

# THE NIH RECORD

Still The Second Best Thing About Payday

## 'People' Awards Featured At NIEHS Ceremony

At the annual NIEHS awards ceremony, institute director Dr. Kenneth Olden surprised several employees with new "grass roots" awards unique to NIEHS—Unsung Hero Awards for people whose contributions may have previously been overlooked, and Peer Awards, in which people are nominated by fellow employees.

The Unsung Hero Awards are for behind-the-scenes contributions that might fall between the cracks of traditional awards. For example, Dr. John Penta received his award for his income-producing commitment to technology transfer work at NIEHS and as a frequent volunteer lecturer on cancer detection and a popular pianist at lunchtimes and institute events.

Dr. Gary Boorman won his award for bringing issues of potential public concern



Ruth McFarland, who provides free notary services, gets award from NIEHS director Dr. Kenneth Olden.

to the institute's research agenda. Dr. John Pritchard's was not only for scientific leadership but also for his 5-year chairmanship of an intramural committee on promotions that developed fair, but rigorous, standards.

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

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Symposium Puts 'Gee' in Genome

## Consortium Scientists Parse 'Book of Life'

By Rich McManus

There was a time when Feb. 12 was pretty much known solely as Lincoln's Birthday. But as of this year, you might as well start calling it G-Day as well—the day a decade of international toil led to announcement of simultaneous publication, in both *Science* and *Nature*, of the nearly complete human genome: some 3 billion copies of scattered A's, T's, G's and C's that, since the authors imposed a freeze Oct. 7, 2000, for purposes of pausing to digest what they've found, resulted in a symposium in Masur Auditorium that lasted more than 3 hours, featured eight speakers, and updated the jam-packed crowd on newfound principles of their own human packaging, not to mention a shared molecular past.

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'Best Investment We Can Make'

## Congressional Delegate Discusses Healthcare, Education Issues at NLM

By Carla Garnett

Healthcare reform and education top the agenda of the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) this session, according to Dr. Donna Christian-Christensen, U.S. Virgin Islands delegate to the House of Representatives and the first female physician to serve in Congress.

"The best investment we can make in our future economy and in seeing that we develop our full human potential is in our healthcare and education systems," she said.

Welcoming Christian-Christensen on her first visit to NIH, Dr. Donald Lindberg, director of the National Library of Medicine,



Rep. Christian-Christensen

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**NIGMS grantee Dr. K. Barry Sharpless (above) is one of six recipients of the Benjamin Franklin Medal. He is a professor in the department of chemistry at the Scripps Research Institute in La Jolla, Calif. He will receive the award, which is administered through the Franklin Institute in Philadelphia, for inventing methods that provide exquisite control of the three-dimensional shapes of synthesized molecules. Dr. Judah Folkman (below), an NCI grantee, will also receive the medal for his research on arresting tumor growth by preventing the formation of new blood vessels.**



#### PEOPLE AWARDS, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Lab and branch chiefs nominate employees for Hero awards, which are purely honorary.

The Peer Awards, given for assistance to others, include \$600 and awardees are nominated by fellow employees, not supervisors. For example, Ruth McFarland, a notary public, has for many years provided that service free-of-charge to fellow employees. Richard Sloane won for his promotion of recycling at NIEHS and at other facilities in Research Triangle Park, N.C.

Beth Anderson won not only for activities improving the institute but also for fostering collaborations with the state of North Carolina in the aftermath of Hurricane Floyd. Valeria Shropshire won for helping contract and regular employees throughout the institute.

Olden said the award winners are "nice to have on our team and contribute more than just the work they perform on the job." He said he hopes the awards promote team efforts and show that the institute values interpersonal relationships. ■

#### Video Preserves Memory of Burned School

A Virginia public elementary school that had been the setting of an NIMH video news release was tragically lost to fire last fall, but the institute recently presented a copy of film highlights to the school as a memento.

The National Institute of Mental Health filmed a video news release to accompany last summer's launch of the Child Mental Health Foundations and Agencies Network (FAN) study, a report on the social and emotional readiness of children entering primary school.

The FAN study revealed that the social and emotional skills of children entering kindergarten are as important for academic success as cognitive skills such as knowing the ABC's and 1-2-3's. Furthermore, social and emotional school readiness is critical for young children's early school success and may even set the stage for success later in life.

With the cooperation of the faculty and students at Dogwood Elementary School in Reston, Va., NIMH was able to produce a video news release package that ran on 35 television stations and garnered millions of viewers across the nation.

Unfortunately, Dogwood Elementary was destroyed by fire this past November. There were no injuries or loss of life; however, more than 500 students and faculty were displaced, and the community of Reston was affected emotionally and financially. In support of the students and staff, and as a token of appreciation, NIMH produced a special video from last August's taping to preserve memories of Dogwood for years to come. The NIMH Office of Communications and Public Liaison recently presented Dogwood Elementary principal Ricki Harvey with the memento video. ■



*The winter 2001 class of the Extramural Associates Program recently visited with NIH acting deputy director Dr. Yvonne Maddox (second from r). EAs include (from l) Dr. Sylvia Smith of Florida International University, Dr. Rachel Lindsey of Chicago State University and Dr. Reuben Wright of Prairie View A&M University. The class will be at NIH through May 25.*

#### NEI's Everett Gets Fellowship Award

Donald F. Everett, NEI program director for collaborative clinical research, received an honorary fellowship award from the American Academy of Optometry recently. He is one of only four recipients in the history of the academy to receive this award. The academy honors recipients for their outstanding contributions to vision research.

Everett was recognized for his "distinguished contributions to eye care and vision research." He is responsible for overseeing multi-center clinical trials and epidemiologic studies. He has been a program director with NEI's Extramural and Collaborative Program since May 1990. ■

## NIH RECORD

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## Benabid Presents Shy Lecture

Dr. Alim-Louis Benabid, chairman of neurosurgery at the Joseph Fourier University in Grenoble, France, recently presented this year's G. Milton Shy lecture on deep brain stimulation (DBS)—a new approach to the treatment of tremor and other neurological disorders. Benabid, who developed the procedure and is considered a pioneer in the field of neurosurgery, described the technique in his lecture "Does High Frequency Stimulation Excite or Inhibit Neural Structures?"

Tremor, a rhythmic, involuntary muscular contraction characterized by to-and-fro movements of the body, is a common symptom of Parkinson's disease (PD) and is the principal feature of essential tremor. DBS—a technique that uses an implanted electrode to deliver continuous high-frequency electrical stimulation to parts of the brain that control movement such as the thalamus, globus pallidus or subthalamic nucleus—suppresses tremor. The technique also relieves other symptoms of PD such as bradykinesia and rigidity.



*Dr. Alim-Louis Benabid*

Unlike ablative surgery—which had long been one of the treatments of choice for these disorders—DBS does not destroy brain tissue and is thus less risky. In addition, the benefits of DBS appear to be long-lasting. There is now evidence that DBS may also slow progression of PD.

Benabid was the first person to use DBS—initially developed to treat pain—in patients with tremor and PD. Now scientists are applying it to a variety of disorders including other movement disorders and epilepsy.

The Shy visiting professorship was established in 1971 to honor the memory of Dr. G. Milton Shy, who developed the NINDS intramural program and became the institute's first clinical director and first chief of its Medical Neurology Branch. Three institutions—NIH, Columbia University and the University of Pennsylvania—on which Shy had a great impact take turns selecting the Shy professor who then visits all three institutions in the year of selection. Benabid is the first neurosurgeon to receive this honor.

Benabid also presented a talk on the "Current and Future Applications of High Frequency Deep Brain Stimulation to Functional Neurosurgery" at NINDS clinical grand rounds during his visit.—Shannon Garnett ■

## Registry Established for Alopecia Areata

A national registry for alopecia areata, a disease whose hallmark is unexplained hair loss, has been established by the National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases. The new registry will be located at the University of Texas M.D. Anderson Cancer Center in Houston, with affiliated centers at the University of Colorado, the University of California at San Francisco, the University of Minnesota and Columbia University.

Registry scientists will seek out and classify medical and family history data for patients with three major forms of alopecia areata: alopecia areata (patchy scalp hair loss); alopecia totalis (100 percent scalp hair loss); and alopecia universalis (100 percent scalp and 100 percent body hair loss). Families with multiple affected members will be especially helpful to further research studies. The project will offer a future central information source where researchers can obtain statistical data associated with the disease. A web site is currently being developed for the registry.

The registry will serve as a liaison between affected families and investigators interested in studying this disorder. Scientists hope the registry will be useful in locating the gene or genes associated with alopecia areata. It will also link patients with other researchers studying the cause or treatment of this disease.

Alopecia areata is an autoimmune disease, one in which the body's natural defense system attacks healthy cells. In alopecia areata, the target of the attack is the hair follicle. It affects both males and females of all races, and often begins in childhood. There is no known permanent cure.

Patient enrollment for the registry is projected to begin in fall 2001. ■

## APAO Seeks Award Nominations by Mar. 20

The NIH Asian/Pacific American Organization (APAO) seeks nominations from employees for its 2001 Outstanding Achievements and Merit Scholarship Awards. Recipients will be honored in the evening program of the annual Asian/Pacific Americans Heritage Program in May. The award categories are as follows: For significant accomplishments in advancing NIH/IC's EEO goals; for significant accomplishments in scientific research; for significant accomplishments in administrative work; a merit scholarship of \$1,000 to an outstanding college-bound student who is a son/daughter of an NIH employee.

Nominations are open to all employees. For instructions on how to apply, visit the APAO home page at <http://www.recgov.org/r&w/apao/index.htm> or go directly to the awards site: <http://www.recgov.org/r&w/apao/awards.htm> or contact Dr. Aftab A. Ansari, fax 402-2406, email [ansaria@mail.nih.gov](mailto:ansaria@mail.nih.gov). Nominations for the awards should be sent to him as well; closing date is Mar. 20. Recipients will be notified in the third week of April.

## ELECTION REFORM, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

spoke briefly about NLM's contribution to the NIH Strategic Plan to Reduce Health Disparities, a document developed with input from each institute and center. NLM's contribution to the multi-year strategy includes technological innovations in health information dissemination such as the user-friendly web sites [clinicaltrials.gov](http://clinicaltrials.gov) and [medlineplus.gov](http://medlineplus.gov). NLM had invited the congresswoman to speak in observance of Black History Month.

"One of things that has pleased me most as I've been serving in this position for the past year is the way the organizations of the agency have really rallied around the importance of minority health issues, particularly health disparities," said Dr. Yvonne Maddox, NIH acting deputy director since January 2000. She recalled seeing Christian-Christensen—among several other members of the CBC—speak on the floor of the House in late November just before the healthcare fairness legislation was passed to create NIH's National Center on Minority Health and Health Disparities. "It's so appropriate and so timely that we have Dr. Christian-Christensen here to speak to us for Black History Month," Maddox said. "I'm delighted to join Dr. Lindberg in welcoming her to NIH."

A third-term Democrat, Christian-Christensen chairs the CBC's health brain trust, which oversees and advocates minority health issues both nationally and internationally. Although this was her first trip to NIH's campus, she recalled that she has been interacting with the agency on a number of issues over the years, the "crowning achievement" being the culmination of a 2-year effort to create the new center.

"In this, the Information Age, data has become as precious as gold," she noted. "Here we are in the largest repository of biomedical information in the world and we want to commend the National Library of Medicine—and the National Institutes of Health—for making these resources available to millions of people around the world. But in many instances, it's not the technological information, but very basic information that is the critical need as we try to chart a course of wellness for this nation, especially with regard to communities of color. That

makes the work you do day after day so very valuable to us, whether we're in education, in research, in practice or in politics and policy."

Christian-Christensen acknowledged that life expectancy gaps between majority and minority citizens have widened and that communities of color continue to suffer

disproportionately with such life-threatening ailments as cardiovascular disease, several cancers and AIDS. In addition, the mental health field is plagued by disparities in availability and access to minorities.

Rep. Donna Christian-Christensen (I) is greeted by Cassandra Allen, past member and chair of NLM's Diversity Council.



disproportionately with such life-threatening ailments as cardiovascular disease, several cancers and AIDS. In addition, the mental health field is plagued by disparities in availability and access to minorities.

Noting that the United States—"the world's only remaining superpower"—is the only industrialized nation that does not provide healthcare to all its citizens, she said the CBC is proud to be called unofficially "the conscience of the Congress" and has made such universal coverage a top priority on its agenda.

"It becomes our challenge—NLM, who holds the information; NIH, who conducts the research; our community partners, who advocate on behalf of those they serve; and ours, the legislators entrusted with the power—to use the information to create policy and advance change," she said. "This brings us back to the power of the vote and where do we go from here... We are convinced that the 'empowerment approach' is the way to health and well-being for us in the new millennium."

Christian-Christensen said another primary CBC goal is to see that all citizens have equal access to the voting booth for the next election. Election reform, she contended, can help solve myriad other societal ills, including health disparities.

"This particular year our focus is on election reform," she said, referring to difficulties reported during the recent presidential election. "That may seem to be very far away from the issues we want to discuss here, but it's not that far away at all. Politics and elections determine whether you will have the resources to get your job done."

Other major CBC initiatives for the 107th Congress include increased investment in training minority healthcare providers and additional emphasis on mental health issues, she said.

"We must reshape, rebuild and recreate the entire healthcare landscape in many of our communities," she concluded, noting that it will be tougher to change education and healthcare than to address election reform. "We in the Congressional Black Caucus applaud and thank the Library of Medicine. I hope that my being here today begins a new and broader dialogue and collaboration that will even further advance the health and quality of life of the people that we in Congress and you here at NIH serve." ■

PHOTOS: KARLTON JACKSON

Assembled for NLM's black history lecture on Feb. 15 are (from l) NLM Deputy Director Kent Smith, NIH acting deputy director Dr. Yvonne Maddox, NLM EEO Officer David Nash, guest speaker Christian-Christensen and NLM director Dr. Donald Lindberg.



### Knee, Hip Injuries in Youth Increase Risk of OA Later

Knee and hip injuries in adolescents and young adults have been linked to osteoarthritis (OA) in those joints later in life, according to an article in a recent issue of the *Annals of Internal Medicine*.

The Johns Hopkins Precursors Study, conducted over a 46-year period, was designed to identify the body's predictors of the aging process. The study, funded by the National Institute on Aging with investigator support by NIAMS, found that participants with a history of athletic or traumatic injury to the knee joint before age 22 had a higher rate of subsequent knee OA. In addition, knee and hip injuries during followup, in the participants' mid thirties, were also related to future knee and hip OA.

Dr. Allan Gelber of Johns Hopkins was the lead author on the paper. He and his colleagues recommend that physicians who treat young patients with athletic or traumatic injuries include stabilizing the joint with braces, and temporarily reducing high-impact exercise to minimize further damage of the injured joint as part of the treatment regimen. In addition, they advise physicians to advocate use of proper sports equipment under safe conditions to prevent joint injuries from occurring and decrease the long-term risk of OA disease later in life.

OA or degenerative joint disease mostly affects the cartilage, which is the "padding" between two bones. It is the most common type of arthritis and a leading cause of disability, especially among older people. Over 20 million Americans have OA. ■

### New Booklet on Sjögren's Syndrome

A new, comprehensive booklet on Sjögren's syndrome for the public and patients is now available from the National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases. Sjögren's syndrome is an autoimmune disease in which the immune system targets moisture-producing glands and causes dryness in the mouth and eyes. Other parts of the body can be affected as well such as skin, joints, muscles and the nervous system. Sjögren's syndrome can be either primary, when it occurs on its own, or secondary, when it occurs with another disease, such as rheumatoid arthritis or lupus. Experts believe 1 million to 4 million people in the United States have Sjögren's syndrome.

*Questions and Answers About Sjögren's Syndrome* includes information about symptoms, diagnosis, the types of doctors to see, treatment and ongoing research. The 36-page booklet was prepared by a medical writer and reviewed by 11 medical experts, as well as the Sjögren's Syndrome Foundation. To read it, visit <http://www.nih.gov/niams/healthinfo/sjogrens.htm> or order a free copy by calling 877-22-NIAMS. ■

### Biology of Asthma Explored, Mar. 15

A STEP Science and the Public Health event titled "Breathless in Bethesda: The Biology of Asthma," will be held Thursday, Mar. 15 from 1 to 4 p.m. in the Natcher Conference Center's main auditorium.

Have you or a family member been diagnosed with asthma? The incidence of asthma is skyrocketing as the number of Americans diagnosed has doubled in the last 15 years. Even more disturbing is that the number of deaths from asthma has doubled in the last two decades, and children are the most susceptible to this disease. The STEP event will discuss possible causes, the latest research, treatment options and prevention.

The speakers include Dr. Floyd J. Malveaux, president for health affairs, Howard University, who is also moderator; Dr. Thomas A. Platts-Mills, professor of medicine, University of Virginia Medical Center; and Dr. Robert P. Schleimer, professor, Asthma and Allergy Center, Johns Hopkins University.

STEP training events are provided for the benefit of NIH employees. This one may be viewed on <http://videocast.nih.gov/>. For reasonable accommodation (a week in advance), or for more information, contact the STEP program office at 435-2769. ■

### Five Appointed to NIGMS Advisory Council

Five new members were recently named to the National Advisory General Medical Sciences Council. They are:

Dr. Douglas A. Lauffenburger, professor of bioengineering and chemical engineering, codirector of the division of bioengineering and environmental health, and director of the biotechnology process engineering center at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology; his research focuses on studies of cell signaling, cell movement and cell growth.

Dr. Eaton E. Lattman, professor and chair of the department of biophysics at Johns Hopkins University, whose research interests include studies of protein structure and the design of anti-sickling agents.

Dr. Susan S. Taylor, professor in the department of chemistry and biochemistry at the University of California, San Diego, in La Jolla, where she also serves as a Howard Hughes Medical Institute investigator.

Dr. Debra A. Schwinn, professor in the departments of anesthesiology, pharmacology/cancer biology, and surgery at Duke University Medical Center, where she also serves as director of the molecular pharmacology laboratory in the department of anesthesiology.

Dr. George C. Hill, professor in the department of microbiology in the School of Medicine at Meharry Medical College in Nashville, where he also serves as vice president for sponsored research and director of international health programs. ■



NIGMS director Dr. Marvin Cassman (r) welcomes five new council members (from l) Drs. Douglas A. Lauffenburger, Eaton E. Lattman, Susan S. Taylor, Debra A. Schwinn and George C. Hill.

BOOK OF LIFE, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

"What a day of celebration this is," enthused Dr. Francis Collins, director of the National Human Genome Research Institute and a leader of the international collaboration that produced the *Nature* paper. "This is the kind of occasion where one day you'll be able to tell your grandkids that you were in the auditorium on Feb. 12, 2001, to celebrate the first reading of the book of life."

Indeed the room's atmosphere was electric, as fire marshals struggled to find the few seats that remained almost a half hour before the symposium began. There were big, hearty greetings down front as members of the seven-country, 20-institution public consortium discovered one another. There were enough beards, ponytails and thoughtful spectacles to comprise a Bob Dylan tour as a sense filled the auditorium that its happy chatter is exactly what the leading edge of a breaking wave sounds like. It was genome rock 'n' roll, with Collins as the exhausted but still game impresario. Adding further to the charged atmosphere were stagehands roaming about with walkie-talkies, weirdly apt messages thrown onto the projection screen by computers in test mode (Information-Source is not



Dr. James Watson

present) and vaguely ominous microphone leakage into the public address system: "You don't really want to do that, do you?" exclaimed a disembodied male voice at one point. There was a whole lotta DNA in the room, and 99.9 percent of it was buzzing to the same vibe.

Collins insisted that the event was a celebration of people, as in humanity, and pointed out that in a slide of the *Nature* cover—once it could be projected right-side up—were tiny human faces in the DNA helix, including those "if you look real hard" of Drs. James Watson and Francis Crick, whose discovery of the double helix in 1953 effectively launched the field of genomic investigation. The publication gala, Collins continued, "is really about all of us—it's our shared inheritance." He said the event "is much more substantive than the June announcement" at the White House, where representatives of both public and private sequencing initiatives met to announce their verging on a final draft of the human genome. "That event was more a marking of the odometer turning over. What



Dr. Aristides Patrinos



Watson (r) accepts a CD-ROM containing the human genome sequence from Collins at the symposium held at NIH's Masur Auditorium.

we have here is a purely scientific symposium."

But before the talks could turn dense with terms like "GC content," "eutherian radiation" and "isochore bins," there was literal rock 'n' roll: Dr. Eric Green, a leading NHGRI sequencing scientist, prepared a slide show with music that annotated the history of the Human Genome Project, with many amusing asides. The soundtrack included the theme

from Hollywood's *Mission Impossible* series, as well as Kool and the Gang's anthem "Celebrate."

The audience also heard from Crick via videotape from his laboratory at the Salk Institute; his serious 5-minute address concluded, "I can only hope that these remarkable



Dr. Eric Lander

powers...will lead to more good than evil." Crick's tone contrasted sharply with that of Watson, who appeared in person in Masur and delivered several outré observations. He cheerfully derided the "bad guys" who had opposed the Human Genome Project, congratulated himself on having coopted other opponents, but turned grave about the subject of the hunt: "There was no doubt that we would succeed...the only thing about competition is that you've got to take care not to lose, and we didn't lose."

Collins presented the Nobel Prize winner with a CD-ROM of the human genome sequence, hoping that one more honor among the many Watson has earned in his lifetime would not languish, "like so much junk DNA" in Watson's basement. "Our thanks to you," Collins concluded, "in the warmest possible way."

Then the science warmed up in a hurry. Dr. Robert Waterston of the Washington University

PHOTOS: BILL BRANSON

Genome Sequencing Center explained details of the mapping and sequencing effort. Dr. Eric Lander, the ebullient leader of the Whitehead Institute for Genome Research, gave an impassioned interpretation of our "very lumpy genome," describing it as having "very different neighborhoods," and noting that the genome is both "a fossil record that one is able to interpret" as well as a still-life epidemiological cohort study.



Dr. Robert Waterston

Lander said that while 1 to 1½ percent of the genome appears dedicated to actual genes, as determined by expression levels and evolutionary homology to known genes in other species, the so-called "junk DNA" or what he called "dark matter" could include "many more genes that we are yet unaware of." He said some 250 genes aren't of human lineage at all, but were derived from bacteria. "There will be surprises galore to find when the mouse, rat, pufferfish, and other genomes are sequenced and compared to the human," he said.



Jim Kent of UC-Santa Cruz

start here so far."

Other speakers on the program included Dr. David Altshuler of the Whitehead Institute, Dr. Barbara Trask of Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center, Dr. Mark Adams of Celera Genomics, Dr. Aristides Patrinos of the Department of Energy, and Jim Kent of the University of California at Santa Cruz, whose team has developed a web browser scientists can use to investigate the human genome on the Internet.

The symposium was the leadoff event in a series that continues for the next few months. For more information about future talks, visit <http://www.nhgri.nih.gov/CONF/>. ■

## Women with Premature Ovarian Failure Needed

Researchers at NICHD are recruiting women who have premature ovarian failure—formerly known as premature menopause—to determine if restoring testosterone will help prevent osteoporosis.

According to Dr. Lawrence M. Nelson, head of NICHD's unit on gynecologic endocrinology, the women will receive testosterone in addition to the combination of replacement hormones (estrogen and progesterin) prescribed for women with premature ovarian failure. The testosterone will be delivered through a patch worn on the skin. "Many women who experience premature ovarian failure don't realize how important it is to replace the hormones that the ovary no longer provides," he said. "We're testing a new method to improve replacing these ovarian hormones."

Women who volunteer for the study will have the opportunity to come to NIH to be evaluated by a team of experts in premature ovarian failure. The evaluation will be provided at no charge, and, in most cases, patients will be reimbursed for their travel expenses.

For information on how to participate in the study, potential volunteers with premature ovarian failure—as well as women with normally functioning ovaries—between the ages of 18 and 42 may contact Vien Vanderhoof by calling toll free at (877) 206-0911. ■

Dr. Stephen P. James is the new deputy director of NIDDK's Division of Digestive Diseases and Nutrition (DDN). As a leader in the field of inflammatory bowel disease (IBD) research and a longstanding NIDDK grantee, he brings a vast knowledge in basic and clinical investigation of GI diseases as well as expertise in grant proposal, review and management to the position. He will coordinate DDN's gastroenterology activities and lead a long-term initiative to develop new research mechanisms to better understand, treat and prevent both forms of IBD, ulcerative colitis and Crohn's disease. He will help create clinical trials and clinical research networks in digestive diseases and develop research programs in celiac disease, Barrett's esophagus, food-borne illness and GI motility disorders. James will also conduct clinical research in GI immunology and IBD at the Clinical Center. For the past 10 years, he has directed the division of gastroenterology at the University of Maryland's School of Medicine and studied the role of T cells in human mucosal immunity. Before joining the Maryland staff, he spent the period from 1982 to 1991 investigating human mucosal immunity for NIAID.



## NIH To Mark Women's History Month

Mark your calendar for the NIH Women's History Month Observance on Thursday, Mar. 15 at 11:30 a.m. in Conf. Rm. F, Natcher Bldg. The program features "Celebrating Women of Courage and Vision—A Panel Discussion," and a slide show quiz with prizes. For more information or reasonable accommodation, call 402-3663.

### CSR's Patricia Straat Retires

Dr. Patricia Straat has retired from the Center for Scientific Review, where she was a special assistant in the Office of the Director. Many who know her from her 21 years at NIH may be surprised by her retirement, because she has never been the retiring type. Straat has rapidly advanced to successes in academic, industry and government careers.

Working under a PHS predoctoral fellowship, she earned a Ph.D. in biology and biochemistry from Johns Hopkins University in 1964. She spent the next 6 years at Hopkins, first as a PHS postdoctoral fellow and then as an assistant professor. Her fields of interest there were broad, spanning the areas of enzymology, nitrogen metabolism, electron transport systems, molecular biology and biophysics.

In 1970, Straat moved to Biospherics, Inc., where she was senior research biochemist and later director of research services. Her most memorable experiences were related to the 1976 Viking mission to Mars. She was coinvestigator of the labeled release (LR) life detection experiment and a member of the Viking biology flight team. Following the mission, she was principal investigator in a study to interpret the resulting data, which were consistent with a biological response. Since the recent report of possible liquid water on Mars, NASA has renewed its interest in the LR experimental results.

Straat joined NIH in 1980 as a grants associate and soon became head of planning and coordination for the National Toxicology Program at NIEHS. In her third year, she became the scientific review administrator of the molecular and cellular biophysics study section at the Division of Research Grants (now CSR). In 1986, she became chief of the referral section and deputy chief for referral in DRG's Referral and Review Branch; in 1996, she was named acting deputy chief for review. Straat moved to the CSR Office of the Director in 1997 as special assistant, developing policy statements, analyzing review data, developing the CSR Intranet and Internet web sites, producing *Peer Review Notes*, and coordinating other CSR and NIH projects.

Straat believes she had "an exciting, enjoyable career." But she will not be looking back. She is looking "forward to a new life in 2001 packed with activities." She plans to enjoy friends, finish writing two books (one on the LR experiment) and advance her interests in photography, horseback riding and riding to hounds ("fox chasing"). With a 10-acre farm, three horses, three dogs, a donkey and a cat, she is certain to have a retirement full of activity.—

Don Luckett ■



Dr. Patricia Straat

### NIDCR Mourns Special Expert Barmes

Dr. David Edward Barmes, special expert for international health, Office of International Health, NIDCR, died Jan. 13 while vacationing with his family at Manyana, New South Wales, Australia.

He was 69.



Dr. David Barmes

NIDCR recruited Barmes in 1996 to help refine its global research agenda and develop strategies for addressing research questions that require global approaches. Most recently, his work focused on building international networks for research on noma, craniofacial anomalies, fluoride and health disparities. Prior to joining the institute, he had

a long career with the World Health Organization.

A native of Australia, Barmes graduated from St. Joseph's Nudgee College in 1948 and in 1953 earned a B.D.Sc. at the University of Queensland. After more than 2 years with the Queensland department of health and home affairs, he was appointed dental officer in the then territory of Papua New Guinea. During this period, he performed extensive baseline epidemiology and was awarded the D.D.Sc. degree from the University of Queensland. He also established a school for dental technicians that later added curricula for dentists. The school eventually became the dental school at the University of Papua New Guinea.

In 1967, he was recruited to the secretariat of the WHO in Geneva as dental epidemiologist. In 1973, he was promoted to chief of the Oral Health Programme. In both roles, he led the development of a series of oral epidemiological manuals for data gathering that set the standard globally and provided the foundation for a global databank. Barmes led two WHO international collaborative studies of oral health systems—one involving 11 countries and another involving seven countries. Those studies provided common methodological strategies to assess oral health delivery and set the tone for today's efforts to build networks of researchers across countries and across scientific disciplines. At WHO, he served on many planning and program committees in areas outside oral health.

He is survived by his wife Rosemary and their five children, Catherine, Jane, Mark, David and Elizabeth; his sons and daughters-in-law, Terence, Gillian, and Suzanna; and seven grandchildren. Expressions of sympathy may take the form of contributions to: Friends of the National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research, 1555 Connecticut Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20036.

**Zimmerman Retires from CSR**

Dr. Eugene Zimmerman has retired from the Center for Scientific Review as scientific review administrator of the allergy and immunology study section of the immunological sciences integrated review group. He has 26 years of federal service, but his commitment and connections to NIH extend back 35 years.

Before receiving his Ph.D. in microbiology at the University of Maryland in 1968, Zimmerman spent a year as a technician in an NIH laboratory studying respiratory viruses. This experience sparked an interest in virology and conquering the common cold. He later worked for two NCI intramural research contractors—Microbiological Associates and Litton Bionetics—as assistant project director and senior scientist. During this 6-year period, he conducted early research on the relationship between retroviruses and cancer, the use of the simian model for studying leukemia, and the use of interferon as an immune system modulator.



*Dr. Eugene Zimmerman*

Zimmerman eventually became interested in doing more to address the broad scientific challenges to preventing disease. In 1976, he jumped at an opportunity to join the NIH Grants Associate Program, which groomed promising scientists for careers in managing NIH research programs. He soon became assistant program director for carcinogenesis at NCI. In 1979, he began managing contract reviews as executive secretary for NCI's cause and prevention scientific review committee.

During the next 2 years, he also supported the review of large program-project grants and became fascinated with the review process. Because of the skills he developed, he was recruited to be executive secretary of the allergy and immunology study section at CSR's predecessor (the Division of Research Grants). The challenge of working in a new field was invigorating, and he greatly enjoyed recruiting and working with the best researchers in the field.

Eight years later, Zimmerman accepted new challenges at NIAID's Division of Allergy, Immunology and Transplantation. He served as special assistant to the DAIT director before becoming chief of the allergic mechanisms section.

Despite the rewards of managing an important research portfolio, Zimmerman was drawn back to the allergy and immunology study section in 1996.

There was nothing stale about his old job. He was still excited to be working with a wonderful group of scientists to find the most promising research applications and nurture new researchers. CSR staff, his study section members and the extramural community shared the feeling.

Dr. Donald Schneider, director of the CSR Division of Molecular and Cellular Mechanisms, summed up their sentiments: Zimmerman has been "wonderfully helpful, scientifically knowledgeable and delightful to work with."

In assessing his 35-year career, Zimmerman notes that there still is no cure for the common cold. The great advances in technology have been no match for the multivariant viruses that cause colds. He is nonetheless hopeful. One of his former study section members has identified a key cell receptor that cold-causing rhinoviruses use to infect cells. One day a grant application could bear a plan for using such research to develop the elusive "magic bullet." In any case, Zimmerman is proud to have been part of a process that includes such possibilities.—Don Lockett

**Memorial Service for Roger Cole**

Dr. Roger Cole, chief of the Laboratory of Microbiology, NIAID, during the 1960's and early 1970's, who retired in 1981, died on Feb. 12. Friends, relatives and colleagues are welcome to attend a memorial service in his honor at River Road Unitarian Church, 6301 River Rd., Bethesda, on Saturday, Mar. 10 at 2 p.m.

**CIT Computer Classes**

All courses are on the NIH campus and are given without charge. For more information call 594-6248 or consult the training program's home page at <http://training.cit.nih.gov>.

Hands-on Web Animation	3/8
Disaster Recovery	3/8
Creating Presentations with PowerPoint 2000	3/8
Data Warehouse <i>Query</i> : Travel	3/8
WildPackets: Getting Started with EtherPeek	3/8-9
Introduction to Java Programming	3/9
Introduction to Image Processing I	3/12-23
WIG - World Wide Web Interest Group	3/13
Introduction to the Helix Systems	3/13
Getting Started with Knowledge Management	3/13
Data Warehouse <i>Query</i> : Property Management	3/13
Basic Security for Unix Workstations	3/14
Data Warehouse <i>Query</i> : Budget & Finance	3/14
Analyzing cDNA Microarray Images using P-SCAN and F-SCAN	3/15
Web Security - Avoid Being Zapped on the Internet	3/15
Introduction to HTML	3/16
Creating Presentations with PowerPoint 2000	3/19
Relational Database Overview	3/20
Getting Started with GCG	3/20
Budget Tracking	3/20
Data Warehouse <i>Analyze</i> : Budget & Finance	3/20
MATLAB 5 - Matrix Laboratory	3/20-22
The ABC's of ABC/M (Activity-Based Costing and Management)	3/21

## CSR's Branche Retires After 42 Years in Government

By Don Luckett

Colleagues from far and wide gathered in Wilson Hall recently to honor Dr. William C. Branche, Jr., on the occasion of his retirement from the Center for Scientific Review after 42 years of federal service.

He had been scientific review administrator (SRA) of the bacteriology and mycology 2 study section in the infectious diseases and microbiology integrated review group since its inception in 1979. Past and present members of his study section applauded as Dr. Ellie Ehrenfeld, CSR director, praised Branche for his 21 years of dedication to NIH and its mission. Current study section members then celebrated his career with cutting-edge presentations of their research data. Branche also received personal words of appreciation from Dr. Ruth Kirschstein, NIH acting director.

Branche began his career at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in 1958 as a virologist in the department of bacterial diseases. While there, he earned a master's degree in bacteriology from George Washington University and a Ph.D. in bacteriology from Catholic University. He became chief of the gastroenteritis study section and then chief of the *Neisseria meningitidis* serology section. He eventually was promoted to chief of the Infectious Disease Service Laboratory. Four years later, allergies forced him from the laboratory he loved, and he joined the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research headquarters as a health scientist administrator. During his 20-year tenure at Walter Reed, he published many articles on *Escherichia coli*, *Shigella flexneri*, *Neisseria gonorrhoeae* and meningococcal infections.

As SRA of the bacteriology and mycology 2 study section, Branche garnered respect from his colleagues for his expertise, commitment to science and good nature. Dr. Anne Morris Hooke of Miami University of Ohio spoke for many when she said, "Working with Bill and the members of the BM2 was by far the most enjoyable study section experience I have had...He is an inspiration to all scientists, young or old, black, white and brindle. He kept himself abreast of the technical aspects of our discipline by spending time each year—at his own expense—in someone's lab, he gave of himself as a mentor on the personal level and as a community volunteer in countless activities, he welcomed newcomers with open arms and made us all members of the BM2 family." He was recognized for



Dr. William C. Branche, Jr.

many of his efforts in 1989 with an NIH Merit Award "for superior resourcefulness in fostering improved relationships with the extramural research community and within the NIH."

Beyond his study section, Branche will be remembered for his countless contributions to the NIH Extramural Associates Program, which encourages women's colleges and institutions with predominantly underrepresented minority student enrollments to increase their participation in NIH-funded research. He served on the EA advisory board for a number of years and eventually became its chairman. He conceived a development and training grant program to help institutions targeted by the EA program, and voluntarily managed the ad hoc committee that reviewed applications. In addition, Branche has mentored and lectured faculty members and administrators who participated in the EA residency program at NIH and in related conferences and workshops. Because of his abiding interest in the success of the program, he has offered to be an unofficial advisor/consultant.

Branche also has been an active member of the American Society for Microbiology. He served on its ad hoc committee for minority microbiologists, and for many years he has served on ASM's membership, manpower and underrepresented minorities committees. Branche's commitment to helping others also has extended to his community. He has coached boys and girls' soccer teams, judged local high school science fairs and served as president of the board of directors of the Pointer Ridge Swim and Racquet Club in Bowie, Md., for 12 years. In addition, he has served as a member of the board of directors of Queen Anne's School in Upper Marlboro for 6 years.

Branche plans an active retirement. He will be teaching at Prince George's Community College, where he feels he can do much to help nursing students get ahead. He also plans to keep fit by learning how to play golf and continuing to play tennis, swim and go bird-watching. ■

### Wednesday Afternoon Lectures

The Wednesday Afternoon Lecture series—held on its namesake day at 3 p.m. in Masur Auditorium, Bldg. 10—features Dr. Clifford Tabin on Mar. 14, who will speak on "Signals Patterning the Vertebrate Embryo." He is professor of genetics, Harvard Medical School.

On Mar. 21, Dr. Tyler Jacks, professor of biology and HHMI associate investigator, MIT Center for Cancer Research, will lecture on "Modeling Cancer in the Mouse."

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

### Renewal of NIH Parking Permits

NIH General Parking Permits for campus employees whose last names begin with E, F and G will expire on the last day of March 2001. In order to obtain a new permit, an employee must visit the NIH Parking Office in Bldg. 31, Rm. B3B04. Hours are 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. Remember to bring a valid NIH identification card, driver's license and vehicle registration certificate. For more information, call 496-5685.

## NCI's Percy Retires After 30 Years

Constance Lehair Percy recently announced her plans for retirement after 30 years of public service at NCI. She is an internationally known expert in cancer classification and nomenclature.

Before coming to NCI, she spent more than 20 years at the American Cancer Society, where, starting in 1947, she worked as a health statistician specializing in cancer nomenclature and classification. A pioneer in cancer classification, Percy began her career after receiving a B.S. in chemistry (1936) from Cornell University and an M.S. in public health (1937) from Columbia University.

Sent to Memorial Hospital (Sloan Kettering) by ACS to help set up a cancer registry, Percy also helped prepare the *Manual of Tumor Nomenclature and Coding*, the first building block for cancer nomenclature. This was followed by an assignment as the only female



Constance Lehair Percy

working with several male pathologists on the committee for the reference manual *Systematized Nomenclature for Pathology* referred to as "SNOP" and later "SNOMED."

While at ACS, working with E. Cuyler Hammond and Larry Garfinkel, Percy did research resulting in one of the first studies linking smoking to lung cancer. Their research on cause of death listed on death certificates showed that the male subjects who smoked were more likely to die early. Percy said she naively believed this evidence would prompt the federal government to ban cigarette smoking. She is still waiting for this to happen.

In 1970, NCI recruited her to Bethesda to work on the 3rd National Cancer Survey that provided statistics on the incidence of cancer in the U.S. The present Surveillance, Epidemiology and End Results (SEER) Program eventually evolved. Working with the SEER cancer registries became Percy's major focus at NCI. She also contributed to the establishment of international cancer nomenclature with the *International Classification of Diseases for Oncology* (ICD-O).

While promoting use of the ICD-O manual, Percy embarked on an "around the world in 40 days" trip through Europe, northern Africa and Asia. This memorable journey included her enduring an overnight detention at the Cairo airport because the date on her smallpox vaccination was misunderstood. She also was active in the founding of the International Association of Cancer Registries (IARC) and, in 1971, attended the first IARC meeting in Tokyo.

At last year's annual IARC meeting in Thailand, Percy announced the publication of ICD-O-3, the third revision of international coding standard for cancer cases. The United States began coding cases using this standard on Jan. 1, 2001.

A living legend in the development of worldwide standards for cancer classification systems, Percy has received several awards and honors, including the most distinguished member of the National Cancer Registry Association award (1994), the North American Association of Central Cancer Registries' Calum Muir Memorial award for outstanding contribution in the field of cancer registration (1997), and two Public Health Service awards for superior service. She has also been an honorary member of IARC since 1993. Over 40 papers on topics such as cancer registration, classification and nomenclature of neoplasm, accuracy of death certificates, and medical nomenclature are included in her portfolio.

After half a century of contributing to lessening the burden of cancer, Percy looks forward to enjoying the life of a retiree. Short-term retirement plans include cleaning up her condo, then traveling to destinations such as California, Florida, Hawaii and England. In London, she will visit her daughter Norma Percy, a television producer. When the pool opens at her condo in Rockville this summer, she'll return and spend time with her other daughter, Connie Aaronson, a math department head and team leader in Montgomery County. Percy will also enjoy spending time with her two granddaughters, Debbie Aaronson, an actress in New York City, and Abby Aaronson, a recent health education graduate of the University of Maryland.

Once head of the NIH golf league when she golfed an under-100 game, Percy now chooses to watch the sport. Tennis also is now a spectator sport for her, after earlier years as an active player. In the future, when not traveling, she will be found wearing her favorite color—purple—and enjoying a relaxing summer swim in her condo's pool. ■

## Postpartum Depression Study

The Behavioral Endocrinology Branch, NIMH, is seeking female volunteer mothers ages 18-40 who: have had one or more past episodes of postpartum depression following a full-term pregnancy, have no current symptoms of depression, must be 6 months post-delivery and not lactating, must be medically healthy and medication-free. Volunteers may be asked to participate in a 6-month protocol investigating the effects of ovarian and stress hormones on brain and behavior. Payment is provided for those who complete the study. For more information call Linda Simpson-St. Clair, 496-9576. ■

## Female Volunteers Needed

The Behavioral Endocrinology Branch, NIMH, is seeking female volunteers ages 18-55 to participate in studies of the effects of menstrual cycle hormones on brain and behavior. Volunteers must have regular menstrual cycles with no changes in mood in relationship to menses, be free of medical illnesses and not taking any hormones or medication on a regular basis. They will complete daily rating forms and be offered participation in one or more protocols. Payment will be in accordance with the duration of each visit and the type of protocol. For more information, call Linda Simpson-St. Clair, 496-9576.

## Letendre Retires After 32 Years at NIH

By Susan Sagusti

Before retiring recently as NHLBI deputy director of the Division of Blood Diseases and Resources (DBDR), biochemist Dr. Carol H. Letendre had contributed to remarkable changes in the field of hematology. Twenty of her 32 years at NIH were spent at NHLBI. During this time, she helped guide research that led to such advances as an understanding of the role of blood clots in heart attacks, a national blood safety program and new developments in the management of hemophilia and sickle cell disease.



Dr. Carol H. Letendre

Letendre also contributed to the development of NHLBI's stem cell research and stem cell transplantation programs. Her particular interests were treatment and cure of hemophilia and prevention and treatment of arterial thrombosis.

Through her efforts, an international workshop in 1991 launched major initiatives in the application of gene therapy to the cure

of hemophilia. She also spearheaded an institute-wide effort in the molecular genetics of arterial thrombosis that resulted in the funding of a \$25 million research program in 2000.

Letendre first came to NIH to complete 1 year of postdoctoral research after earning a master's degree in nutritional science and a doctorate in biochemistry from Cornell University. She then completed 4 additional years of postdoctoral study in nucleic acid enzymology at the Institut de Biologie Physico-chimique in Paris, followed by a 9-month position as research associate at the University of Virginia's department of biology.

After returning to NIH to complete two staff fellowships—the first with NIAMS and the second with NICHD—Letendre was granted career status and became a research chemist in NICHD's Laboratory of Biomedical Sciences. Her areas of concentration included enzymes of nucleic acid metabolism, biochemistry of neurotransmitters and developmental biology.

Letendre became director of the NIA dermatology program in 1980, marking the start of a 20-year career as a health scientist administrator. In 1981, she joined NHLBI as executive secretary of the institute's research manpower review committee in the Division of Extramural Affairs. Two years later she became program administrator for the DBDR Hemophilia and Platelet Disorders Program, and in

1986 she was named the division's deputy director.

One of Letendre's many contributions has been to foster the development of researchers in blood disorders and transfusion. "The extramural community greatly appreciates Carol for her knowledge of the NIH grants system and her willingness to help investigators navigate the complex rules that are often associated with research programs," said Dr. Barbara Alving, DBDR director.

Letendre has been a member of the American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology since 1980. She has also been active in the American Society of Hematology, for which she developed a training workshop offered at the organization's annual meeting; the highly successful program has grown to include other NIH institutes that fund hematology research.

Throughout her NIH career, Letendre served on numerous NHLBI and trans-NIH professional committees. She was a founding member of NHLBI's molecular genetics group, which formulated and coordinated the institute's molecular genetics efforts over the past 10 years. As a member of the trans-NIH zebrafish coordinating committee, she was a 1999 recipient of the NIH Director's Award. The award acknowledged the group's extraordinary coordinated efforts among 18 NIH institutes and centers to develop funding initiatives for research using a single animal model.

"Regardless of the setting, Carol always shared with her colleagues both experience and a unique sense of humor," Alving added. "Her very positive influence will long be remembered both within the NIH and within the broader scientific community."

During her retirement, Letendre plans to pursue continuing interests in music, ornithology and adventure travel. ■

### Science of Mind-Body Interactions

What are the mechanisms linking emotions and health? How does the brain mediate between events in our environment and changes in our autonomic, endocrine and neurological functioning? These and other mind-body questions will be the focus of the "Science of Mind-Body Interactions" conference being held Mar. 26-28 in Masur Auditorium, Bldg. 10. Sponsored by more than a dozen institutes and offices, it will feature a keynote address by Dr. Antonio Damasio, author of *Descartes' Error* and *The Feeling of What Happens*. Sessions will focus on biology of social interactions, neurobiology of emotions, inflammatory and infectious disease, and sleep. The conference is free to NIH'ers. Advance registration is required; visit [www.mindbody.org](http://www.mindbody.org).

### Nonsmoking Volunteers Needed

Are you a female nonsmoker, 18 to 35 years old, in good health and not on birth control pills? You may be eligible to participate in a study of commonly prescribed medications. The study involves multiple visits to the Uniformed Services University (next to the Naval Medical Center, across the pike from NIH) over a 3-month period. Earn up to \$880 and get a free physical exam. Call (301) 319-8204 for more information and a preliminary telephone screening.