultimate goals and aspirations, and brainstorm about future cooperative projects. Nobel laureate Dr. David Baltimore, president of Caltech who was appointed to lead NIH's AIDS vaccine research advisory committee, continues to play a large role in the agency's activities in this area, Varmus said.

Other topics covered in the director's overview to the ACD include the recently launched Clinical Research Training Program, which attracted 80 applicants (9 students were eventually enrolled) in its inaugural session and expects even more this coming year; the possibility of establishing a graduate program for the Intramural Research Program, which will require planning by a graduate intramural education office; continuation of the "extremely useful" regular 5-year independent assessments of ICD directors as well as ongoing quality reviews of the institutes' intramural research programs; ongoing ethics-related issues, including NIMH's workshop on informed consent by patients with mental impairment and genetics testing; and the reignited National Foundation for Biomedical Research, which, under new director Dr. Anne Alexander, has been given \$500,000 to support operations in fiscal 1998 and will be involved in fundraising to expand the Clinical Research Training Program.

Special reports at the meeting were given on several issues including reorganization of the Center for Scientific Review, changes in the policy of supporting new investigators (discontinuation of the R29, or First Independent Research Support and Transition, awards), the status of NIH clinical research, and summary recommendations resulting from the outside review of NIH's administrative structure and costs. The ACD meets twice a year and is scheduled to convene next in early June. ■

1997 Stride Interns Named, Previous Grads Sought

The 1997 NIH Stride Program interns were introduced recently at an orientation held by NIH's Division of Career Resources and the technical advisory board (TAB) to the program. The 1997 interns are: Marriam Bright, computer assistant, training for a position as DCRT computer specialist; Debra Milans, administrative assistant, training for a position as NCI administrative officer; and Kim Tran, personnel assistant, training for a position as NIAID personnel management specialist.

Stride is a competitive, 3-year program that gives employees an opportunity for career change and advancement, and provides a combination of on-the-job training, academic courses, and selected short courses to prepare individuals for specific professional positions. It was established under the DHHS Career Opportunities Program to help meet NIH staffing needs.

TAB oversees the planning and operation of Stride. Its members include Donna Brooks, NIDCD personnel officer and TAB chair; Herb Casey, director, OD Division of Career Resources; Yvonne DuBuy, NIDR executive officer; Roger Pellis, NIAID executive officer and director, Office of Administrative Services; Olive P. Childers, chief, Administrative Management Branch, NEI Division of Intramural Research; Sheila Monroe, OD personnel management specialist and Stride Program manager; Carla Howard, OD personnel assistant; Michelle Gray, OD personnel management specialist; Donna Huggins, NIDDK supervisory grants management specialist; and Vicki Baldwin, OD personnel management specialist.

The keynote speaker at the orientation was Nancy Middendorf, a former secretary who completed the Stride Program in 1995 as a committee management



1997 Stride Program interns (top, from l) Debby Milans and Marriam Bright are greeted by Sheila Monroe (bottom, l), Stride manager, and Donna Brooks, advisory board chair. Not shown is intern Kim Tran.

specialist for OD/NIH. "Stride was the perfect program for me to bridge between the nonprofessional and professional fields, and to achieve my goals," she said.

Other Stride graduates who spoke at the orientation were Janet Howard, NIAMS writer/editor; Ryan Wise, NIDCD computer specialist; Pamela Carter, CC computer specialist; Shanita Douglas, NIAID administrative officer; and Dexter Collins, OD budget/accounting analyst.

The program is seeking information on former interns (including retirees) for historical purposes. If you can help locate Stride graduates, contact Sheila Monroe before Feb. 13 by email at sm207q@nih.gov, or phone 402-8978. ■

Black Volunteers Needed

The Cardiology Branch, NHLBI, needs Black normal volunteers ages 30-60 to participate in a study assessing the causative mechanisms of certain cardiovascular diseases. Volunteers must not be taking any medication. The study includes placement of a small needle in the brachial artery and takes approximately 4-5 hours. Participants will be paid. For more information call 496-8739.

CSR Names Two New Scientific Review Administrators

Dr. Andrea Harabin recently joined the Center for Scientific Review as scientific review administrator of the lung biology and pathology study section. A cardiopulmonary physiologist, she came to CSR from the Naval Medical Research Institute, where, for the past 2 years, she was head of the diving medicine department. Her considerable research accomplishments include working with French scientists to develop the only hydrogen diving research program in the United States.



Dr. Laurence Stanford recently became scientific review administrator of the neurology B-1 study section in the Center for Scientific Review. He had been at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, for the past 15 years, where he was associate professor in the department of comparative biosciences, School of Veterinary Medicine, and coordinator of the sensory and motor processes unit. He recently spent 2 years on sabbatical as director of the developmental neurosciences program of the National Science Foundation. His research has focused on the eye, especially the retina, though he has also worked on other areas of the central nervous system.



Mondays through Thursdays at one of NIH's Executive Plaza buildings, but telecommutes on Fridays at the Jefferson County TeleCenter in Ranson, W.Va., 4 miles from her house. "I am improving the quality, and even quantity, of my work. I can now spend time doing my job that I normally would spend traveling."

Support from the Top

Supported by initiatives by both President Clinton and Vice President Gore, flexible work place programs—of which telecommuting is one—have been steadily gaining prominence and acceptance in recent years. In fact, the President's management council interagency telecommuting working group



The Jefferson County TeleCenter in Ranson, W.Va., opened in spring 1997. One of about a dozen in the Washington metropolitan area, the center is becoming a popular (but best of all, convenient) office away from the office for workers in and outside the federal government.

has developed an action plan outlining five phases to be implemented over 3 years (which began in January 1996) to increase federal participation to 60,000 telecommuters by the end of fiscal year 1998. HHS Secretary Donna Shalala also urged the department-wide exploration of such "flexi-" options in her Quality of Work Life Initiative introduced early last year.

"The big thing we're offering employees is quality of life," comments Pete Smith, a former fed at NASA who retired in 1996 before becoming director of the Jefferson County TeleCenter. He also knows first-hand the burden of a long commute: After moving to West Virginia in 1994, he spent 5 hours a day on the train to and from downtown D.C.

"Telecommuters don't have to make that slog in every day," he continues. "The biggest thing we're offering employers is happier employees, and happier employees have been shown to be more productive. In fact, recent figures indicate that the telecommuting worker is about 10 percent more productive overall. It's really a payoff for the employer."

Interagency Network Opens Doors

According to Sandy Olmsted and Judy Vickers, human resource consultants in NIH's Office of

Human Resource Management, some employees have been telecommuting since 1990 and although the number of NIH'ers who have received formal approval for telecommuting has increased each year, the level of participation is relatively low—fewer than 200.

Opened last March, the Jefferson center is one of a dozen or so in the Washington, D.C., area. The network of centers was established in late 1994, following hearty endorsements by the region's congressional leaders. The Interagency Telecommuting Program, part of the long-range plan and a reinvention laboratory of the General Services Administration, adopted its mission as a motto: "Moving Work to People." Its Website at <http://www.gsa.gov/pbs/owi/telecomm.htm> offers those who are seriously considering the change (and those who are merely curious about the option) just about everything they want to know about flexible work places and federal employment, including lists of the network centers and agency coordinators, and answers to frequently asked questions about the program.

As an example, the Jefferson TeleCenter currently supports 11 federal workers who do various jobs, work many different schedules, and industriously use the broad range of electronic equipment at the facility. These days at the center, Smith noted humorously, "there is a speechwriter for the commissioner of the U.S. Customs Service, who burns up the fax machine" and a procurement specialist for the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration, who's "apparently working on a major software procurement—he just finished having a bidders' teleconference here."

"I have been telecommuting for the past 2 months," says 11-year NIH'er George Martin, an ORS telecommunications specialist who telecommutes at the Frederick Telework Center, "and I find that it has been beneficial. I get more paperwork and record updating done, and I am able to concentrate to a better degree when I am in the office in Frederick."

Olmsted and Vickers say telecommuting ideally suits "positions that have portable work—regardless of grade level. Some examples are work that requires thinking and writing, like data analysis, reviewing grants or cases, writing decisions or reports; positions that involve data entry, word processing or programming; telephone-intensive tasks such as setting up conferences, obtaining information, or following up on participants in a study."

Moxley's and Martin's jobs often take them away from their desks. As telecommunications specialists, they take orders from NIH'ers who need to have their telephones or datalines serviced, moved or upgraded. Moxley says she does pre-work site

surveys for the phone technicians about two or three times a week, then goes back to her desk to design the floor plan that will tell the tech what needs to be done and where. Everything but the site visits can now be done in Jefferson County, she explains, saving her valuable commuting time and trouble.

Home Alone?

Not every job can adapt to telecommuting, however. Instances where flexiplace options cannot work include positions that require intense face-to-face contact with supervisors, other employees, customers or the public; jobs that require access to equipment or material that cannot be removed from

"[Telecommuting] works. The peace of mind is just knowing that you don't have to make that long trip down the road with the snow, rain, ice, and the aggressive drivers that we are dealing with on a daily basis. It brings a change of attitude..."

the workplace; positions for which special facilities are required (such as an operating room); or when the costs of participation would result in prohibitive costs to duplicate the same level of confidentiality/security at the alternative workplace.

Olmsted and Vickers report, "based on feedback from employees and supervisors participating in a government-wide Office of Personnel Management telecommuting pilot in the early 1990's and information on the Web, the consensus seems to be that most employees love working at home and feel they are much more productive than when in the office because there are fewer interruptions. On the negative side, some also experience isolation—they feel left out of the informal communications available in the office.

"In addition, since this is a 'trust' system—supervisors must trust that employees are working although they can't be seen—not all are comfortable with the program," they continue. "Those who are comfortable with it, however, indicate that employee morale is greatly improved as a result of participation."

"Our biggest problem is nervous bosses," noted Smith. Some supervisors seem to have the misconception that telecommuting opens the door to goofing off and not getting any work done, he said. Because they are not seeing the employee, Smith explained, some bosses feel they are not really supervising. "What they should try to focus on is the quantity and quality of work being accomplished, not the physical environment of the worker." That's one of the benefits of using a

telecenter instead of setting up shop at home, he said.

"Nothing says you have to telecommute from a center," Smith said.

"[There is] no reason you couldn't try to do this from your home. But for some supervisors, the center is kind of a reassuring atmosphere.

This is an office. There is a business-like setting." Because other employees are also working there, a telecenter could also address the isolation problem reported by some telecommuters.

Getting Started

Authority for implementing and monitoring telecommuting rests with each institute, center and division and there is a formal approval process. Employees interested in telecommuting need to do their own legwork, suggest Olmsted and Vickers. "They should discuss with their supervisors what duties could be performed at an alternative worksite (home, GSA telecommuting center, another approved worksite), how communication with the office and with clients would be handled while working at the alternative worksite; how work progress would be measured; proposed work schedule (days in the office/at the alternative worksite); whether the proposal is short-term (to complete a specific project) or unlimited in duration; childcare/eldercare arrangements made if working at home or another approved worksite.

"Because management may be hesitant to approve an 'unlimited duration' arrangement," they caution, "employees might suggest a 2- to 3-month trial period."

"I would just like to say, 'It works,'" concludes Moxley. "The peace of mind is just knowing that you don't have to make that long trip down the road with the snow, rain, ice and the aggressive drivers that we are dealing with on a daily basis. It brings a change of attitude, a feeling of greater accomplishment . . . within minutes of home, saving time and energy in commuting." ■

Calling All Stressed Outs

The anxiety and stress laboratory at USUHS seeks paid volunteers for participation in a study of anxiety and stress in everyday life. If you consider yourself a generally "anxious" or "stressed out" person (without a history of treatment) and are interested in learning about or reducing symptoms, you may be eligible. Volunteers will be paid \$40 for completion of the study. For more information, call Darin Lerew, (301) 295-9665. ■



Like the one shown above at the Jefferson site, workstations at most telecenters closely resemble the "federal cubicles" found in NIH offices as well as the private sector. The professional setup, and the presence of other employees, help relieve feelings of isolation some telecommuters report, according to Jefferson center director Pete Smith.

Inaugural Communication Series a Success

There was standing room only when 200 health communicators from city health departments, local colleges, health associations, private consulting firms, and state and federal agencies packed Natcher Conference Center recently for the first NIH Health Communication Forum. The one-day event, "Developing the Blueprint: Designing a Health Communication Program," featured the best practices of health education campaigns launched by NIH, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and several other HHS agencies in recent years. The annual forum series, sponsored by NIH and the national capital area chapter of the National Society for Public Health Education (SOPHE), addresses a new topic in health communication each year.

Plenary session speaker Elaine Bratic Arkin, a former PHS public affairs director, explored CDC's definition of health communications: "the crafting and delivery of messages and strategies, based on targeted audience research, to promote the health of individuals and communities." Author of *Making Health Communication Programs Work: A Planner's Guide*, Arkin described six steps for planning a successful health education program, beginning with "planning and strategy selection" and ending with "program evaluation." Vicki Freimuth, associate director for communications at CDC, showed the audience a 50-year retrospective video of public health messages. She believes that as translators of science for the public, communicators play a critical role in scientific research and intervention planning.

"NIH scored a bull's eye," commented Marsha Corbett, senior communications advisor in the Office of Scientific Information at NIMH. Breakout sessions emphasizing planning and utilization of social marketing tools were "right on target," she added. Six workshops addressed: planning a health education program; strategies for reaching special populations; formative evaluation; strategies for educating health professionals; creating partnerships; and using technology. Exhibits from SOPHE, Healthy Montgomery Coalition, and NIH clearinghouses highlighted sample publications, programs and Websites. "We are very excited that NIH has taken a prominent role in providing this information for health communication professionals. The positive response we received from this forum was overwhelming," said NIDDK's Mimi Lising, coordinator of the event.

The critical role of health communication at NIH gained emphasis in January 1995 when NIH director Dr. Harold Varmus convened the "Communicating Science and Health in the New Millennium" conference. "Communicating science to the public is a core function at NIH and it has been found that we do it quite well," commented Anne Thomas, NIH associate director for communications, in opening

remarks to the audience. "The forum series is a continuation of the important dialogue that began in 1995," she said. NIH communications offices have disseminated information to the public for years as charged by Congress, but this role has become increasingly complex and sophisticated. "Health communication now strives to modify health behaviors and improve public health. We must use every means available to accomplish that,"

During a program break, NIH Associate Director for Communications Anne Thomas (l) discusses forum events with her CDC counterpart, Vicki Freimuth.



said Elizabeth Singer, NIDDK information officer and lead member of the forum's working group.

Participants' response to the forum series was enthusiastic. "This event has been really good in providing insight and examples on what our counterpart information offices are involved in," said NIAID's Claire McCullough. The working group that coordinated the forum has already begun planning for 1998. "We expect next year's forum to be another standing-room-only event," said Singer. ■



Santa Claus, known to campus denizens the rest of the year as NIH Police Chief Thomas Rufty, greets honorary reindeer Kim Priest of the voucher office as he made his rounds in the Clinical Center during the recent

holiday season. The jolly elf held court in the CC lobby for a while with employees and youngsters, before venturing to the second floor cafeteria and the pediatric patient care unit, where he distributed candy canes and other seasonal tokens.



Dr. Nadarajen A. Vydellingum, scientific review administrator in the surgery, radiology, and bioengineering initial review group, Center for Scientific Review, recently participated in a lecture series sponsored by the American Heart Association. He spoke on lipid metabolism, obesity, and type II diabetes to 180 Montgomery County high school students. As part of their science program, senior students can elect to participate in the lecture series, which requires them to write a paper and complete a written test submitted by each speaker.

NIAMS Branch Chief McHale Retires

After starting her federal work dissecting rat brains and ending it as chief of the Scientific Information and Data Systems Branch (SIDS) at the National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases, Carolyn McHale recently retired to work in the animal kingdom (live ones), becoming a Friends of the National Zoo (FONZ) Think Tank volunteer.

In addition to being SIDS chief, McHale developed processes, systems, and guidelines as a leader in the field of information resources management at NIH. She chaired the NIH architectural management group telecommunications subcommittee that was responsible for the development of the security plan for the NIH backbone and enabling services. She was also a major contributor to the reengineering of the NIH information management for planning, analysis, and coordination (IMPAC) system. IMPAC is the grants information system that tracks applications and funded extramural research projects. From 1992 to 1996, McHale was chair of the office technology coordinators, which maintains current technology and system awareness related to networks, mainframe systems, home pages, and other office automation systems for the NIH community. She was also a member of the data warehouse committee.

Due in part to an allergy to rats—her chief object of experimentation—McHale changed careers from research chemist at the Armed Forces Radiobiology Research Institute. She then focused on information management, joining NIH in 1974 as a technical information specialist at the Division of Research Grants. In 1976, she became chief of program information systems at NEI. In 1981, she became chief of the biomedical services section, Specialized Information Services, NLM, where she coordinated the TOXLINE database. TOXLINE is an online database that provides access to information on toxic effects of chemicals. In 1985, she joined NIA as chief of the program analysis and technical information office. McHale joined the then newly created NIAMS in 1987.

She received numerous awards, including two NIH Merit awards, and in 1992 and 1997, she received the NIH Director's Award. In 1997, she received the Government Computing News Award, which recognizes individuals for their accomplishments and contributions to excellence in information technology. In 1996, she was recognized as one of the top 100 women in computing by the McGraw-Hill companies, publishers of *Business Week* magazine, which acknowledged her achievements and contributions to information services and technology. She was the only federal worker to receive this award. McHale coordinated the NIAMS Combined Federal Campaign in 1995 and 1996, receiving the President's Award for exceeding goals.

She also received the Harriet E. Worrell Award in 1990 from her alma mater, Drexel University, for ongoing service to the school and for her distinguished career. NIAMS director Dr. Stephen I. Katz remarks, "Carolyn McHale has an indisputable record of commitment, achievement, and service to the federal government and to the NIAMS."



Carolyn McHale holds a hermit crab, part of the Think Tank exhibit at the National Zoo.

With aspirations of doing medical research, McHale earned a degree in biological sciences from Drexel in 1965. She also served as president of its student body, and was active in intercollegiate sports. She met her future husband, John, on a high school seniors' weekend visit to Drexel. They married in 1963.

McHale may be more active in retirement than in her federal service: She will continue to work at the Think Tank, the National Zoo's exhibit

that challenges the visitor to decide whether an animal is actually thinking or its actions are instinctive. She plans to travel as a FONZ in the Galapagos Islands, visit her timeshare in St. Martin, and work as a consultant in the computer field.

"Carolyn McHale has been exemplary in her leadership of the NIAMS information technology programs," Katz concluded, "and has played a very important role in NIH-wide information technology activities. We will miss her and wish her well on her retirement." ■



Patricia L. Scullion, chief of the training strategies and development section in NCI's Human Resources Management and Consulting Branch, received the 1997 Linda Trunzo Humanitarian Award at the recent annual meeting of the federal section of the International Personnel Management Association. The award recognizes outstanding humanitarian contributions of a Federal Government employee outside the workplace. Scullion is a volunteer for Special Love, Inc., a nonprofit organization that provides enrichment programs for children with cancer. She has worked with this program since its inception in 1982, coordinating bake sales and bake-a-thons that provide holiday treats to Special Love families, and helping with programming and staffing for special activities. She has volunteered at the Children's Inn since it opened in 1990, and serves as a board member of the Adam Russell Foundation, a nonprofit organization devoted to supporting families with HIV-infected children. Last summer, Scullion served as a counselor at Camp Heartland, a week-long camp in Malibu, Calif., for children with AIDS and their siblings.

Injured on the Job?

Do you have a work-related upper extremity problem or injury, i.e., carpal tunnel syndrome, tendonitis, or repetitive strain injury of the fingers, wrist, elbow or shoulder? USUHS is conducting a study that includes a \$40 payment. Volunteers must be ages 20-60, seen by a physician within the past month and currently working. Call (301) 295-9659.

FOI Officer Joanne Belk Retires After 24 Years

Joanne Belk, head of the Freedom of Information (FOI) Office at NIH for the past 11 years, retired Jan. 3 after 24 years of federal service.

A formidable Bostonian who has traveled the world and worked at an astonishing array of intellectual hotspots, Belk came to NIH in 1977 as an assistant to NIH's FOI officer, under whom she learned the ropes of handling requests for information. The Freedom of Information Act—passed in 1966 and strengthened in 1975—opens the federal government to inquiries from anyone curious about

"We are subject to whatever the mailman brings in the door every day...Anyone with a 32-cent stamp can send a paralyzing request. We just have to cope. You can't plan ahead in this business."

public issues; it is the FOI officer's job to determine what material can be released. Belk became director of FOI when her mentor retired in 1986, and presided hawklike over an escalating number of FOIA requests as law firms, the media and citizens learned they could use the act to gather information. Such newsmaking topics as the Silver Spring monkey case, animal rights protests, tobacco litigation, African AIDS drug trials, the controversy over discovery of the AIDS virus, and current issues over rights to market the cancer drug Taxol have occupied Belk and two assistants she characterizes as unusually able—Nancy Comfort and Connie Caldwell. Less momentous issues also land on their doorstep, including requests for information in such personal matters as failures to be hired or promoted.

"We are subject to whatever the mailman brings in the door every day," laments Belk with a dry laugh. "Sometimes they are horrendous requests. There's no way to predict what we'll get. Anyone with a 32-cent stamp can send a paralyzing request. We just have to cope. You can't plan ahead in this business."

Ahead of her time as a fiercely independent woman, Belk has done more than simply cope for all of her professional life. Her resume is alive with bold forays—holder of a degree in English from Simmons College, she worked for a time in the Army as a public relations officer for military hospitals, reported on women's news for the *Boston Herald* for 2 years, studied languages in Europe, worked at the National Academy of Sciences and MIT (she relocated to Boston in order to watch her son play sports in prep school), spent 5 years as an editor at *Science* magazine (her first editing job was B.F. Skinner's paper "Phylogeny and Ontogeny of Behavior"), took night courses at George Washington University to become a paralegal, then worked

for 2 years at the law firm of Kirkland and Ellis.

She came to NIH because of her combined experience in biomedical matters and legal work. Though she is sad to give it up, FOI was a fascinating cap to an adventurous career.

"We could not have functioned successfully without the assistance we received from the Office of General Counsel," said Belk, "from (attorney) Bob Lanman on down. They have been enormously helpful and invaluable. I also had great support from Anne Thomas (NIH associate director for communications), who appreciates the problems that face us, and has helped us through various litigation. We've won some cases, and we've lost some."

Belk's "retirement" will mimic her career: she plans travel to Europe with friends, renovation of her Washington, D.C., home (she intends to remain in town), volunteer work at her beloved Washington Opera and the Lantern (Bryn Mawr's second-hand bookstore) and visits to her son in Tokyo. Call this era of her life FOJB—Freedom of Joanne Belk.—
Rich McManus ■



The National Cancer Institute recently launched a new training program for caregivers, "The Cancer Journey: Issues for Survivors," which responds to issues facing more than 8 million cancer survivors in the United States. On hand at a ceremony in Wilson Hall were (from l) Sam Donaldson of ABC-TV, who is a cancer survivor; Carol Webb, president of Ortho Biotech Inc., which has supported the program; and NCI director Dr. Richard Klausner. For more information about the program, call 1-800-4-CANCER.

Director's Seminar Set, Jan. 16

The NIH Director's Seminar Series of Friday noontime lectures in Bldg. 1's Wilson Hall continues on Jan. 16 with Dr. Julio A. Panza of NHLBI's Cardiac Branch speaking on "Mechanisms of Impaired Endothelial Regulation of Vascular Tone in Patients with Essential Hypertension." Continuing medical education credit is available. ■



Jane Hu Retires from Center For Scientific Review

Dr. Jane Hu has retired from the government after spending the past 19 years in the Center for Scientific Review (CSR, formerly the Division of Research Grants), where she was the scientific review administrator for the visual sciences, neurology A, sensory disorders and language, and sensory sciences study sections. In addition to her responsibilities in CSR, Hu was appointed by the Secretary of Defense, from



Dr. Jane Hu

1991 to 1993, to be a member of the Defense advisory committee on women in the services. This committee, which was started by Eleanor Roosevelt, is designed to analyze and make recommendations on any problems of sexual harassment and lack of equal treatment of women in the military. Retirement will enable Hu to spend more time with her husband, and visit her two grown, married children and 1-year-old granddaughter more frequently. Retirement will also enable her to spend more time with her creative writing. From 1994 to 1996, she published two books of English poetry and two books of Chinese prose, and she is currently working on a volume of sonnets. Finally, retirement will enable Hu to be a consultant for the Atlantic Council of the United States, a think tank in the Washington, D.C., area. Working with the council, she recently established the China Foundation, a nonprofit organization with independent entities, thus far, in Hong Kong and Beijing, China. The purpose of the foundation is to provide health services and health advice to villages and other rural areas in China. Besides providing humanitarian assistance, its activities are designed to promote a closer U.S.-China relationship.

Over the years, Hu has been impressed with the tremendous growth of the peer review system, as well as the increased number and scope of the study sections. And although she will be busy with retirement activities, she will miss her colleagues in CSR, her other friends throughout NIH, and the biomedical research scientists. ■

Treatment for Panic Attacks

People currently experiencing spontaneous panic attacks and/or significant social anxiety may be eligible for a collaborative NIMH/USUHS treatment outcome study evaluating nondrug treatments for panic and anxiety. For more information call Audrey Kowmas at USUHS, (301) 295-3651. ■

DWD Training Tips

The Division of Workforce Development, OHRM, offers the courses below. Personal computer training is also available through User Resource Center hands-on, self-study courses, at no cost to NIH employees. Additional courses are available by completing the "Training by Request" form in the back of the DWD catalog. For more information call DWD on 496-6211 or consult DWD's home page at <http://www-urc.od.nih.gov/dwd/dwdhome.html>.

Courses and Programs Starting Dates

Courses and Programs	Starting Dates
<i>Management, Supervisory, & Professional Development</i>	
The Best: Building Effective and Successful Teams	2/26
Building High Performance Teams	2/24
GPRA "Results Act" Orientation for Developing Performance Measures	2/24
ITMRA: Greater Efficiency Utilizing IT Performance Measures	2/24
Conflict Management for Managers	2/25
Effective Leadership and Management Skills for Administrative Support Staff	2/26
Fundamentals of Grammar	2/23
<i>Career Transition</i>	
NIH Retirement Seminar (FERS)	2/18
KSA Methodology	2/18
<i>Administrative Systems</i>	
Domestic Travel	2/23
Foreign Travel	2/26
Travel for Administrative Officers	2/20
Determining Price Reasonableness in the Award of Simplified Acquisitions	2/17
Introduction to NIH Property Management Title 38 and Baylor Plan Time and Attendance Using TAIMS	2/17
<i>Computer Applications and Concepts</i>	
Introduction to Personal Computing for New Users	2/26
Introduction to CRISP	2/27
Excel 7.0 for Windows 95	2/25
MS Outlook 97 - Fundamentals	2/24
Microsoft Word 97 Advanced	2/18
PowerPoint 97 Fundamentals	2/24
MS Access 97 Fundamentals	2/23
MS Access 7.0 for Windows 95	2/18
PowerPoint 7.0	2/23
Presentation Skills with PowerPoint	2/24
Desktop Publishing with WordPerfect 7.0 for Windows	2/19

DCRT Courses and Programs

All courses are on the NIH campus and are given without charge. For more information call 594-3278 or consult DCRT's home page at <http://livewire.nih.gov/>.

PARACHUTE Startup for Windows 95	1/22
LAN Services and Email from Parachute on the PC	1/22
BRMUG	1/27

Chamber Music Concert, Jan. 18

The Rock Creek Chamber Players will perform at 3 p.m. on Sunday, Jan. 18 in the 14th floor assembly hall at the Clinical Center. This free public concert, sponsored by the recreation therapy section, will include Beethoven's "Eyeglasses" duet for viola and cello; four pieces by Max Bruch for clarinet, viola and piano; Stravinsky's *Suite Italienne* for cello and piano; and Dvorak's string sextet Op. 48, performed by Sisters In Law. For more information call (202) 337-8710.



To Be Strong, the R&W Needs You!—Become a member of R&W by Feb. 27 and you have a chance to win a prize package including two tickets to a game by all the major professional teams in town, 100 lottery tickets (you can be a millionaire!), a 26-inch bike and a year's membership at the Fitness Center, and four tickets to movies, Busch Gardens or King's Dominion, and other gifts. If you become your office's R&W coordinator and sell 10, 25, 50 or 100 memberships, prizes range from T-shirts and mugs to romantic candlelight dinner for two. Call Katie or Karen for more details, 496-6061.

FAES Concert Set, Jan. 18

The FAES Chamber Music Series will present Vadim Repin, violin, at 4 p.m. on Sunday, Jan. 18 in Masur Auditorium, Bldg. 10. Tickets are \$20 at the door; \$10 for students and fellows. For more information call 496-7975.

Think Spring with NIH Garden Club

The holidays are over, winter has set in and, with thoughts of spring, gardening catalogs are in the mail. It's not too early to begin planning for your garden and the NIH Garden Club wants to help. On Tuesday, Jan. 27 in Bldg. 31, Conf. Rm. 9 at noon, Carol Allen, president of the Maryland Native Plant Society, will talk about garden designing with native plants. Allen is also an expert on growing orchids. This is an opportunity to learn about plants that are native (and hardy) in this growing area. Club meetings are open to anyone interested in gardening. For more information email Karen Helfert (kh21k@nih.gov). ■

Singers Dispel Winter Blahs

The NIH Chamber Singers invite you to join them at one of their lively vocal concerts on the theme, "The Cure for February: Eat, Drink, and Be Merry... and Then Sleep!" The concerts will take place on Thursday, Feb. 12, at 7 p.m. in the Clinical Center's 14th floor assembly hall; on Thursday, Feb. 19, at noon in Natcher's balcony B; and on Tuesday, Feb. 24, at noon in the Clinical Center's Masur Auditorium. Admission is free. All are welcome. For more information about the concerts and the NIH Chamber Singers, or if you are interested in becoming a member of the group, visit its Web site at <http://www.recgov.org/r&w/chamber/>. ■

Wednesday Afternoon Lectures

The Wednesday Afternoon Lecture series—held on its namesake day (usually) at 3 p.m. in Masur Auditorium, Bldg. 10—features Dr. Diane Mathis on Jan. 21, speaking on "A Stripped-Down Model of Autoimmune Diabetes." She is director of research, INSERM, LGME, Institute of Genetics and Cell and Molecular Biology, Louis Pasteur University, Strasbourg.

A special Monday version of the lecture series takes place Jan. 26 when Dr. James Eberwine delivers "Molecular Biology of the Single Neuron: Insights Into Neuronal Development and Neurological Disease." He is professor, department of pharmacology and psychiatry, University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine.

On Jan. 28, Dr. Paul S. Anderson, president, American Chemical Society, and senior vice president at DuPont Merck Pharmaceutical Co., will discuss "Discovery of HIV Protease Inhibitors."

For more information or for reasonable accommodation, call Hilda Madine, 594-5595. ■



NIAAA director Dr. Enoch Gordis (l) recently presented the Mark Keller award to Dr. Marc A. Schuckit in recognition of his significant achievements in alcohol research. Schuckit is professor of psychiatry at the University of California and director of the Alcohol Research Center, San Diego Veterans Affairs Medical Center. The award and lecture series is sponsored by NIAAA in tribute to Mark Keller, pioneer in alcohol-related research and teaching and early proponent of the disease concept of alcoholism. Following the presentation, Schuckit delivered a lecture entitled, "A prospective study of genetic and environmental influences in alcoholism: Working toward prevention."

Issues in Cancer Survivorship

The National Cancer Institute's Office of Cancer Survivorship is sponsoring a workshop on "Research Issues in Cancer Survivorship" Mar. 9-10 at the Natcher Conference Center. It will deal with issues of importance to survivors and the professionals who care for them. To register contact Courtney Jones, (301) 907-3844. ■