Speakers Bureau Volunteers Recognized at Ceremony

By Margaret Warker

NIH employees take their work seriously. So seriously in fact, that some are reaching out to the community to share their love of science and enhance public understanding of health and medical research. These individuals, who are members of the NIH Speakers Bureau, were recognized for their outstanding contributions at an awards ceremony and reception on June 12 in Wilson Hall.

The NIH Speakers Bureau, sponsored by the Office of Research on Women's Health and administered by the Office of Science Education, is a network of researchers, health professionals, administrators and technical experts who volunteer their time and talent to talk about their careers and share their expert knowledge with diverse audiences throughout the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area. The bureau seeks to promote scientific literacy and stimulate career interest in medical research and other health professions by bringing the excitement of NIH research to students of all ages.

‘Three Freedoms’ Permit NIH Laboratory to Prosper

By Rich McManus

It isn’t the only laboratory at NIH that has an enviable long track record of combining impeccable scientific achievement with a loose, congenial atmosphere, but NIDDK’s Laboratory of Molecular Biology (LMB)—established in 1960 to break further ground in a field then comparatively new—is a fitting poster child for what NIH labs are supposed to accomplish. Some 15 members of the National Academy of Sciences are either there now or have passed through its ranks, and its extensive bibliography is studded with scientific peaks: seminal studies of protease that laid the groundwork for understanding HIV protease; the discovery of DNA gyrase, an enzyme important in developing effective antibiotics; and studies of chromatin and DNA organization that help explain gene expression in higher organisms.

These achievements, and more importantly the ethos out of

‘Worst Is Yet to Come’

Fauci Says AIDS Pandemic Far from Over, Prevention Is Key

By Carla Garnett

Towards the end of 1999, NIAID director Dr. Anthony Fauci recalled he was often asked if after 20 years of the epidemic, AIDS could finally go into the history books as the disease that was. After all, his questioners reasoned, we have many combinations of drugs—both anti-HIV and those to combat opportunistic infections—that are forestalling the onset of AIDS in HIV-infected people, and keeping people with AIDS alive longer. We may not have a cure, but the rate of new cases seems to be leveling off, and a vaccine is in our not-too-distant future, right? Fauci said time and again he’d have to shake his head. On the contrary, he told them, “the worst of the global pandemic has yet to occur.”

That was his sobering conclusion at a recent lecture, “AIDS: Considerations for the 21st Century,” hosted by the NIH Office of
Celebrate World Breastfeeding Week

The NIH Lactation Program will be celebrating 2 years of service to the NIH community during World Breastfeeding Week Aug. 1-7. World Breastfeeding Week is celebrated annually and is led by the World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action. The theme, “Breastfeeding: It’s Your Right,” highlights the fact that women have the right to breastfeed, to receive factual information, and to be protected from outside interference when breastfeeding. A variety of activities have been planned to highlight the NIH Lactation Program and educate the community about the importance of breastfeeding.

The NIH program has been in operation since September 1998. Since then, more than 300 women have participated in some aspect of the program. Of the 77 women completing the program so far in fiscal year 2000, 64 percent have provided breastmilk to their babies for the first 6 months of life. This is well above the national average of approximately 20 percent of babies receiving breastmilk for the first 6 months of life, and in line with Healthy People 2010 goals. The program began with three lactation rooms around campus and has expanded to include seven rooms. Work has begun on finding space for several other rooms as the need continues to increase. In light of the success of the program, and its popularity among working mothers on campus, it has been made a permanent program of the NIH Work and Family Life Center, beginning in fiscal year 2001.

Celebrate World Breastfeeding Week and learn more about the NIH Lactation Program. The following activities will be held on campus:

Aug. 1—Information table and door prize drawing near the upper cafeteria in Bldg. 10 (11:30 a.m.-2 p.m.)
Aug. 2—Seminar on “Maintaining Your Milk Supply When You Return to Work” given by Vergie Hughes in Bldg. 31, 6C10 (noon-1:30 p.m.)
Aug. 3—Information table and door prize drawing near the cafeteria in Bldg. 31 (11:30 a.m.-2 p.m.)

For more information, contact Jane Balkam, lactation consultant, 435-7850.

Dear Editor,

I recently read a short article in the NIH Record about parking on the NIH campus—a longtime subject of discussion and frustration by those working or visiting the Bethesda campus. Has any consideration been given by the construction planners to incorporate lanes or paths for bicyclists? The bike racks on campus at every building that has them are always full, indicating a large number of people who ride their bikes to NIH. If biking through campus were more friendly, many more people have indicated that they would cycle to work, thus alleviating some of the parking crunch. It is probably not too late to add biking lanes, or at least shoulders wide enough for bicyclists, to the main campus roads, and/or paved paths for cyclists.

Dr. M.E. Truckenmiller, NIDA/IRP

Fire Prevention Slogans Sought

The Emergency Management Branch, Division of Public Safety, is now accepting slogans for NIH’s observance of National Fire Prevention Week. If you win the contest, open to everyone (except members of EMB and their immediate family), your idea and your name will appear on next year’s posters. You can enter as often as you like. Previous slogans include “Smoke—Silent and Deadly,” and “Watch What You Heat.” Be sure to print (legibly) or type your slogan on a sheet of white paper. If you submit multiple candidates, rank them in order of preference. Entries are due by Sept. 1. Send or fax entries to the fire prevention section (attention: J.P. McCabe), Bldg. 15G, Rm. 2. Fax number is 402-2059. For more information call 496-0487.

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The Record is recyclable as office white paper.
NIH'ers Urged To Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

By Linda Silversmith

Were you among the folks who thought "Clean Your Files Week" (Apr. 17-21) was a good idea, but did not quite get around to it then? Perhaps you were confused because your office did not have bins for recycling either white office or mixed paper. You are not alone.

Although recycling has grown at NIH since the mid-1980's, and paper recycling was high during the recent "Clean Your Files Week," there is room for improvement, said David Crook, recycling coordinator in the Environmental Protection Branch, Division of Safety, ORS.

According to Crook and William "Kenny" Floyd, chief, EPB waste management section, NIH currently recycles about 30 percent of its wastes. Last year, the total amount of campus trash weighed 11,500 tons, with about one quarter (3,203 tons) coming from one site—Bldg. 10, the largest building on campus.

Crook points out, "If you could get all that mixed paper out of the trash, it would make a huge difference." Many papers listed as "don'ts" on the white office paper recycling containers are eligible for recycling in the mixed paper containers.

How can NIH'ers do more to reduce waste? Crook says, "If you could get all that mixed paper out of the trash, it would make a huge difference." Many papers listed as "don'ts" on the white office paper recycling containers are eligible for recycling in the mixed paper containers.

Because of the weight of the recyclables, contractor looks for the best price when hauling recyclables to local dealers.

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Could we do better? The official recycling goal is 50 percent in Montgomery County, where NIH is located, and the county itself recycled 36 percent last year.

The county recycling regulation says that businesses, including government facilities, must recycle office paper, corrugated cardboard, newsprint, aluminum and bi-metal food and beverage cans, glass and plastic food and beverage containers, and yard trimmings.

Businesses can voluntarily recycle scrap metal, plastic film, food waste, wood waste, batteries, motor oil and antifreeze, construction and demolition debris, toner cartridges and phone books.

But how? Crook works with each NIH building or cluster to devise a recycling plan. Volunteer area coordinators help by determining which categories each office, corridor or complex is willing to recycle and by calling Crook to arrange for containers or for troubleshooting.

In a typical week in early spring 2000, the campus collected 12.1 tons of recyclable materials. Crook emphasizes that the main goal of recycling is to reduce the amount of waste going to landfills. The fact that recycling also reduces the cost of waste disposal (about $44 per ton) is a bonus. The 1999 savings were $125,000 for 2,842 tons that NIH recycled over the year.

Aluminum is the clear winner when it comes to the value of recycling—both for cash payback and environmental value. Scrap metal dealers this spring were paying nearly $640 per ton. Every ton recycled is one less ton to be imported: the United States no longer mines any aluminum and must import all of it.

The per-ton payback recently for some other wastes was $120 for office paper; $30 for cardboard; and $10 for scrap metal. The NIH waste contractor looks for the best price when hauling recyclables to local dealers.

How can NIH'ers do more to reduce waste? Crook says, "If you could get all that mixed paper out of the trash, it would make a huge difference." Many papers listed as "don'ts" on the white office paper recycling containers are eligible for recycling in the mixed paper containers.

Bond Drive Wraps Up, Exceeds Goals

NIH's 2000 U.S. Savings Bonds drive—from May 5 to June 30—rode a wave of success to achieve its overall goal of a 5 percent increase in new savers. At the beginning of the campaign, more than 2,100 NIH'ers were savings bond holders; by the drive's end, NIH had added more than 700 new bond buyers. In addition, each institute and center either met or exceeded its individual goal. NIGMS was this year's lead IC.

Bond drive coordinators remind NIH employees that you may purchase bonds at any time during the year, not just during the campaign. When doing so, you should submit your completed application form to your personnel office.

Below are winners of bond campaign prizes:

Raffle ticket winners—$250 gift certificate for Circuit City-Jane Quirk, NINDS; $100 savings bond-Laverne Waybright, CSR; $50 gift certificate to R&W Gift Shops-Dorcas Joya, NCI; movie tickets—E.C. Melvin, NIGMS

Coordinators/canvasser winners—New England lobster clam bake dinner-Karen Wayns, NINDS; bull pen party at Orioles' game-Chanteshea Bulluck, NIAMS; $100 savings bond-Anne Marie Brasile-Majac, NHLBI

Kenny Floyd (l), chief of the waste management section, and Dave Crook, NIH recycling coordinator, encourage you to help set up a recycling effort in your work area.
SPEAKERS BUREAU, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

In her opening remarks, NIH acting director Dr. Ruth Kirschstein thanked the NIH Speakers Bureau volunteers for their commitment to NIH’s public outreach and science education activities, recognizing that the efforts of these individuals are integral to the overall NIH mission.

ORWH director Dr. Vivian Pinn commended the volunteers for their outstanding contributions and dedication. She explained that the NIH Speakers Bureau was established by ORWH to enhance the visibility of women in science and medical research. While the bureau continues to meet its original objective—as evidenced by the 33 women who are currently serving as volunteers—this program has proven to be a valuable resource for the entire community.

From the volunteer’s perspective, the NIH Speakers Bureau offers a sense of personal satisfaction and fulfillment. Dr. John F. Finerty, program director, Cancer Immunology Branch, National Cancer Institute, volunteers to speak on such topics as immunology, infectious diseases and cancer research. He “enjoys teaching and helping local NIH communities to understand science and medical research. People want to know the implications of new research on their health and when they’ll be able to benefit from medical findings. I try to target discussions to each audience and explore how discoveries will benefit that audience.”

Volunteer Dr. Hameed Khan, a health science administrator in the Division of Scientific Review, National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, talks about cutting-edge research, therapeutic approaches for cancer and ethical issues related to new scientific discoveries. Khan believes he has a “moral obligation to communicate science to the public. The education goes both ways—the speech is the tip of the iceberg. The real challenge comes during the question and answer period. The questions make me think and refresh my memory. I have to be on top of everything.”

Representatives of local schools have expressed their appreciation for the NIH Speakers Bureau and its positive impact on science education. Julie Ghent-Paulucci, a biology and anatomy teacher at Richard Montgomery High School in Rockville, says the bureau “provides a first-hand look at what researchers are doing. The speakers are enthusiastic about their work and that carries over to the students. I think the speakers gain from the enthusiasm of the students as well.” Barry Mensh, a biology teacher at George C. Marshall High School, Falls Church, Va., is grateful for the bureau, noting that the volunteers “bring science to life and help motivate the students to reach their dreams. You get somebody who is on the cutting edge doing the things we’re learning about, and the kids are just mesmerized. Speakers who ask the kids questions get them to think and problem-solve.”

The activities of the NIH Speakers Bureau go beyond the classroom setting. Volunteers have been asked to speak in a variety of fora, including local community groups and nonprofit organizations.

Kandy Hutman, senior adult program director of the Jewish Community Center in Rockville, routinely submits requests for volunteers to speak at JCC’s semiannual science and technology adult education classes. Hutman says the bureau, “is wonderful because it provides experts who are able to convey technical information to the lay person. The speakers put a human face on the research being done at NIH...NIH isn’t just that building down the street—it’s a resource...The latest discoveries become accessible. The value of this service is incalculable. There is a geometric explosion that doesn’t stop with the lecture. The speakers address the seniors, who talk to their children and grandchildren.”

For more information about the NIH Speakers Bureau, visit OSE’s web site at: http://science-education.nih.gov/speakers. If you have further questions about the program or are interested in becoming a volunteer, contact Anne Baur by email at: baura@od.nih.gov, or phone 496-1871.

NCI Sponsors First Annual Advances in Cancer Prevention Lecture, Aug. 3

Dr. Bernard Levin, vice president, division of cancer prevention, University of Texas M.D. Anderson Cancer Center, Houston, will deliver the first annual Advances in Cancer Prevention Lecture, sponsored by the Office of Preventive Oncology in NCI’s Division of Cancer Prevention, on Thursday, Aug. 3 at 3 p.m. in Lister Hill Auditorium, Bldg. 38A. His presentation, “Cancer Prevention: What Is the Future?” is open to the public; registration is not required.

At M.D. Anderson, Levin oversees research in the departments of clinical cancer prevention, behavioral science, epidemiology and health services research. His personal research includes seeking molecular markers for detection of colorectal cancer, chemoprevention of colorectal adenomas using cyclooxygenase-2 (COX-2) inhibitors, and enhancing the public awareness of colorectal cancer prevention.

A reception will follow the lecture. Persons requiring assistance or reasonable accommodation should call 496-8640.
Graham Named Director for Human Clinical Studies at VRC

Dr. Barney Graham has been appointed director for human clinical studies and tenured investigator at the Bumpers Vaccine Research Center. He comes to the VRC from Vanderbilt University School of Medicine, where he was professor of medicine and associate professor of microbiology and immunology. For the past 13 years, he also headed the AIDS Vaccine Evaluation Unit at Vanderbilt, part of the national clinical trials network funded by NIAID. That tests candidate AIDS vaccines in humans.

"I am delighted that Barney Graham is joining the Vaccine Research Center as an investigator and director of the vaccine trials program," said VRC director Dr. Gary Nabel. "He is highly respected for his experience in AIDS vaccine studies in humans and is also an accomplished molecular virologist. He brings a unique perspective to vaccine development based on his extensive prior work, and he will provide outstanding leadership in these critical areas of research."

Graham graduated magna cum laude from Rice University in Houston, and completed his M.D. at the University of Kansas School of Medicine, where he received the Roscoe Falls Morton Award for "outstanding senior student in internal medicine." He completed his internship and residency in internal medicine at Vanderbilt, where he also finished his Ph.D. before joining the university as a full-time faculty member. In 1993, Vanderbilt honored him with the Grant Liddle Research Appreciation Award for "promoting interest in research among young physicians."

NIH recognized the potential and importance of Graham's work early on, and has funded many of his studies on candidate vaccines for respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) and AIDS. In addition to his duties at Vanderbilt, he consults for many public health organizations, such as the World Health Organization, UNAIDS and the International AIDS Vaccine Initiative. He was recently appointed to the editorial board for the Journal of AIDS, and reviews manuscripts for major virology, immunology and clinical research journals. Graham has served on many NIAID committees and chaired the executive committee for the AIDS Vaccine Evaluation Group.

He is a member of many professional scientific societies, including the American Society of Clinical Investigation, and is a fellow in the American College of Physicians and the American Academy of Microbiology.

Graham's extensive experience in molecular virology and vaccine research, his pivotal role in establishing NIAID's AIDS Vaccine Evaluation Group, and his community involvement make him a unique selection for this position. As director of clinical studies, he oversees the design of clinical trials and selection of vaccine candidates, and will develop the infrastructure for the clinical trials program at the VRC. He also serves on the VRC executive committee, which analyzes the priorities of the center and evaluates potential vaccine candidates. As a tenured investigator, Graham continues his laboratory studies in the pathogenesis of RSV and in the development of vaccines.

FAES Announces Fall Courses

The FAES Graduate School at NIH announces the schedule of courses for the fall semester. The evening classes sponsored by the Foundation for Advanced Education in the Sciences will be given on the NIH campus. Courses are offered in biochemistry, biology, biotechnology (daytime courses), chemistry, imaging sciences, immunology, languages, medicine, microbiology, pharmacology, psychiatry, statistics, toxicology, administration and courses of general interest. It is often possible to transfer credits earned to other institutions for degree work, and many courses are approved for category 1 credit toward the AMA Physician's Recognition Award.

Classes will begin Sept. 18; mail registration ends Aug. 31 and walk-in registration will be held Sept. 6-12. Tuition is $100 per credit hour, and courses may be taken for credit or audit. Courses that qualify for institute support as training should be cleared with supervisors and administrative officers as soon as possible. Both the vendor's copy of the training form and the FAES registration form must be submitted at the time of registration. Note that FAES cannot access training forms entered in the NIHTRIS system; a signed hard copy (vendors' copy of SF182 form) is needed in order to process registrations for classes.

Schedules will be available in the graduate school office in Bldg. 60, Suite 230, the foundation bookstore in Bldg. 10, Rm. B1L101, and the business office in Bldg. 10, Rm. B1C18. To have a schedule sent, call 496-7976 or visit the FAES website at http://faes.org.

Dr. Stephen M. Nigida, Jr., has joined the Center for Scientific Review as a scientific review administrator in the immunologic sciences integrated review group. He is responsible for the review of Small Business Innovation Research applications and other applications submitted to his review group, SSS-4.

After a postdoctoral fellowship at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, he joined Emory University School of Medicine. He was subsequently head of the viral diseases and immunity section within the AIDS Vaccine Program at NCI's Frederick Cancer Research and Development Center. Immediately prior to coming to CSR, he was scientific director at Spring Valley Laboratories, Inc., Maryland. Nigida has been principal investigator on an SBIR contract with NIAAA.
THREE FREEDOMS. CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

which they grew, were the focus of a talk given June 20 by Dr. Buhm Soon Park, the DeWitt Stetten Jr. Memorial fellow in the history of 20th century biomedical sciences and technology, along with LMB stalwarts Dr. David Davies and Dr. Gary Felsenfeld. Entitled, "More Academic Than a University: Three Freedoms and the Laboratory of Molecular Biology, NIDDK," the lecture portrayed NIH at perhaps its most idyllic—brilliant and charismatic lab leadership, plentiful resources, and scientists trusted to follow their own instincts.

Park, a chemist trained at Seoul National University who has recently earned a Ph.D. in the history of science from Johns Hopkins University, came to NIH a year ago to find out what characteristics distinguished NIH as a place for research. His Ph.D. thesis had been on the history of quantum chemistry, so he chose as his target a laboratory that combined a wealth of training in both physics and chemistry—the LMB.

Ever since it was organized 40 years ago by then NIAMD scientific director Dr. DeWitt Stetten, Jr., LMB has had a distinctly physical and molecular bent; its founding leadership was recruited largely from the California Institute of Technology, and were largely alumni of Nobel Laureate Linus Pauling's laboratory. “Four of the five initial section chiefs were at Cal Tech simultaneously,” noted Davies, “and three worked with Pauling.”

What the recruits found at NIH was an institution that prized independent pursuit of knowledge. Park quoted a 1965 report to then President Lyndon Johnson on NIH’s operation: “The NIH scientist has at least as much, and probably more ‘academic’ freedom than his university counterpart...He chooses his own research project and determines his own direction of approach. He finds it relatively easy to secure modern equipment...He has fewer distractions to keep him away from his laboratory—faculty meetings, committee activity, and the like...Not being in an educational institution, he need not teach; he can devote all his time to research.”

Park then reviewed a 1988 Institute of Medicine report on NIH’s intramural programs, which touted “three freedoms”: freedom to choose research topics, freedom to devote all working hours to research, and freedom from the need to obtain grants.

What bureaucracy was on hand had the scientists’ interests at heart: enlightened institute directors, solicitous scientific directors, and lab chiefs with uncommon empathy and ability to inspire. These three levels—Park termed them “semi-permeable membranes”—assured that bench scientists felt “only an intellectual pressure that they have to show that they are doing excellent and productive research.”

Three personalities loomed large in Park’s overview: NIH director (1955-1968) Dr. James Shannon, who presided over NIH’s “golden years,” and who always valued basic over applied research; Stetten, who said, “The greatest return will be secured if the mature scientist is allowed and encouraged to select the problems on which he will work”; and Dr. Gordon Tomkins, who is credited with establishing what Felsenfeld called the “terminally optimistic” style of the lab. Noted Park, “Tomkins became the lab chief in 1962, but his influence was not through this position. Tomkins was indeed an extraordinary person. He was an M.D./Ph.D., an expert in hormone studies, and a jazz musician of professional quality (he had played with Stan Kenton and Charlie Barnet prior to his NIH years). His knowledge was astonishingly diverse, and his memory was simply legendary. But his great talent was in the realm of communication with fellow scientists.”

Park touched on other felicities of intramural NIH life—the luncheon seminar groups, some of which have today ripened into the more-formal interest groups; the evening courses for scientists that are now administered by the Foundation for Advanced Education in the Sciences; the Assembly of Scientists at NIDDK; and the still-extant collegiality and cross-atmosphere that is decidedly un-federal, and still an attraction to young minds.

Park concluded his lecture with a close look at the whimsical poster that advertised his talk; it featured a painting showing more than 200 youngsters involved in some 80 activities—“Children’s Games” by 16th century Flemish artist Pieter Brueghel, the Elder, features youngsters rolling hoops, riding hobbyhorses and playing with tops. Park observed, “They are playing alone, in a small group, or a big group. No one directs them to play this or that game. They are free, self-directed...”
Vonderhaar’s Mentorial Prowess Recognized

Dr. Barbara Vonderhaar, chief of the molecular and cellular endocrinology section of the Laboratory of Tumor Immunology and Biology, NCI, recently won Bethesda AWIS (Association for Women in Science) 2000 Award for Excellence in Mentoring. A 28-year veteran of NIH science, she has hosted some 101 investigators ranging from high school students to professors on sabbatical in her lab. Many of her mentorees have gone on to succeed in a variety of different careers; her first postdoc went on to win the 1995 Bhatnagar Prize (India’s Nobel Prize). Others have excelled in science administration and teaching—one of her mentorees was Toby Horn, who spent many years heading the Molecular Biology Program at Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology.

Vonderhaar devotes much time to mentoring younger students. She has often remarked that her goal is to train her replacement, and that a career in science does not begin at the postdoctoral level.

Letvin Joins VRC as Program Director

Dr. Norman Letvin, an expert on HIV research in primates, has joined the Bumpers Vaccine Research Center as director of the Non-Human Primate Research Program. As program director, he oversees the use of primate models in the evaluation of preclinical AIDS vaccine candidates developed by VRC investigators and directs the development of new vaccine strategies.

“Dr. Letvin is a pioneer in the development of primate models of lentivirus infection,” said VRC director Dr. Gary Nabel. “He has provided important scientific direction and leadership in AIDS vaccine research over the years. He has already played a seminal role in the growth of the VRC, and his active involvement will no doubt accelerate our efforts to make an effective vaccine for AIDS.”

Letvin received his A.B. degree summa cum laude from Harvard University and earned his M.D. from Harvard Medical School before beginning a full-time academic career at Harvard. He began his career at Harvard’s Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, and later became chairman of the division of immunology at its New England Regional Primate Research Center. He is currently chief of the division of viral pathogenesis at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center, a position he still holds while also devoting his time to the VRC.

Letvin has been involved with NIH for many years. Throughout his scientific career, he has received NIH funding for many of his research studies in immunology, HIV/AIDS pathogenesis, AIDS vaccine development and the assessment of vaccines in primate models. He has also been involved with many NIH HIV/AIDS-related research committees. He currently chairs the NIAID AIDS Vaccine Design and Evaluation Group and the NCI primate advisory committee, and serves on the AIDS vaccine research (“Baltimore”) committee and the HIV Vaccine Development Resource Group. In addition, Letvin also serves on the scientific advisory boards for the International AIDS Vaccine Initiative, the Center for AIDS Research at Duke University Medical Center, and the Oregon Regional Primate Research Center. He also serves on the editorial boards for Science, Journal of Virology and AIDS Research and Human Retroviruses.

Over the years she has had 15 high school, 53 undergraduate and 6 medical/graduate students as well as 2 high school teachers work in her lab.

Her mentoring has reached beyond her laboratory to her institute, NCI, where she initiated programs to allow postdocs to present their work and meet with senior investigators. She also established a seminar series on mammary gland biology, and a grant-writing workshop for young investigators.

Vonderhaar has served on the mentoring committee for Women in Cancer Research, and participates in mentoring activities for the American Association for Cancer Research. She is the fourth woman to serve on the board of trustees for the Gordon Research Conferences, the second to serve as chairman of the board. In that capacity, she implemented a program to fund students and faculty from primarily minority colleges to attend the Gordon Conferences, and lobbied to increase the number of women speakers and board members.

Vonderhaar’s dedication to advancing the careers of others is clearly summed up by an old Chinese proverb that hangs above her desk: “If you are planning for a year, sow rice. If you are planning for a decade, plant trees. If you are planning for a lifetime, educate a person.”
Each year, the Office of Education plans several special activities—including a lecture series—designed to enrich the summer experience of students working on campus. The series offers students and all attendees the opportunity to hear leading NIH scientists present results of their work on the frontiers of biomedical research. For the first time, the annual series has a theme, “Domestic Health Disparities.”

Fauci, cochair of NIH’s program to develop a strategic research agenda to help close such health gaps, used the latest epidemiological data available on AIDS to show how the disease is spreading nearly unchecked in many regions of the world—particularly sub-Saharan Africa and India.

Dividing his talk into several aspects, Fauci began by explaining the epidemiology and natural history of HIV infection. Recently, he said, scientists have been able to confirm that HIV, the virus that causes AIDS, had its origins in nonhuman primates in sub-Saharan Africa. The virus “jumped species from the chimpanzee to the human, which is not at all uncommon,” he said, citing influenza as a classic example of a disease that jumps species—from fowl and pigs to humans. He then offered startling epidemiological data.

“Look at what has happened in Africa—particularly sub-Saharan Africa,” Fauci said. “In the southern African countries of Botswana, Zimbabwe and South Africa the epidemic is truly out of control. We talk about disparities in health, this is the poster for disparities. In Botswana and Zimbabwe, the epidemic is truly out of control. We talk about disparities in health, this is the poster for disparities. In Botswana, Zimbabwe and South Africa the epidemic is truly out of control. We talk about disparities in health, this is the poster for disparities.”

In some southern African countries, 35 percent of pregnant women are infected with HIV. In the armed forces of such countries as Uganda and Zimbabwe, up to 45 or 50 percent of the troops are infected. “This is something that has national security as well as economic and humanitarian implications,” Fauci said, noting that President Clinton and Vice President Gore both had addressed the issue recently at the Security Council of the United Nations.

Sub-Saharan Africa has more cases of HIV than any region in the world. India has more cases—4 million people infected—than any other single nation. In the United States, in contrast, about 0.3 percent of the population is infected, Fauci said.

“While we are very hopeful with regard to China,” he said, “because we are having close interaction with our Chinese colleagues who are trying to adopt the public health measures of education, behavior modification, distribution of condoms, and better attention to injection drug use. We are hoping that if they put these mechanisms in place, we will not see an explosion of the epidemic in the most populous nation in the world.”

Although he had given a global view of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, Fauci said, “That’s not to diminish the extraordinary impact this disease still is having in this country.”

There were about 730,900 cumulative cases of AIDS reported in the U.S. as of Dec. 31, 1999, according to the latest statistics provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. About 440,000 people with AIDS in the United States have died since the beginning of the epidemic. Up to 900,000 people are infected with HIV in this country; more than 200,000 of them do not yet know that they are infected.

The most disturbing number, Fauci said, is the 40,000 new cases per year in the U.S. Although the number of cases per year has reached a plateau compared to the mid-1980’s, he said, the plateau is unacceptably high. Most of the new cases are found in individuals younger than age 25.

In terms of domestic health disparities, Fauci said “AIDS has evolved from a disease predominantly of gay white men to a disease of inner city minorities, mostly individuals who are geographically connected to an injection drug use population.” Also increasing, he said, are the cases among women.

Showing a slide on U.S. AIDS cases by race/ethnicity, Fauci explained the concept of health disparities. In 1998, the rate of AIDS cases among African Americans was 82 per 100,000 people—10 times the rate among white people.

Fauci then gave a brief, but comprehensive look at the disease’s pathogenesis.

“AIDS is different than most other viruses,” he said. “When you get exposed to most other viruses, the virus either kills you or you get rid of it completely. There are very few viruses—herpes, or hepatitis B and C, as examples—that continue to replicate. Most viruses either kill you or you get better. That’s absolutely not the case with HIV. The virus itself doesn’t kill you; it’s the secondary infections that kill.” The immune system partially controls the virus, but never completely clears it from the body.

Throughout the lecture, there were various opportunities for Fauci to reflect on his nearly 20 years of battling AIDS from the frontlines. He recalled how he and his colleagues were frustrated in the disease’s
earliest years. As infectious disease physicians, he said, they were accustomed to treating—and most times, curing—their patients. When the first people with AIDS began arriving at the Clinical Center, doctors were unable to cure them and despite physicians’ best efforts all the patients succumbed to the relentless infection.

“This was a very disturbing time for us in those first few years before we knew that HIV was HIV,” he admitted. “All of our patients were dying. The only thing we could do was treat the opportunistic infections and neoplasms.”

Concluding his talk, Fauci mentioned the 16 FDA-approved antiretroviral drugs to treat HIV/AIDS. The first therapy, commonly known now as AZT, was approved in 1987. In the 13 years since, researchers have learned that HIV/AIDS is far too smart a disease to be controlled with any one drug; the virus quickly adapts to a single therapy and renders the drug virtually useless after a time. These days, combinations of HIV drugs—often including a protease inhibitor—are the standard treatments. Such combinations are known as highly active antiretroviral therapy (HAART).

Fauci also anticipated a question about developing an AIDS vaccine, explaining one of the “many stumbling blocks” that scientists have yet to overcome: Researchers have identified several different HIV subtypes—called “clades” and a vaccine against one clade might not protect individuals from other subtypes. Many more studies will have to be conducted before the promise of a vaccine is realized, he said.

Following the lecture, Fauci stayed for nearly 20 minutes of questions from the audience.

“We chose a subject that we thought would be of considerable interest to you and of enormous value for you to consider later on in your careers,” said NIH deputy director for intramural research Dr. Michael Gottesman, whose Office of Intramural Research oversees the Office of Education. “There are enormous health disparities that exist in this country among various populations. Some of these disparities are geographic, some are related to occupation, some to race, ethnicity or culture, genetic inheritance. In many cases, we simply do not understand why one population has an incidence of heart disease or hypertension or kidney disease many times higher than the remaining population. These are very troubling statistics about the United States and we’re hopeful that the people sitting in this audience will decide one day to work on these subjects and how we can contribute to alleviating these disturbing disparities.”

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Sociologist Riley Leaves NIH for Maine

Sociologist Matilda White Riley, NIH scientist emeritus and founder of the National Institute on Aging’s Behavioral and Social Research Program, is returning to her home in Maine. Riley, 89, will become research professor in sociology (honorary) at Bowdoin College in Brunswick, where she was teaching prior to joining NIA in 1979.

“The National Institutes of Health deeply appreciates the contribution that Dr. Riley has made during her tenure at the National Institute on Aging,” said Dr. Ruth Kirschstein, acting director of NIH. “She is a scientist of courage and vision and will be greatly missed. Women entering the fields of sociology and aging have fewer professional barriers to surmount, in part, because of her pioneering work.”

Dr. Robert Butler, NIA’s founding director, recruited her to set up and direct a program in the social and behavioral aspects of age and aging. Riley served as associate director of NIA for behavioral and social research from 1979 to 1991 and senior social scientist at NIA from 1991 to 1997. She was honored in 1998 with the title of scientist emeritus.

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Bowdoin holds nostalgic meaning for her. As a girl, she attended Brunswick High School, where she met her future husband, John “Jack” Riley, with whom she has collaborated professionally during their 69-year marriage. Following a brilliant career in the world of academia, foundations and market research, she went back to Brunswick in the 1970s as Bowdoin’s first woman full professor. Bowdoin gave her her Jack honorary degrees in the same year (1972), and in 1996 Bowdoin named a building in her honor.

At Bowdoin, she will focus on “age integration,” the breaking down of age boundaries so that old and young people interact and understand each other. The June 2000 issue of The Gerontologist is devoted to NIA’s development of this topic. Along the way, she and her husband have long-range plans for a volume on their “joint lives as sociologists.”—Jeaninne Mjoseth

NIH University: New Services Available

Assessment Testing will be administered at Executive Plaza South, Suite 100 on Wednesdays, 1-4 p.m., beginning Aug. 2. Employees will be able to take CLEP (College Level Examination Program) and DANTES tests to obtain college credit. Montgomery College will also administer college assessment tests for degree-seeking students or for students who wish to take mathematics or English courses. Call 402-3382 for more information or to make an appointment.
AIDS PANDEMIC, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Education to kick off its 2000 Summer Lecture Series for Students.

Each year, the Office of Education plans several special activities—including a lecture series—designed to enrich the summer experience of students working on campus. The series offers students and all attendees the opportunity to hear leading NIH scientists present results of their work on the frontiers of biomedical research. For the first time, the annual series has a theme, “Domestic Health Disparities.”

Fauci, cochair of NIH’s program to develop a strategic research agenda to help close such health gaps, used the latest epidemiological data available on AIDS to show how the disease is spreading nearly unchecked in many regions of the world—particularly sub-Saharan Africa and India.

Dividing his talk into several aspects, Fauci began by explaining the epidemiology and natural history of HIV infection. Recently, he said, scientists have been able to confirm that HIV, the virus that causes AIDS, had its origins in nonhuman primates in sub-Saharan Africa. The virus “jumped species from the chimpanzee to the human, which is not at all uncommon,” he said, citing influenza as a classic example of a disease that jumps species—from fowl and pigs to humans. He then offered startling epidemiological data.

“Look at what has happened in Africa—particularly sub-Saharan Africa,” Fauci said. “In the southern African countries of Botswana, Zimbabwe and South Africa the epidemic is truly out of control. We talk about disparities in health, this is the poster for disparities. In Botswana and Zimbabwe, about 25 percent to 30 percent of the entire adult population is infected with HIV. That’s absolutely astounding.”

In some southern African countries, 35 percent of pregnant women are infected with HIV. In the armed forces of such countries as Uganda and Zimbabwe, up to 45 or 50 percent of the troops are infected. “This is something that has national security as well as economic and humanitarian implications,” Fauci said, noting that President Clinton and Vice President Gore both had addressed the issue recently at the Security Council of the United Nations.

Sub-Saharan Africa has more cases of HIV than any region in the world. India has more cases—4 million people infected—than any other single nation. In the United States, in contrast, about 0.3 percent of the population is infected, Fauci said.

“We are very hopeful with regard to China,” he said, “because we are having close interaction with our Chinese colleagues who are trying to adopt the public health measures of education, behavior modification, distribution of condoms, and better attention to injection drug use. We are hoping that if they put these mechanisms in place, we will not see an explosion of the epidemic in the most populous nation in the world.”

Although he had given a global view of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, Fauci said, “That’s not to diminish the extraordinary impact this disease still is having in this country.”

There were about 730,000 cumulative cases of AIDS reported in the U.S. as of Dec. 31, 1999, according to the latest statistics provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; about 440,000 people with AIDS in the United States have died since the beginning of the epidemic. Up to 900,000 people are infected with HIV in this country; more than 200,000 of them do not yet know that they are infected.

The most disturbing number, Fauci said, is the 40,000 new cases per year in the U.S. Although the number of cases per year has reached a plateau compared to the mid-1980’s, he said, the plateau is unacceptably high. Most of the new cases are found in individuals younger than age 25.

In terms of domestic health disparities, Fauci said “AIDS has evolved from a disease predominantly of gay white men to a disease of inner city minorities, mostly individuals who are geographically connected to an injection drug use population.” Also increasing, he said, are the cases among women.

Showing a slide on U.S. AIDS cases by race/ethnicity, Fauci explained the concept of health disparities. In 1998, the rate of AIDS cases among African Americans was 82 per 100,000 people—10 times the rate among white people.

Fauci then gave a brief, but comprehensive look at the disease’s pathogenesis.

“HIV is different from most other viruses,” he said. “When you get exposed to most other viruses, the virus either kills you or you get rid of it completely. There are very few viruses—herpes, or hepatitis B and C, as examples—that continue to replicate. Most viruses either kill you or you get better. That’s absolutely not the case with HIV. The virus itself doesn’t kill you; it’s the secondary infections that kill.” The immune system partially controls the virus, but never completely clears it from the body.

Throughout the lecture, there were various opportunities for Fauci to reflect on his nearly 20 years of battling AIDS from the frontlines. He recalled how he and his colleagues were frustrated in the disease's...
earliest years. As infectious disease physicians, he said, they were accustomed to treating—and most times, curing—their patients. When the first people with AIDS began arriving at the Clinical Center, doctors were unable to cure them and despite physicians' best efforts all the patients succumbed to the relentless infection.

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OSE Summer Film Festival Returns

The popular Science in the Cinema—a free 6-week film festival open to the public—is now under way in its seventh season, sponsored by the Office of Science Education. As is traditional, after the screening of each film, a guest speaker with expertise in the film's subject area comments on the science depicted in the film and takes questions from the audience. The Thursday evening program runs from 7 to approximately 9:30 in the Bldg. 45 auditorium. Seating is on a first-come, first-served basis. All films are shown with captions.

The remaining four presentations are:

**Good Will Hunting**, Aug. 3 - Will Hunting is only 20 years old but already stands out in his rough, working-class neighborhood in South Boston. He's never been to college, except to scrub floors as a janitor at MIT. Yet he can summon obscure historical references from a photographic memory and almost instantly solve math problems that frustrate Nobel Prize-winning professors. Starring Robin Williams, Matt Damon, Ben Affleck, Casey Affleck, Stellan Skarsgard, Minnie Driver (1997, Rated R). Guest speaker: Dr. Judith Rapoport, Child Psychiatry Branch, NIMH.

**Yellow Jack**, Aug. 10 - This film is based on the true story of U.S. Army doctor Walter Reed (Lewis Stone) and his quest to discover the cause of yellow fever. After the Spanish-American War, the United States Army occupied countries that suffered from many tropical diseases, one of which was yellow fever. In 1899, Walter Reed, who was stationed in Washington, D.C., was sent to Cuba as part of a team investigating the cause of this disease. Cuban physician Carlos Finlay (Charles Coburn) hypothesized that mosquitoes might be responsible for transmitting the disease to humans. Also starring Janet Beecher, Virginia Bruce, Alan Curtis, Andy Devine, Buddy Ebsen, Jonathan Hale, William Henry, Robert Montgomery (1938, Not Rated). Guest speaker: Michael Rhode, chief archivist, National Museum of Health and Medicine, Armed Forces Institute of Pathology, Washington, D.C.

**Girl, Interrupted**, Aug. 17 - Based on a true story and the best-selling book of the same name, this film is set in the changing world of the late 1960's. Finding herself at a renowned psychiatric institution for troubled women, Susanna Kaysen must choose between the world of people who belong on the inside—like the seductive and dangerous Lisa—or the often difficult world of reality on the outside. Angelina Jolie won the 1999 Oscar for best-supporting actress. Also starring Winona Ryder, Vanessa Redgrave, Whoopi Goldberg (1999, Rated R). Guest speaker: Dr. Danny Wedding, professor of psychiatry and director, Missouri Institute of Mental Health, University of Missouri School of Medicine.

**Not As A Stranger**, Aug. 24 - Stanley Kramer's directorial film debut is based on Morton Thompson's novel of the same name. The story of a nurse who works to put her husband through medical school, this film is a timeless depiction of the financial and emotional challenges faced by those who embrace the medical profession. Starring Olivia de Havilland, Robert Mitchum, Frank Sinatra, Gloria Grahame, Broderick Crawford, Lon Chaney, Jr., Harry Morgan, Lee Marvin (1955, Not Rated). Guest Speaker: Dr. Peter Dans, associate professor of medicine, John Hopkins University School of Medicine.

For more information about the Science in the Cinema film series, visit the OSE web site at http://science-education.nih.gov.